



Honest to God

A Master Class in the Lord's Prayer

Session 3 – Our Father in Heaven

“Who wants to go to Heaven?” the Sunday school teacher asked. All the boys and girls shot hands into the air. Except for Billy. He slid down in his chair and let out a sigh. “Billy,” the teacher gently asked, “wouldn’t you like to go to Heaven?” “Well...I *guess* so. But my mom said we could go to Disneyland after church. I really don’t want to miss that.”

Many people think like Billy. Heaven is up there, somewhere, someday. But we’re busy living, and Heaven? Truth be told, it feels like an interruption. It isn’t on our to-do list for today. Why not? When Heaven fills our thoughts, it’s more than a destination. It’s a motivation.

Goals for this Session:

- Discover a glimpse of what Heaven will be like.
- Consider why being heavenly-minded is of great earthly good.
- Examine how Heaven is a destination *and* a motivation.
- Pray honest prayers that value eternal things more than earthly things.

Ice Breaker

What are some common misperceptions people have about Heaven?

Day One – The Big Idea

Read **Matthew 6:9–13**, **Colossians 3:1–2**, and **Revelation 22:1–5** to get the overall idea. Follow the text closely but without getting bogged down in details.

1. What is the central topic? State the main point of this passage in a sentence or two.
2. What insight does this give you into God’s ways and our relationship to Him?
3. The Bible shapes our core beliefs about God and our conduct toward others. Share one takeaway lesson from this passage and how you can apply it to your life.

Day Two – Think Heaven

Read Colossians 3:1–2

“Our Father in Heaven ...” When we fix our hearts and minds on things above, we begin to see how heavenly-mindedness shapes us for earthly good.

1. We can take comfort in praying, “our Father” because God is always accessible and actively engaged in our daily life. “He is not far from any one of us. For in Him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:27–28 NIV). At the same time, God is so *transcendent* (beyond us) that even the heavens cannot contain Him (1 Kings 8:27).

How do these two truths about God factor in to the way that we think, live, and pray to our Father in Heaven? Briefly share your thoughts and then note some of David’s thoughts on the matter.

Psalm 8:3–5

Psalm 103:11–19

Psalm 139:1–12

- a. Do you believe that your Father in Heaven is listening, working, and looking after you? How does knowing this help you in the circumstances you face today?
2. How often do you think about Heaven? For most of us, except for seasons of grief or the realities of aging, Heaven doesn’t usually occupy our thoughts. But Colossians 3:1–2 instructs us to *keep seeking* (diligently, actively, single-mindedly) the things that are above and set your heart on Heaven. Share what that means for you in practical, everyday terms.
 - a. Does being heavenly-minded influence your daily choices and short-term goals? In what way?
 - b. Think of one or two specific things (e.g., a long-term goal, pursuit, relationship) that your heart and mind is set on. What helps you to keep it in proper perspective?

What is likely to hinder you?

3. **Seek** and **Set**. Paul used two words to state and re-state this command. “*Keep seeking*” describes a **mind-set**. “*Set*” describes a **heart-motive**. Are we splitting hairs, or is there a point? Well, Paul had just finished dismantling a cage that some rule-makers were trying to trap the Colossians in. “Don’t let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that comes from human thinking” (Colossians 2:8 NLT).

He reminded them to let their roots grow down and grow strong in the truth. Heaven was theirs because of faith in Jesus, not a bunch of powerless rules. They sound wise but they have absolutely no power to change you from the inside out. *You’re free to get on with your life in Christ.*

So . . . don’t live like you used to, don’t give in to all the dirty laundry behaviors you’ve left lying around in your heart (Colossians 3:5–9). Put them off—that’s the old you. Does it sound like Paul just gave them another set of impossibly difficult rules to follow? Not at all. He was giving them—and us—something much better to live for.

Consider again what it means to *keep* seeking and *set* our mind on Heaven. How does being heavenly-minded shape us for earthly good? Briefly share your thoughts.

- a. Let thoughts of Heaven fuel your mind to action.

“Let me offer a fresh way to look at these all-too-human struggles. You don’t need to *turn away* from one thing as much as you need to *turn to* another.

What do you do when you want a child to let go of something? You put something better and more interesting in front of him—he will let go in a hurry to reach for that new something.

You and I need something more important to us than the earthly attractions that keep tripping us up. A new affection that causes that old thing to be seen for what it is, and I don’t want it anymore.

What is the new affection? Heaven.”

Pastor Greg Laurie
Essentials

- b. Give your heart to heavenly things, not to the passing things of earth.

Memory Verse

Write the verse and let it be part of your prayers every day. Ask the Holy Spirit to work it into your heart and mind.

For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.
2 Corinthians 5:1 ESV

Think it over . . .

What does the metaphor of a tent and a building teach you about your life?

Day Three – Breaking Camp

Read 2 Corinthians 5:1–7

“Our Father in Heaven ...” The Bible promises that our resurrected bodies will be a new and improved, clearly unmistakable version of us.

1. As you read 2 Corinthians 5:1–7, give some thought to...
 - a. What is Paul most comforted by?
 - b. What is Paul most confident of?
 - c. What part, if any, do you find most difficult to wrap your head around?
 - d. Share one takeaway truth and why it ministers to you.

2. If you needed to explain to someone, who didn't know what having a resurrected body will be like, could you do it? (Without asking Pastor Greg or reading any other book but the Bible.) Note something from each of these verses—then choose one to explain in a little more detail.
Please note: This is not a test and you will not be graded!

Job 19:25–27

1 Corinthians 15:42–44

Philippians 3:20–21

1 John 3:2

3. In one of his last recorded prayers, King David said, “We are here for only a moment, visitors and strangers in the land as our ancestors were before us. Our days on earth are like a passing shadow, gone so soon without a trace” (1 Chronicles 29:15 NLT).

And we all say ... amen. It's been wisely said that we cannot add years to our life, but we can add life to our years. Some take up that challenge and go after their bucket list. Others have been consistently building a legacy.

What do you want your spiritual legacy to be? What is on your *spiritual* bucket list?

Memory Verse

For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 Corinthians 5:1 ESV

Think it over . . .

What do you most look forward to about your resurrected body?

Day Four – Someday ... Heaven!

Read Revelation 22:1–5

“Our Father in Heaven...” Someday we will see Him face to face, but until then, we can see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living (Psalm 27:13).

1. Revelation 22:1–5 gives us an amazing glimpse of Heaven. Take your time reading these verses...there’s no hurry. We won’t cross-reference or look for deep meanings. Just read it as many times as you like and note what seems the same—and different—in heaven about:
 - a. Water
 - b. Street
 - c. Tree
 - d. Leaves
 - e. Fruit
 - f. People
 - g. Night
 - h. Light

2. When Moses said, “Please show me Your glory,” the Lord answered, “...you cannot see My face, for man shall not see Me and live” (Exodus 33:18, 20 ESV). So, it’s astounding to be told that in Heaven, we will see God’s face. Do we have to wait until Heaven to see God’s face and live?

In Western culture, when we speak to someone we look them in the face—not at their shoes, or beyond their shoulder to the wall behind them—to have meaningful communication.

When someone gives little or no eye contact during conversation it’s a sign of disinterest or distraction. From an early age, we teach our children to look at a person when they are being spoken to, as a sign of respect. In Middle Eastern cultures, strong eye contact *between men* is a sign of honesty and sincerity, a nonverbal way of saying *believe me when I say...*

God invites us to seek His face *today* and listen intently and believe (apply) what He says.

2 Chronicles 7:14–15

Psalm 27:4, 8, 13–14

Matthew 5:8

John 14:19–21

2 Corinthians 4:6

Day Five – Honest to God: A Master Class in Prayer

This will be the layout for the last day throughout this series. Just choose some scripture, insight, or the Memory Verse and *pray it*.

A doration ...

C onfession ...

T hanksgiving ...

S upplication ...

Memory Verse

For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 Corinthians 5:1 ESV

And When You Pray ...

“Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.” —Ephesians 6:18 NIV

“Prayer is not just getting God to move. It’s the process through which God moves and changes us. Prayer will not only transform what you pray about; it will transform you.”

Greg Laurie

For you personally, what has been the most important discovery or insight from this study?

How will you put living it into practice in the days ahead?

Prayer Requests
