Study Guide

Over Father in the average	
Our Father in Heaven	
SESSION GOALS	
The point of every session is a main idea with the goal of what we want to walk away from the discussion with —knowing, feeling and doing.	
MAIN IDEA: Prayer is an intimate dialogue between us and God.	
Head Change: To understand that through Jesus, we who were once far from God have now been adopted as His children and heirs, thereby gaining the right to call God our Father. Heart Change: To be spiritually re-kindled and humbled by the miracle of our adoption and to truly internalize the implications of being God's children. Life Change: To live as the children and heirs of Christ.	

OPEN	
Begin with a round of introductions. Ask members who are willing to share what their favourite memory of their father is. They could even share what they have learned from their fathers or the father figures in their lives. Some others could share about their struggles with prayer.	
Every child longs to be protected by his/her parent. And yet, not every child is fortunate to have nurturing parents. Whatever our earthly fathers may have been like, they pale in comparison to the incomparable 'Father-liness' of God. Praying, Jesus says, need not be difficult because we are simply conversing with our Heavenly Father.	
In this opening session, Ranjit David explores the implications of calling God our Father, and how internalizing and understanding the dynamics of the father-child relationship can alter the course of our prayer lives.	
As you watch, write down how Ranjit David answers these questions.	
What are some of the reasons we struggle with prayer?	
How does the phrase "Our Father in heaven," form the basis of our prayer life?	
What are the two ways in which someone can be a child?	
What is the significance of being God's adopted child?	
What role does Jesus play in your adoption as God's child?	

WATCH	
SESSION 1: Our Father in Heaven (12 minutes)	
REVIEW	
Ranjit lists down a few common reasons for our finding prayer difficult. Which one resonates the most with you? How does the reminder that God is your Father help you in your struggle?	
Have you had a chance to commit the Lord's prayer to memory? How has the way you recite the prayer changed over the years?	
Ranjit notes that the phrase "Our Father in heaven," forms the basis of our prayer life? In what ways do you think this phrase defines your relationship and standing with God?	
Ranjit explains how some religious philosophies frown on an intimacy with God. What could be the reason behind this? Why is it that we can be emboldened to call God our Father?	
Ranjit says that adoption is the greatest and highest privilege for us who are in Christ. Legally, what rights does an adopted child have? How does this make you feel about your adoption? What are some of the privileges you have enjoyed by being a child of God?	
Have you ever felt like you were a spiritual orphan? What emotions are evoked by having God as your adoptive Father?	
The Bible tells us that God is the Father of all creation. This means that He is everybody's Father. And yet, not all call Him Father nor enjoy the father-child relationship. How will you allow this to change the way you live your life and the choices you make?	

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Read Matthew 6:7 and Matthew 26:44. Jesus	
cautioned his disciples against using repetitive words. In what ways are we guilty of doing exactly what the verse	
warns us against in the Lord's prayer?	
In what ways are you prone to heap up empty words when praying? Why do you think we do this?	
In the context of Jesus' words, how must we regard liturgies and catechesis? What is the context in which these elements have meaning?	
In Matthew 26, the writer of the gospel points out that	
Jesus prayed again and again with the same words. What do you think the difference is? So, what is Matthew	
6 really cautioning us about?	
Read Galatians 4:4—7, Romans 5:10 and Ephesians 2:3 (ESV), 2 Corinthians 6:14—18. Contrast the term	
children of wrath and enemies of God with the term	
heir. What does each inherit?	
How did Jesus change the inheritance due to us?	
What does the phrase 'Our Father in Heaven' now mean to you?	
Read Luke 15:11–32 and Isaiah 63:16. Even in the Old Testament, God had often spoken about Himself as a	
longing father figure who wanted to not just discipline His children but experience intimacy with them. Yet, this	
was not a concept that had been internalized by the	
Israelites. At a time when legalism was the order of the day, the parable of the prodigal son must have been	
controversial and shocked Jesus' listeners, as it laid	
bare the Father heart of God and His willingness to accept a profligate son.	
In the light of our readings today, what aspect of this	
parable stands out the most to you?	

How did his loss of identity impact the younger son? What was essential for restoration? How do you think	
that his father's acceptance may have restored the son's sense of self-worth and dignity?	
What aspect of the father's behavior towards his son encourages you today?	
LAST WORD	
We often tend to view God as an exacting taskmaster who has very high expectations of us and will condemn us when we stray. The Bible however gives us a very different view of God. In Romans 8:29, Paul says that we	
were predestined to be in the image of God's firstborn son Jesus. That makes us part of God's own family! By addressing God as our Father and meaning it, we enter into a relationship of deep dependence and intimacy with God.	
LIVE IT OUT	
Select at least one activity below to complete before watching the next session.	
Worship: Listen to the song <i>Good, Good Father</i> by Chris Tomlin or another song that points you to God as our Father.	
Memorize: Read Psalm 103:13 and commit it to memory.	
Pray: Admit in prayer the struggles you face when you pray. Ask God to fill you with the peace that comes with being in a right relationship with Him. If you've never experienced it before, ask Him to help you enjoy the deep love, compassion and intimacy of a father-child relationship.	

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