



Digging Deep 2019-2020 Men's Bible Study Guide
By Ben Giselbach and Caleb Colley

Quarter Two (December through February)

- December: Matthew 6:1-6 (Pure religion)
- January: Matthew 6:7-15 (The model prayer)
- February: Matthew 6:16-24 (True treasure)

Instructions for using this material:

1. The Digging Deep study material is designed to facilitate in-depth group Bible study, and not to merely dispense information from “teacher” to “student.” As you go through the study, you will want to have separate paper or a computer on which to record your thoughts. (We do not leave space in this document for your answers to discussion-oriented questions.)
2. There are many tools that will help in digging, such as Bible encyclopedias, Greek and Hebrew lexical books, commentaries, etc. Many are available for free on-line. If you need help accessing such materials, ask others in your group or ask Ben or Caleb.
3. The Facebook group is an interactive portion of the study. Find it at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1564776240335067/> (or search “Digging Deep Men’s Bible Study” on Facebook). If you don’t have Facebook, you can still contribute to the discussion by emailing your comments to calebcolley@gmail.com or ben@plainsimplefaith.com.
4. As we go through the study together, please provide questions and comments to the nationwide study group on Facebook. It will be great to have an ongoing discussion about the material.
5. A monthly video podcast will be posted on the Facebook page.
6. Glenn Colley will assist us by preaching a sermon each month on the topic for that month’s Digging Deep study. The sermons will be posted on the Facebook page and at calebcolley.com/diggingdeep.

Month Four: Pure Religion (Matthew 6:1-6)

Introduction.

- A. Begin this study by reading Matthew 6:1-34.
- B. Define the word “piety”. _____
- C. Conduct a search throughout the entire Bible on the word “hypocrite” and “hypocrisy.”
1. How often are these words found in the whole Bible? Which Bible character had the most to say about hypocrisy? Make your case by citing passages.
 2. What Bible character is most noted for his or her pride?
 3. What is the dictionary definition of the English word “hypocrite”? Write a short paragraph summarizing the meaning of the Greek word *hypokritēs*, the word used by Jesus in Matthew 6:2, 5.
- D. List 5 of the most direct Bible condemnations of pride. As you make your list, consider:
1. What Hebrew word(s) is/are translated “pride”? _____. What do we learn from the meaning of this word?
 2. What Greek word(s) is/are translated “pride”? _____. What do we learn from the meaning of this word?
- E. Proverbs 3:34 is quoted two times in the New Testament. Give the citation for both passages:
1. _____
 2. _____
- F. With the passages that condemn pride in mind, list 5 synonyms for pride.
1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____
 5. _____

I. The Principle: The problem of pride (Matthew 6:1).

- A. The main principle of Matthew 6 is the principle found in verse 1: “Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven” (NASB). He then illustrates this in three areas of religious piety: benevolence (v. 2-4), prayer (v. 5-8), and fasting (v. 16-18).
1. In Matthew 6:1, Jesus warns against practicing our righteousness before men, yet in Matthew 5:16, Jesus commands us to “let our light shine before men in such a way that they may see our good works.” Read the article here (<http://www.apologeticspress.org/AllegedDiscrepancies.aspx?article=648&b=Matthew>), and explain how there is no contradiction between these two texts.
 2. Since **benevolence**, **prayer**, and **fasting** are tied properly to humility before God and concern for others, what attraction do these activities hold for the proud man?
 3. Is there any act of worship, benevolence, service, or generosity that is immune from the temptation of vainglory? Why or why not?
- B. One of the reasons pride is so dangerous is its subtlety. What are some of the ways in which pride can manifest itself in a Christian’s life?
- C. Find one of the qualifications for the office of elder that implies an elder cannot be prideful. What will be the penalty for an elder (or anyone else) who persists in pride? Are the young more susceptible to pride than the old? Why or why not? (Use James 1:13-14 and 1 John 2:15-17 in your answer.)
- D. Write a paragraph on how to overcome pride, including principles found in Galatians 2:20 and Colossians 3:3, 11.

II. The Application: Sincerity in helping the needy (Matthew 6:2-4).

- A. Cite some New Testament passages about beggars in society. Consider that beggars were often in the synagogues and the streets (cf. John 9:1; Acts 3:2)—obviously public places. Is it wrong to help people publicly?
- B. Explain the difference between the motivation of piety and the motivation of establishing a reputation for piety. Have you ever met someone who would serve only if he could be *seen* serving or *heralded* as having served? How did this impact his potential to make a difference?
- C. First, Jesus says we are not to announce our good works to others (v. 2). Second, Jesus says we are not to announce our good works to ourselves (v. 3). That is the thrust of His metaphor about our hands. Our service, benevolence, and giving is to be unselfconscious—without any thought of praise we might accrue in the eyes of others. We are not to keep score—God is the only one who should be doing that (cf. Matthew 25:37).

D. Who is the greatest example of selfless giving? List 3 passages that describe His character in this regard:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

III. The Application: Sincerity in praying (Matthew 6:1-6).

A. List at least 3 passages in the New Testament that discuss or record public prayers. Given the texts cited, obviously it is not wrong to pray publicly. What, then, is Jesus forbidding in our text?

B. Describe the similarities that should characterize both our public and private prayers. Then, describe any differences that should apply. What are the spiritual benefits of private prayer?

C. Is it possible to waste our time praying? Explain how this might be done.

D. Can a prayer request ever be used in a hypocritical way? Give an example.

Month Five: The Model Prayer (Matthew 6:7-15)

Introduction: Jesus' lesson in prayer.

- A. Begin this study by re-reading Matthew 6.
- B. Jesus contrasted prayer that the Father will hear (as exemplified in the model prayer) with prayer that the Father will not hear—"meaningless repetition" with "many words" as practiced typically by the Gentiles (6:7). What is Jesus trying to get us to avoid in our prayer life?
1. Should we attempt to pray "all new material" every time we pray? Are there themes to which we should return in prayer? Cite at least three New Testament passages in your answer.
 2. Should prayers be short or long? Cite at least three New Testament passages in your answer.
 3. How can we make sure that our prayers do not devolve into meaningless repetition?
- C. Then, Jesus gave His disciples a lesson in prayer.
1. This prayer is sometimes called "The Lord's Prayer," and yet Jesus was not actually directing these words to the Father. Which clause in the prayer makes us aware that this is a model for Christian prayer, rather than prayer that is directed from Son to Father?
 2. Find at least two passages where we read a prayer that could be described more accurately as "The Lord's prayer."
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 3. People do not know automatically how to pray; even the disciples requested that the Lord teach them (Luke 11:1). Reflect on how you learned to pray: Were the foundational principles that guided your earliest prayers consistent with the biblical teaching on prayer?
- I. "Our Father in heaven."**
- A. God's relationship with man can be described with a variety of words, including (find a passage for each):
1. Ruler _____
 2. Lord _____

3. Master _____

4. King _____

5. Teacher _____

B. And yet, God is also our Father. Write a paragraph about the significance of God relating to us as Father. Use Hebrews 12:4-11 in your response.

II. “Hallowed be Your name.”

A. What does it mean to say that God’s name is hallowed? Consult at least one lexical source.

B. What section in the Bible most clearly teaches our need and obligation to glorify God in our prayer life?

III. “Your kingdom come.”

A. When Jesus gave the model prayer, had the kingdom come or not? Consult Mark 9:1-2 in your answer.

B. Find at least three New Testament passages that show that after Acts 2, the kingdom had come, and Christians were citizens in it. Is the kingdom identified with any particular institution in the New Testament?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

C. Given that the kingdom has come, is there any sense in which we might still pray for the kingdom to come?

D. The false doctrine called “premillennialism” teaches that Christ’s kingdom is yet to be established, and that it will be established as a geopolitical, earthly institution. Read the following article and then list several reasons why premillennialism cannot be true (with Scripture references for each point).

1. <https://www.christiancourier.com/articles/322-examining-premillennialism>

IV. “Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

A. While it may be easy to ask for God’s will to be done while things are going well for us, it is more difficult during difficult times. Other than Jesus Himself, who explicitly asked for the Lord’s will to be done (Matthew 26:39), find three other biblical characters whose

attitude and/or prayers demonstrated that they sought God's will to be done even if there were negative earthly consequences, and describe their approach to prayer.

V. "Give us this day our daily bread."

- A. This part of the prayer reminds us that God is the giver of even those necessary, daily items we may take for granted. Write a paragraph discussing how the attitude of the wicked men mentioned in James 4:13-16 is the opposite of the attitude exemplified by the statement "Give us this day our daily bread."
- B. This verse presupposes that prayer is made every day. Find two other Bible passages that emphasize the regularity of prayer, and summarize what we can learn from each of them.
1. _____
 2. _____

VI. "And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."

- A. Does the word "debt" here refer specifically to money, or to something else? What kind of debt might be under consideration? Other translations and Greek tools may help.
- B. Jesus' view seems to be that God forgives us according to whether we are willing to forgive others. We find confirmation of this elsewhere in the Bible; find two other passages that teach this principle.
1. _____
 2. _____

VII. "And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

- A. Temptation comes to all (James 1:13), and yet we should pray to have as little as possible, showing that we do not relish enticement to sin. Find at least three other passages that give instruction concerning our attitude toward temptation.
- B. God always answer the prayer to make deliverance from evil possible. Read 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 and make a list of every principle you learn about temptation and sin in this passage.
- C. How do people (even Christians) sometimes lead *themselves* into temptation? Use Philippians 4:8 in your answer.

VIII. "For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."

- A. This last clause is, while beautiful, probably not original to Matthew's gospel (the oldest manuscripts generally do not contain it). Nonetheless it is true that the kingdom and

power and glory belong to God forever. This principle is taught clearly in the New Testament, especially in the book of Revelation. Find three Revelation passages that teach that the kingdom will be with God forever.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Conclusion.

- A. Are there themes that are evident in the model prayer (or in Jesus' personal prayer life) that have been missing from or weak in our prayers? Write down one or two items in Jesus' prayer that you will emphasize more in your prayer life.
- B. Does Jesus' prayer include thanksgiving? Was Jesus' intent to give a topically exhaustive model for prayer? If thanksgiving is not explicitly stated in His prayer, then find two passages where we are commanded to give thanks. What do we learn from each of these passages?
 1. _____
 2. _____

Month Six: True Treasure (Matthew 6:16-24)

Introduction: Self-Denial

- A. Re-read Matthew 6.
- B. What is the difference between *loving oneself* (Mark 12:33; Ephesians 5:29) and being a *lover of self* (2 Timothy 3:2)?
- C. Is it possible to practice the principle found in Matthew 6:33 without first practicing the principle found in Luke 9:23? Explain your answer.
- D. Write a paragraph on the self-denial exhibited by Jesus, focusing on how He sets the example for us. Use Philippians 2:5-8 in your answer.

I. Fasting (Matthew 6:16-18).

- A. Write a brief statement to define fasting, clarifying both what fasting is and what it is not.
- B. Read the article by Wayne Jackson entitled, "Is Fasting for Christians Today?" (<https://www.christiancourier.com/articles/231-is-fasting-for-christians-today>). Having read the article, suppose a Christian wanted your advice for fasting today. What Scriptural counsel would you give?
- C. How many passages in the Old Testament commanded the Israelites to fast regularly or annually? (In other words, a recurring event, not a single event.) List them here:
- D. What was so bad about the fasting practice of the hypocrites of Jesus' day?
- E. Read Isaiah 58:1-2. Why were the Israelites discussed in this passage fasting?
 - 1. Were they pleasing God?
 - 2. What did God desire more than the physical act of fasting?

II. Treasure (Matthew 6:19-24).

- A. Is it wrong for Christians to possess things, have savings accounts, and insurance policies, and invest time and money into hobbies and recreation? Incorporate Ephesians 4:28 and 2 Thessalonians 3:10 into your answer, explaining how we can at the same time provide for our families and obey Jesus' command to invest in heaven rather than on Earth.
- B. There is a great deal of Scriptural material concerning the godly view of wealth. Let us do a brief survey.

1. Read Luke 12-16, and list every lesson available from this text concerning the biblical view of wealth.
 2. Consider the words of Agur in Proverbs 30:1-9.
 - a) As it relates to riches, what did he ask God?
 - b) What is a spiritual danger of being too wealthy?
 - c) What is a spiritual danger of being poor?
 3. Consider Revelation 3:14-22. What effect did wealth have on the church in Laodicea?
 4. Consider 2 Peter 3:10-14. How does this help change our perspective of material things?
 5. Read the following passages and note what each has to say about the eyes:
 - a) 2 Corinthians 4:18.
 - b) Hebrews 12:2.
 - c) 1 John 2:1.
 6. Read the book of Ecclesiastes. What do we learn about material wealth from this text?
- C. Bearing in mind Matthew 6:19-21, what does the “eye” represent in verses 22-23? What sort of things distort your vision? How can you keep your eye clear of debris? Restate Matthew 6:22-23 in your own words.