




Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

The Lord's Prayer

 As we study the Lord's Prayer, pay attention to the reverence Jesus used as He prayed to His Father. Jesus did not begin His prayer by praying, "To the most holy Supreme Deity, whom I hope is listening". It was personal: "Our Father". (The word "our" is critical to us; even though His ministry has just started, Jesus is already considering the people, who believe in Him, His brothers and sisters, see [Ephesians 1:5](#).) Jesus' words are said to God Who is alive, Who is present, Who is listening, Who is His Father, Who is 'our' Father, Who lives in Heaven. He is. Jesus knows.

A spouse may think that he or she knows everything there is about their partner; however, the closeness, the love, the connection that Jesus has with His Father makes our human relationships look like a deep gray fog compared to the vibrancy and clarity of colors that mark the connection between Jesus and God. Jesus knows and throughout this prayer He is telling us about the [agapé love](#) and power of the Lord God Almighty, Yahweh, "our Father Who art in Heaven", "Abba, Father".

 An older translation may be a bit more familiar:

Matthew 6:9-13 [Revised Standard Version (RSV)]

⁹ Pray then like this: 'Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. ¹⁰ Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread; ¹² And forgive us our debts [trespasses, or sins], As we also have forgiven our debtors [As we forgive those who trespass (or sin) against us]; ¹³ And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. [For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, for ever. Amen.]'

⁹ "This, then, is how you should pray: " 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, ¹⁰ your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Q1. *Hallowed be your name*: What does "hallowed" mean to you?

 **Definition:** Hallowed (adjective)

1. Sanctified; consecrated.
2. Highly venerated; sacrosanct.

[American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright © 2016 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. All rights reserved. <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/hallowed>, accessed: 03/11/2026.]

 **Synonyms** for Hallowed

Sanctified; holy; blessed; sacred; honoured; dedicated; revered; consecrated; sacrosanct; inviolable; and beatified.

Collins Thesaurus of the English Language – Complete and Unabridged 2nd Edition. 2002 © HarperCollins Publishers 1995, 2002. <https://www.freethesaurus.com/hallowed>, accessed: 03/11/2026.

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Q2. **Hallowed be your name:** What is in a “name”; how should we think about, and speak God’s Name?

Exodus 20:7 [International Children’s Bible (ICB)]
[Commandment #3]

⁷ “You must not use the name of the Lord your God thoughtlessly. The Lord will punish anyone who is guilty and misuses his name.

Exodus 20:7 [The Message (MSG)]
[Commandment #3]

No using the name of God, your God, in curses or silly banter; God won’t put up with the irreverent use of his name.

Philippians 2:9-11 [NIV-1984]

⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,

¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Revelation 19:12^b & 16 [NIV-1984]

^{12b} He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. . . .

¹⁶ On his robe and on his thigh, he has this name written: “KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”

Q3. **Hallowed be your name:** In virtually any media today, we frequently see/hear references to God, as in OMG (Oh, my God!) or a profanity that includes God’s Name.

① Are there degrees of ‘badness’ in which OMG is okay, while a profanity is bad?

② How should we react?

① Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

②

Q4. **Your kingdom come:** What does this phrase mean to us Believers?



Your kingdom come: “ ‘*Let the kingdom of the Messiah appear*’: This [phrase] was . . . a leading point in the prayers of the Jews, especially in the Kaddisch, which had been in regular use since the captivity [of the Jews in Egypt] . . . ” [Source: © about 1880, Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer’s *NT Commentary*, commentary text courtesy of BibleSupport.com. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/matthew/6-10.htm>, accessed: 03/13/2026.]

Jesus changed the traditional Jewish phrase from ‘*Let the kingdom of the Messiah appear*’ to “**Your kingdom come**”. In essence, Jesus indicates in His wording that the Messiah is present; He’s here; Jews do not need to pray and hope that he will appear at some future time; the future is now; He’s here! Meyer continued to write, “the kingdom *comes* with the Messiah who comes to establish it” (ibid.) And now that the Messiah is here, ‘God’s will shall be done and the Messiah’s Kingdom shall reign forever’.

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Q5. **Your will be done:** When we pray this phrase, what are we asking of God?

Genesis 50:19-21 [The Message (MSG)]

[After the death of his earthly father Jacob, Joseph, who was the Pharaoh's governor over Egypt, consoled his remorseful and frightened brothers with these words of comfort and acknowledgement of God's sovereignty:]

Joseph replied, "Don't be afraid. Do I act for God? Don't you see, you planned evil against me but God used those same plans for my good, as you see all around you right now — life for many people. Easy now, you have nothing to fear; I'll take care of you and your children." He reassured them, speaking with them heart-to-heart.

Psalms 139:16b [NIV-1984]


All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

Isaiah 25:1 [New American Standard Bible (NASB)]

Lord, You are my God; I will exalt You, I will give thanks to Your name; For You have worked wonders, Plans formed long ago, with perfect faithfulness.

Q6. **Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven:** When we pray this phrase, we recognize God's sovereignty, His authority, His . . . everything. What was the first thing that came into your mind when you read this phrase just now?

Day 2

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

¹¹ Give us today our daily bread.

Q7. **Bread:** Does "bread" refer exclusively to the food our bodies need each day? Or might it also refer to the spiritual food that our souls need daily?

Food for our bodies, exclusively? Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Spiritual food? Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Matthew 6:31-34 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

³¹ Don't worry and say, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' ³² All the people who don't know God keep trying to get these things. And your Father in heaven knows that you need them. ³³ The thing you should want most is God's kingdom and doing what

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God wants. Then all these other things you need will be given to you. ³⁴ So don't worry about tomorrow. Each day has enough trouble of its own. Tomorrow will have its own worries.



“Jesus did not instruct His followers to pray for a one-time permanent solution to their daily needs. He did not tell believers to ask for enough money to forever guarantee they could feed their families for days or weeks or years. The point Jesus makes here is to pray in dependence on the Father; to ask Him to meet the needs of each day. In doing so, He destroyed any idea that believers should be mostly self-reliant, checking in with God only when faced with a critical need. Instead, Jesus showed clearly that every child of God must be God-reliant for every need on every day.

“In fact, whether we choose to acknowledge it or not, we are reliant on God for all things at all time. Every good gift we receive comes from Him and not from ourselves ([James 1:17](#)). The prayer for our daily bread is the humble expression that we understand that to be true.

“This concept of ‘daily bread’ provides important context when Jesus speaks about anxiety later in this chapter ([Matthew 6:25–26](#)). Parents often teach children the difference between ‘needs’ and ‘wants’. It's good to note the difference between survival and luxury. At the same time, dependence on God means realizing that what we ‘need’ relates directly to His will, and His plans ([Matthew 6:10](#)). What we truly ‘need’ is defined according to the purposes God has for us in that moment, as difficult as that can be to accept.” [© Copyright 2002-2026 Got Questions Ministries. All rights reserved. <https://www.bibleref.com/Matthew/3/Matthew-3-3.html>, accessed: 03/16/2026.]

¹² Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Q8. ***Forgive us our debts:*** Is Jesus referring to monetary obligations that we owe to a bank, credit cards, or another person?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Q9. ***Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors:*** If Jesus is referring to “debts” as sins or transgressions, what should we do before we say these words?

Q10. ***Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors:*** Did Jesus give this prayer – The Lord’s Prayer – to us as a model prayer, or did Jesus need to pray each of these petitions, too?

Hebrews 4:15 [NIV-1984]


For we do not have a high priest [Jesus] who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin.

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2 Corinthians 5:21 [NIV-1984]


God made him [Jesus] who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'

 "The Greek [word] for temptation can also mean testing." [Footnote to Matthew 6:13 in the NIV-2011 version.]

Q11. ***And lead us not into temptation:*** This seems to be out-of-character for God. Why should we ask God to "lead us not into temptation"? Does this mean that He might "lead us . . . into temptation" and we have to plead "Please, don't!"?

 "This is the third request for the wellbeing of the one who is praying. The Greek word *peirasmon* is translated as 'temptation' here, and is the same term used of Jesus' experience with Satan in the wilderness ([Matthew 4:1](#)). This can refer to being enticed towards sin, or to being tested in a trial. In either case, the phrase is better understood as 'lead us away from temptation or testing.' [James 1:13](#) (↓) makes it clear that God never entices anyone to sin. God obviously has the power, though, to lead His people away from tempting circumstances, including temptation to sin that might come from enduring hard circumstances. We should ask God to do that for us, knowing that even when we're tempted, He always provides us a means to avoid sin ([1 Corinthians 10:13](#))." [© Copyright 2002-2026 Got Questions Ministries. All rights reserved. <https://www.bibleref.com/Matthew/6/Matthew-6-13.html>, accessed: 03/18/2026.]

 "A petition similar to this is offered by David, [Psalm 141:4](#) (↓) God tempts no man. See [James 1:13](#) (↓). This phrase, then, must be used in the sense of 'permitting.' Do not 'suffer' us, or 'permit' us, to be tempted to sin. In this it is implied that God has such control over the tempter as to save us from his power if we call upon him. The word 'temptation,' however, . . . means sometimes 'trial, affliction,' anything that 'tests' our virtue. If this be the meaning here, as it may be, then the import of the prayer is, 'Do not afflict or try us.' It is not wrong to pray that we may be saved from suffering if it be the will of God. See [Luke 22:42](#) (↓)." [©1834, Notes on the Bible by Albert Barnes. https://biblehub.com/commentaries/barnes/1_timothy/2.htm, accessed: 03/19/2026.]

James 1:13-15 [NIV-1984]

¹³ When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; ¹⁴ but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

Psalm 141:4 [NIV-1984]

Let not my heart be drawn to what is evil, to take part in wicked deeds with men who are evildoers; let me not eat of their delicacies.

Job 1:6-10 [NIV-1984]

⁶ One day the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them.

⁷ The Lord said to Satan, "Where have you come from?"

Satan answered the Lord, "From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it."

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⁸ Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil."


⁹ "Does Job fear God for nothing?" Satan replied. ¹⁰ "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land."

1 Peter 5:8-9 [NIV-1984]

⁸ Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

Luke 22:42 [NIV-1984]


[Jesus prayed,] "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."

 And the version of the Lord's Prayer that many of us are accustomed to reciting:

Matthew 6:9-13 [King James Version (KJV)]

⁹ After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. ¹⁰ Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. ¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread. ¹² And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. ¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Day 3

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

^{14a} For if you forgive men when they sin against you, ^{14b} your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ^{15a} But if you do not forgive men their sins, ^{15b} your Father will not forgive your sins.

Q12. *If you forgive [a person] when they sin against you:* Is it easy for us humans to forgive another person for a wrong that person committed against us? What gets in the way?

Easy? Challenging? (Why did you circle that answer?)

.....
What gets in the way?
.....

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Q13. Think about the sins, the wrongs, that you have committed against others. Has God, Jesus, forgiven you for those sins? How do you know?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

How do you know?

Q14. Who are you emulating, if you choose to forgive someone?

 C R J S

 When you forgive, you are demonstrating Christ-in-action!

^{15b} **“your Father will not forgive your sins”**: Satan would love to paralyze a Believer’s faith and actions by introducing that worry/anxiety: ‘what sin have I forgotten to declare?’ Was my forgetfulness itself a sin? Was it an honest forgetfulness, or did I subconsciously/purposefully forget? We can get so bound-up in our own insecurities, that we can at times forget Jesus and His [agapé love](#) for us. We can only do . . . our best. God knows us and the wonderful talents that He has given us . . . and the limitations imposed upon our minds and bodies. We can only do our best.

God knows the debilitating effects that harboring resentment can have upon our wellbeing, so we are to purge that resentment by asking someone we hurt to forgive us, or by granting forgiveness to someone who wronged us.

Satan can twist that ‘resentment knife’ in our souls so that the resentment becomes more and more insidious, more and more a barrier to our ability to demonstrate the love of Christ to Believers and nonbelievers, alike. The next best thing that Satan can do to an avowed Believer in Christ Jesus is to paralyze the Believer, so that their witness is dulled, if not stopped altogether. Happy/sad, smile/frown, kindness/ambivalence: resentment breeds the negative.

It is important to each of us – we who believe – to periodically examine our conduct, our actions, our inactions, our words, our silence against the mirror of Scripture. We can ask God to help us remember any sinful behavior that we may have committed (or omitted), then we can name it and ask God to forgive us. God does not want us to fail! He wants us to thrive as a vibrant lighthouse shining our bright spotlights-of-Christ through the deep fog of this world. Remember: a flashlight, even a candle flame, is better than no light; and as our faith grows, our light brightens!

We also tend to minimize the silent work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will introduce into our mind forgotten sins that need to be forgiven. We must act upon those promptings and not squelch the Holy Spirit by ignoring His promptings.

We must always keep Scripture in mind, because Satan is always around ‘masquerading as an angel of light’ ([2 Corinthians 11:14](#)). The Holy Spirit will not prompt us to do anything that contradicts Scripture. Satan on the other hand is always scattering distrust, disrespect, lies, a white lie or half-truth (a lie is a lie regardless of how it is dressed), emotional hurt, perverted Scripture, division, little to no mercy, cruelty, brutality, and hatred. Satan is a bad dude.

James 2:17 [NIV-1984]

In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

Q15. ^{15b} **your Father will not forgive your sins**: Is my salvation in jeopardy if I do not name every single sin that I have ever committed (and then asking the Lord for forgiveness)?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

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John 3:16–18 [NIV-1984]

¹⁶ "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

Colossians 2:13–14 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

¹³ You were spiritually dead because of your sins and because you were not free from the power of your sinful self. But God made you alive with Christ. And God forgave all our sins. ¹⁴ We owed a debt because we broke God's laws. That debt listed all the rules we failed to follow. But God forgave us that debt. He took away that debt and nailed it to the cross.



In chapter 5 we studied these verses 5:23-26 (repeated below ↓). In verse 6:15 (↑) Jesus repeats a summarized version of His instruction of seeking (or granting) forgiveness. When Jesus repeats a teaching, the teaching is especially important. In verse 15^b Jesus tells us that forgiveness is critical. We know that seeking forgiveness from God for our sins is critical; but so is demonstrating a Christ-like mercy, and forgiving others who have sinned against us.

God gave us a mind, a mind that retains memories. Forgiveness does not mean that we forget the sin against us; or that lives return to the way they were before the sin; but He does ask us to "give up resentment against or stop wanting to punish (someone)" [see the 'forgive' definition below (↓)].

Forgiving someone may be the hardest thing that we are asked to do in this world. Yet, God knows how long-term resentment can poison a soul. He instructs us to extend to others the same grace that He extended to us. He cannot tolerate sin of any kind.

Yet, through the willingness of Christ Jesus to take our sins upon Himself by submitting to the humiliating 'kangaroo court' of the Sanhedrin; the scourging that tore deep jagged gashes across His shoulders, back, and thighs; the crown of thorns that cut deeply into His scalp; and the brutal crucifixion, itself; Christ Jesus willingly submitted to it all because He loved me, He loved you, and He wants us to spend eternity with Him and His Father. Jesus took our sins upon Himself as a final sin sacrifice ([Hebrews 10:10](#)); through His death we are made sinless. We are God's adopted sons and daughters ([Romans 8:15-17](#)), which means that Jesus is our brother! Thank You, God! Thank You, Jesus!



Definition: forgive (fər-gīv', fôr-)

v. for·gave (-gāv'), for·giv·en (-gīv'ən), for·giv·ing, for·gives

v.tr.

1. To give up resentment against or stop wanting to punish (someone) for an offense or fault; pardon.
2. To relent in being angry or in wishing to exact punishment for (an offense or fault).
3. To absolve from payment of (a debt, for example).

v.intr.

To grant forgiveness.

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Matthew 5:23-26 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

²³ "So when you offer your gift to God at the altar, and you remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there at the altar. Go and make peace with him [seek forgiveness]. Then come and offer your gift.

²⁵ "If your enemy is taking you to court, become friends with him quickly. You should do that before you go to court. If you don't become his friend, he might turn you over to the judge. And the judge might give you a guard to put you in jail. ²⁶ I tell you that you will not leave that jail until you have paid everything you owe.

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Matthew 18:23–35 [NIV-1984]

[A parable about the unforgiving servant]

²³ "Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents [Greek: a talent was worth about 20 years of a day laborer's wages] was brought to him. ²⁵ Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

²⁶ "The servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' ²⁷ The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

²⁸ "But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii [Greek: a denarius was the usual daily wage of a day laborer]. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded.

²⁹ "His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.'


³⁰ "But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. ³¹ When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened.

³² "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. ³³ Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' ³⁴ In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

³⁵ "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."

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Day 4

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

Your Attitude When Fasting

¹⁶ "When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

Q16. **When you fast:** What is fasting?


 Fasting: "Fasting, abstaining from food for a set period, was required by the law of Moses only once a year on the Day of Atonement ([Leviticus 23:26-32](#)). Over time, the Pharisees and other religious leaders had added many more days of fasting. Fasting was intended to be an act of worship before God, a time set aside for honoring Him, bringing special requests, or focusing on prayer." [© Copyright 2002-2026 Got Questions Ministries. All rights reserved. <https://www.bibleref.com/Matthew/3/Matthew-3-3.html>, accessed: 03/20/2026.]

Q17. **When you fast:** ① Should we, who believe, fast? ② If yes, when? ③ If yes, how often?

① Should we fast? Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

② When?

③ How often?

 "The word 'fast' literally signifies to abstain from food and drink, whether from necessity or as a religious observance. It is, however, commonly applied in the Bible to the latter. It is, then, an expression of grief or sorrow.


"Such is the constitution of the body, that in a time of grief or sorrow we are not disposed to eat; or, we have no appetite. The grief of the 'soul' is so absorbing as to destroy the natural appetites of the 'body.' People in deep affliction eat little, and often pine away and fall into sickness, because the body refuses, on account of the deep sorrow of the mind, to discharge the functions of health.

" 'Fasting, then, is the natural expression of grief.' It is not arbitrary; it is what every person in sorrow naturally does. This is the foundation of its being applied to religion as a sacred rite. It is because the soul, when oppressed and burdened by a sense of sin, is so filled with grief that the body refuses food. It is, therefore, appropriate to scenes of penitence, of godly sorrow, of suffering, and to those facts connected with religion which are suited to produce grief, as the prevalence of iniquity, or some dark impending calamity, or storm, or tempest, pestilence, plague, or famine.

"It is also useful to humble us, to bring us to reflection, to direct the thoughts away from the allurements of this world to the bliss of a better. It is not acceptable except it be the 'real expression', of sorrow; the natural effect of the feeling that we are burdened with crime." [©1834, *Notes on the Bible* by Albert Barnes. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/matthew/6-16.htm>, accessed: 03/23/2026.]

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Q18. *Hypocrites . . . have received their reward in full*: Why did Jesus say that they have already received their reward?


 “The Old Testament commands to fast can be translated with the words ‘afflict yourself’ ([Numbers 29:7](#)). In Jesus’ era, it seems some religious leaders made a point to do this very publicly. The group known as the Pharisees had a reputation as the most strictly religious people in Israel. They were intensely proud of that status. Scholars suggest the Pharisees fasted two days every week [[Luke 18:12](#)]. Jesus says in this verse they disfigured their faces in some way and looked ‘gloomy’ to make sure that everyone who saw them knew they were fasting.

“This quest for publicity worked. People saw them, understood they were fasting yet again, and gave them credit for being highly devout. Jesus says here that human approval is the only reward attention-seekers will receive for their fasting. Since their effort was not about God, God will not respond or reward them for it. God said the same to their ancestors about fasting with no real heart change ([Zechariah 7:5–6](#); [Matthew 5:20](#); [6:16–18](#)).” [© Copyright 2002-2026 Got Questions Ministries. All rights reserved. <https://www.bibleref.com/Matthew/6/Matthew-6-16.html>, accessed: 03/23/2026.]

¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Q19. (Verse 17) What does this verse imply? That I look normal – like everyone else? Or that I put on a special fasting face?

Normal? Special fasting face?

 Jesus continues to emphasize “motive”. Is my motive to look important or pious before others? Or is my motive purer in that I want to honor my Lord? Jesus says that the Jewish religious leaders, especially the Pharisees made a show of their supposed piety by marking their bodies/clothing with specific signs that indicated they were fasting. Their motive seemed to be public acclamation – “he’s very pious, well done!” Perhaps, at one time there was a motive to honor God, but it became less and less important as they sought the approval and praise of men and women.

God examines a person’s motives. The Jewish religious leaders sought the admiration of others. Jesus emphasizes that we are to seek God’s approval and praise by praying and fasting secretly.

Jesus is not condemning congregational or group prayers with other Believers, because that would contradict His teaching ([Matthew 18:19-20](#)). He condemns the actions of the person whose motive is seeking the approval of others through pious-sounding prayers or an appearance of woe-is-me-I’m-fasting ([Isaiah 6:5a](#)). Jesus teaches that we are to honor Him, by ourselves, in secret.

How often should we fast? That is a good question. This commentator believes that it is an individual Believer’s decision based on promptings from the Holy Spirit. Some Believers may feel led to fast once-a-week; others, never. Some may fast as their way to honor God; others after a particularly egregious sin-failure; and others to prepare for a heartrending prayer-request. The decision to fast must be covered in prayers that seek direction from God through the Holy Spirit.

Do not let other Believers tell you that God wants you to fast (and when to fast); fasting is not governed by a formula or legalism or a church-rule. It is governed by you wanting to honor God or to seek God’s mercy, while honoring the promptings of the Holy Spirit. You know Scripture. You pray. You seek God’s wisdom. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit that have been placed in your thoughts, feelings, and upon your heart


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and soul.

This commentator never dreams. One night I had several short, vivid dreams that I actually remembered. The next afternoon I was studying John 16 (using a Bible in book form). Suddenly, [verse 13](#) stood-out as if the book publisher had bolded that specific verse. I understood then through the bolding of that specific verse that my dreams were from the Holy Spirit and were not a Satan-induced counterfeit. The point of this story is that the Godhead will use various ways to prompt us. For me it was a vivid dream; other times he might use another person – our spouse or child, for example. We must be willing to accept various forms of communication as He imparts His wisdom – above all we must filter those messages through the [pages of Scripture](#), so that we know the message is from the Lord!

Fasting is a willingness to give up something to honor the Lord. However, God does not want you to hurt your body through fasting. God wants you to preach, teach, and outreach the Gospel message of Christ Jesus; you cannot do that if your body is malnourished. Now, Satan would like you as a Believer to be hurt because it limits your ministry. If you hurt your body through severe fasting, it demonstrates a devoted fanaticism, but it does nothing to attract nonbelievers to Christ Jesus, and that attraction must be our ultimate goal in obedience to Jesus' teachings.

Day 5

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

Your Heart Follows Your Treasure

¹⁹"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

Q20. ***Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth:*** What do you know of your great, great grandparents? When they died, do you know the balance of their savings account, or the property they owned? What do you know of their hopes and dreams?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Q21. ***Treasures on earth:*** Are “treasures on earth” permanent or temporary?

Permanent? Or temporary? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Lesson 10: Matthew 6:9-24

Q22. *Treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal:* Are our earthly treasures really subject to “moth and rust and theft”? What is Paul implying?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

What is Paul implying?

²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.

Q23. *Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven:* Are “treasures in Heaven” permanent or temporary?



“Christ commanded His disciples and followers not to mindlessly stockpile material possessions (Matt 6:19 ↑). Worldly goods can easily be lost to thieves and natural forces. Every treasure — here meaning money and objects — that can be stockpiled on earth is temporary. Having it comes with no guarantee of keeping it; it's not eternally reliable.

“Now Jesus tells His followers to focus instead on stockpiling treasures in heaven. These rewards are eternal. They cannot be lost to moths, rust, thieves, or anything else. In financial terminology, they are a far better investment. Christ's meaning here is not that believers ought to have no possessions, or money, at all. The main theme of the Sermon on the Mount ([Matthew 5:1–2](#)), so far, has been the priority of motivations. Our hearts and our sincerity towards God matter most of all, so having wealth is not a problem until we start to prioritize it over godliness.

“How did Jesus mean for His followers to store up rewards for themselves in heaven? He has spoken a few times in this Sermon on the Mount of acts God will reward. These have included being persecuted for Jesus' sake ([Matthew 5:11–12](#)); giving to the needy in secret ([Matthew 6:4](#)), praying in secret ([Matthew 6:6](#)) and fasting without calling attention to oneself ([Matthew 6:18](#)). In short, God rewards His people when they lead lives of sincere devotion and worship to Him.

“Rewards from God are more than just experiencing His favor in a moment of this life. Jesus has in mind something other than being allowed into heaven, since salvation cannot be earned by “eternal treasures” ([Titus 3:5](#); [Romans 3:28](#); [John 6:28–29](#)). So, what are they? Scripture does not give us an explicit understanding. We know that there ‘are’ rewards, but Scripture doesn't provide any meaningful explanation of what they are. Jesus likely meant His audience to presume that any eternal gift from God would be worth the investment of righteous living on earth.”

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Revelation 14:13 [NIV-1984]

Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on."

"Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them."

Lesson 10: Matthew 6:9-24

Revelation 20:12-13 [NIV-1984]

[An excerpt from the Great White Throne Judgment]

¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done.

²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Q24. *Where your treasure is:* To what kind of “treasure” is Jesus referring?

Q25. Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also: Why would my heart follow my treasure?



In verse 24 (↓) Jesus declares, “No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money”. Verse 21 (↑) is closely connected to verse 24. Is the Lord Christ Jesus your ‘treasure’? Are your children your ‘treasure’? Is your wife or husband your ‘treasure’? Is your bank account your ‘treasure’? What do you worship? What do you frequently think about? What do you focus on? Your physique? Your co-worker? A big, beautiful boat at the marina? Your lawn? Your next trip? Your next bet? Your next beer?

Your treasure, my treasure, can be most anything. Whatever it may be, it takes our focus off of Jesus and highlights our vice(s). It reveals our motives, which Jesus has been emphasizing throughout the ‘Sermon on the Mount’. What are our true motives?

Satan has perfected his work over the centuries (actually, millennia). While we like to think that we are more sophisticated than our forebears, the motives that drive us are remarkably unchanged. Jealousy led Cain to the murder of Abel ([Genesis 4:8](#)). Lust led to the rape of Jacob’s daughter Dinah ([Genesis 34:2](#)) and the revenge-killing of all the men in the city. Unrestrained greed and fear that led to the enslavement of the Jews ([Exodus 1:11-14](#)). Then, God lists sins committed by the Jews: “They curse. They lie. They kill. They steal. They are guilty of adultery. They break all my laws. One murder follows another.” ([Hosea 4:1-2](#).) My point is this: we do not learn from history. We repeat the same mistakes, the same sins, over-and-over. A new generation → the same sins, over-and-over. Is it hopeless? No. Through Jesus, I see peace. “[Know Jesus, know peace; no Jesus, no peace.](#)” Only through Jesus will the earth see true peace.




Peace on earth ([Matthew 3:16](#))

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Lesson 10: Matthew 6:9-24

Day 6

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

²² "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. ²³ But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

Q26. *The eye is the lamp of the body . . . whole body will be full of light:* How are our eyes a lamp, so that our "whole body will be full of light"? (Hint: what can you see in a room at night, with absolutely every light turned-off and all blinds/shades drawn?)

Proverbs 4:18–19 [NIV-1984]

¹⁸ The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, shining ever brighter till the full light of day. ¹⁹ But the way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble.

John 1:1-10 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

¹ Before the world began, there was the Word [or Christ; God told people about Himself through His Son Christ Jesus]. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ All things were made through him. Nothing was made without him. ⁴ In him there was life. That life was light for the people of the world. ⁵ The Light shines in the darkness. And the darkness has not overpowered [or understood] the Light.

⁶ There was a man named John [the Baptist] who was sent by God. ⁷ He came to tell people about the Light. Through him all people could hear about the Light and believe. ⁸ John was not the Light, but he came to tell people about the Light. ⁹ The true Light was coming into the world. The true Light gives light to all.

¹⁰ The Word was in the world. The world was made through him, but the world did not know him.

Matthew 4:16 [NIV-1984]

the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned."

Matthew 5:14-16 [NIV-1984]

¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Lesson 10: Matthew 6:9-24


John 8:12 [NIV-1984]

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

2 Corinthians 4:6 [NIV-1984]

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Q27. The eye is the lamp of the body . . . whole body will be full of light: "I'm blind." How can my "whole body . . . be full of light"?

 Jesus is speaking symbolically. "Can we see? Or are we blind?" are not the questions to ask. The question should be: "Do you believe in the Lord Christ Jesus and His redeeming grace?" If yes, then your soul, your spirit, is lighted (or lit) by His Light; if you do not believe in the Redeemer, then you remain blinded by the sins and temporary pleasures of this world. If your soul, your spirit, is lighted (or lit) by Jesus through the Holy Spirit ([Ephesians 1:13-14](#)), then you radiate His light into the world through your faithful demonstrations of mercy, servanthood, and action. In Revelation 22:5, the Apostle John wrote this of Paradise – the New Jerusalem – "There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever."

Q28. (Speculative) ***If then the light within you is darkness:*** If you are a Believer in the saving grace of Christ Jesus and your body dies, what might your soul experience? (Hint: Agapé love?)

Q29. (Speculative) ***If then the light within you is darkness:*** If you are a nonbeliever in the saving grace of Christ Jesus and your body dies, what might your soul experience? (Hint: what might separation from God be like?)

Lesson 10: Matthew 6:9-24

²⁴"No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

Q30. *No one can serve two masters . . . You cannot serve both God and Money:* Does this mean a wealthy person can never be a Believer? Only the poor?

Q31. *No one can serve two masters . . . You cannot serve both God and Money:* If God has blessed a person with wealth, what must that person do? What must the wealthy person guard against?

Do (actions)?

Guard against?



I know of a man who invested in a small company. Over the decades that company grew, and the small group of investors finally sold it to a much larger corporation. The man became a multi-millionaire overnight. His children were well cared for, as was his mother. Over time he funded the addition of a chapel to the church he attended, but his view of “who is my neighbor [Luke 10:29, 36-37]” remained quite narrow. While he was always conservative with his money, as he aged, he became even more avaricious. He was always right and not open to challenge or debate. It was as if ‘his’ wealth gave him a special ‘rightness’ in his personal relations with others, especially those who were poorer – if your opinion did not align with his, then you were wrong.

When his physical container – his body – dies in this world, he will have to answer to Jesus. His motives will be laid-bare. Did he fund the chapel, because he wanted to demonstrate his benevolence or was it a way to buy his way into Heaven (“Jesus, did you see what I did for you!?!”) Did he bask in the accolades he received when the church dedicated the chapel? Did he secretly ease the burdens of the destitute? Did he contribute to causes of exclusion, or inclusion? Did he treat his money as his, or a as blessing from God? Jesus knows his deeds as well as his motives and will judge accordingly.

Christ Jesus has been speaking to all of us about how we demonstrate our faith in Him to the world, and He wants us to always examine our motives. Be kind as Jesus is kind. Love as Jesus loves. Serve as Jesus serves. Be charitable, as Jesus is charitable. Jesus loved us so much that He willingly gave up His life in a most horrendous death, so that we might be saved for all eternity. We are Jesus’ hands, feet, and voice in this world!

We are to demonstrate His love to others and ‘others’ should be defined as liberally as possible. Why? Genesis 1:26 states, “Then God said, *Let us make man in our image, in our likeness*”. If every person on this planet is molded in God’s image — it is an expansive inclusion and no true Christian should make a distinction about ‘neighbor’! Neighbor includes every person, regardless of color, gender, wealth, or education. It is not a narrow definition limited to my parents or my children or the people who live on each side of my house. Neighbor should be defined as including every person whom Jesus brings near me (our personal sphere of influence): other drivers, store clerks, cashiers, waiters, delivery people, co-workers, bosses, etc. We have the privilege to share Jesus’s love to the people He brings to us, and we willingly assume that privilege because of our gratitude to our Lord for what He has done for us.

Our missionary deeds should include all people. We are to love. We are to serve. People vilify the immigrant, the destitute, the unhoused, the vagrant, the person whose skin is a different color. We, who believe, must liberally define ‘neighbor’ and do what we can to directly demonstrate Jesus’s love, or through indirect influence aggregate funds or lend our support to public policies that will assist our ‘neighbors’. Contributions to a church’s ‘caring fund’ or taxes to governmental assistance programs provide an aggregation of funds that provide merciful, caring, and loving support. Do we want to build-up, or tear-down?

Lesson 10: Matthew 6:9-24

I know of a woman who clerked at a large retail store. The store required her to work an occasional weekend. The woman loved the peace of early Sunday mornings. However, about 10:00 am (it was as if a light switch was toggled) the store got busier and the patrons became horrid, rude, disrespectful, self-absorbed. She observed that, when the 9:00 am church services ended, people stopped to pick-up a few items, and those nicely dressed church-goers were “absolute witches”. Her faith in the “Christian” community was sorely tested.

Again, motive. How are we, who believe, treating those whom God brings into our sphere of influence? We are always under scrutiny. People are always watching our behavior, our interactions with others, especially if they perceive that we are “Christian”. Are we kind, or demanding? Are we merciful, or cruel? Are we respectful, or bad-mannered? Are we courteous, or selfish? Are we narrow-minded, or inclusive? Are we judgmental, or deferential?

We must always remember that God is the judge ([1 Corinthians 5:12-13](#)). Do our actions, facial expressions, reactions, words, or silence demonstrate judgment, or inclusion? Peace, or confrontation? Distaste, or courtesy?

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