

A REFRESHED PRAYER

“Lord, teach us to pray.” (Luke 11:1, NIV)

YOU’LL FIND PLENTY OF ADVICE ONLINE and from your local professional about when it’s time for new clubs. Technology changes, as does your body, and if you want to get the most out of your equipment, you might need an update.

What’s harder to find is a suggestion that your prayers need to be refreshed. But I’d guess they do. Prayer is one of those spiritual practices where we can fall into rote activity, stale and mindless.

So what if today, we take one of the most familiar prayers—the outline Jesus gave to his disciples—and amplify it with one express purpose: to bring prayer to life again?

“Our Father, dwelling in heaven but somehow mindful even of us here on earth, let your name be revered in every corner of the earth, held up as holy on every occasion.

Let your kingdom, which surrounds you in heaven, also be among us, even as Christ said it was, so that we see matters not from our perspective but from yours.

Let your will be done here, too, for we are gravely prone to setting our own course and advancing our own agenda.

Give us exactly what we need today, Lord—simple provision for the good of our bodies and the bodies of those in our care.

Forgive us our sins. We daily miss your righteous mark, but we know that you are faithful to forgive us when we confess our sin, which we do here and now. And make us forgivers, Lord. Even as Christ died, he forgave those who had put him on the cross, recognizing the ignorance in their error. May we bear grace like that!

Father, keep us from sin at all! We are prone to temptation. Don’t let us go there, not even a little bit. There is an enemy, an evil one, who wants nothing other than for us to disgrace your name by our unrighteous actions. Deliver us from him, Lord, keeping us pure for your own purpose and glory.

Yes, these are our desires, Lord. Let us see each one fulfilled today. Amen.”

Opening questions Are you typically quick or slow to replace your clubs? What club do you have in mind to replace next in your bag? • How can you tell when your prayers become stale?

READING Luke 11:1-4; Matthew 6:9-13; Philippians 4:6-7

The Lord’s Prayers (Luke 11 & Matthew 6)

What differences do you find between the prayers in Luke 11 and Matthew 6? Would you say this is more “The Lord’s Prayer” (as tradition has named it) or “The Disciples’ Prayer”?

In the version offered in today’s devotion, what line or idea takes on fresh meaning for you? Why is this?

Prayer and peace (Philippians 4)

Are there aspects of prayer in verse 6 that reach beyond the outline of Luke 11 and Matthew 6? In this context, what is prayer meant to replace, and what is the result of this kind of prayer?
