

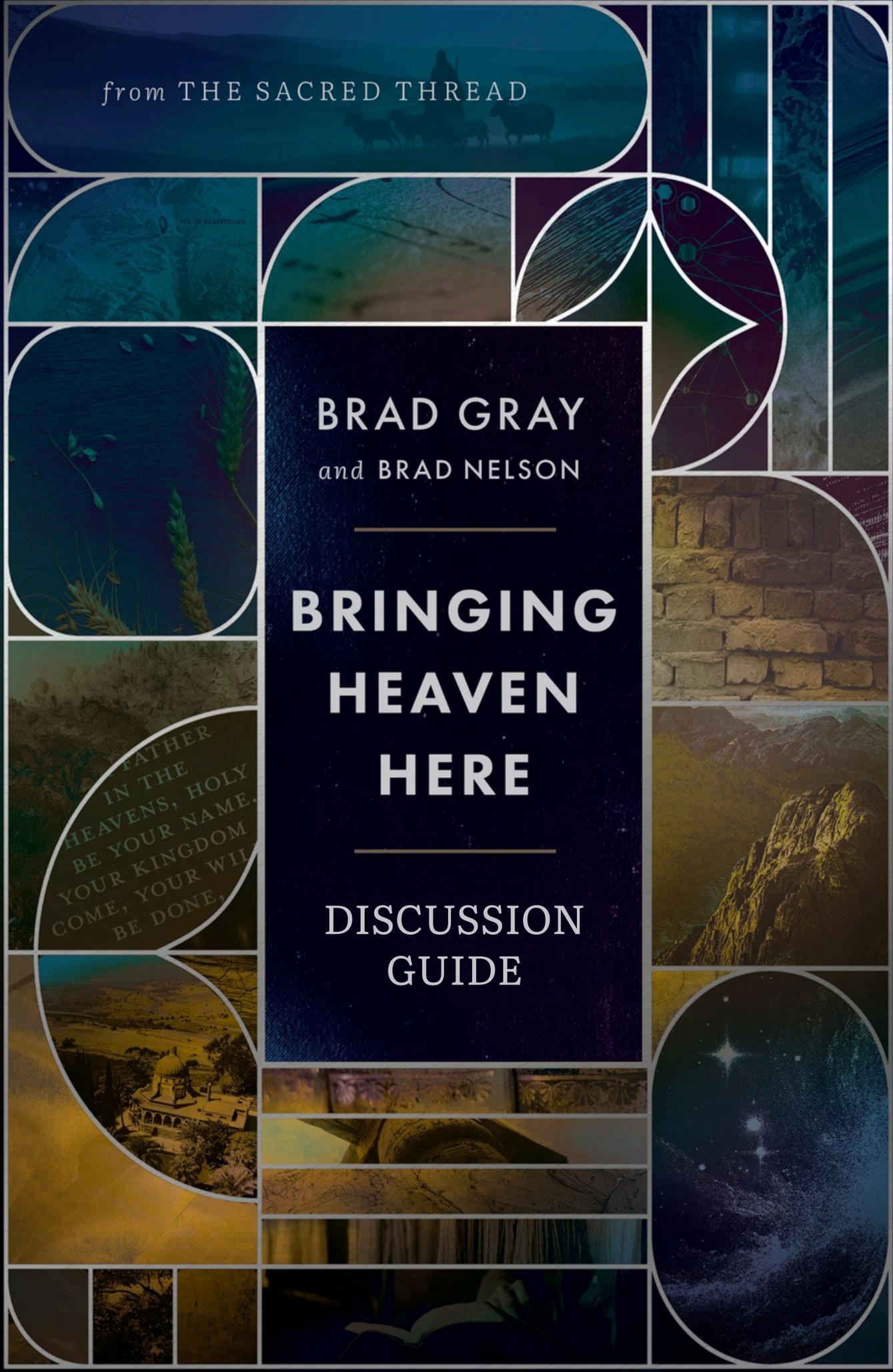
from THE SACRED THREAD

BRAD GRAY
and BRAD NELSON

**BRINGING
HEAVEN
HERE**

DISCUSSION
GUIDE

FATHER
IN THE
HEAVENS, HOLY
BE YOUR NAME.
YOUR KINGDOM
COME, YOUR WILL
BE DONE,



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Discussion Guide for *Bringing Heaven Here: How the Lord's Prayer Can Change Your Life and Our World*.

What if the prayer Jesus taught us to pray was never meant to be a comfortable ritual, but an invitation to radical transformation? What if it was actually a call to participate in something far greater than ourselves—to become agents of heaven's reality breaking through into our everyday world?

In *Bringing Heaven Here*, Brad Gray and Brad Nelson invite us into this profound possibility. They challenge us to see beyond the familiar words of the Lord's Prayer and discover its revolutionary power to reshape not only our hearts, but our relationships, our communities, and the very fabric of our daily lives.

This discussion guide will help you as you explore how prayer becomes action, and how ordinary believers can become powerful channels for advancing God's kingdom.

As you gather with others to discuss these ideas, you're not just studying a book; you're joining a conversation that spans centuries. You're connecting with believers who have dared to ask: "What would it look like if heaven's values governed our choices? If God's love flowed through our hands? If divine justice shaped our responses to the world's brokenness?"

So take a breath and prepare to explore what it truly means to bring heaven here—not someday in the distant future, but right now, in the midst of our everyday lives.

CHAPTER 1

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Strong Enough for the Weight of Life

*“When we uncover the world behind the Lord’s Prayer,
we’ll recover the power within it.”*

1. Looking at Chapter 1, which of the reasons given for why modern people often miss out on the power of the Lord’s Prayer resonated most with you? Why?
2. Are there parts of your life where you feel disconnected or unsettled? If so, can you name them?
3. As we begin, what are you hoping this prayer might bring into the parts of your life that feel disconnected or unsettled?

CHAPTER 2

OUR FATHER

The One Who Cares for Us

“God is a Father. Not a distant or detached one, but one who hears the cries of his children and turns up in the middle of their pain, ready to rescue.”

1. How has your personal experience with fatherhood—whether through presence, absence, or pain—shaped your view of God?
2. What barriers or pain points in your life might God, as a Rescuer, be inviting you to bring to him? How have you experienced the love of “the Father who comes running” in pain points in the past?
3. If God is truly a perfect parent, what difference might that make in the way you approach him this week—in prayer, in trust, or in your daily decisions?

CHAPTER 3

OUR FATHER

The One We Can Count On

“Very often, before we can step into what God has for us, he first needs to address deep places within us.”

1. When you face seasons of silence or unanswered prayers, how do you typically respond? How might viewing these moments as invitations to grow in intimacy with God reshape your perspective?
2. What ‘wilderness experiences’ in your life have shaped you the most? How did they deepen your trust in God or your connection with others?
3. How does the idea of God as a loving Father who is ‘leading us somewhere good’ challenge or encourage you in times of adversity, disappointment, or delay?

CHAPTER 4

IN THE HEAVENS

The One Who Sits Above It All

“Our Father in the heavens sees the intricate details of our lives, and that makes all the difference in seasons of uncertainty.”

1. In this chapter we explored how “in the heavens” points to God enthroned above it all—not distant, but sovereign. Why is it so important to remind ourselves daily that God sees what we can’t?
2. When life feels out of control, how might remembering that God is still on the throne change your perspective? Where do you most need that reality to crash into your life right now?
3. If you could step back and see your world the way God sees it—like astronauts seeing Earth from space—what’s one thing you’d stop stressing about? And what’s one thing you’d take more seriously?

CHAPTER 5

IN THE HEAVENS

The One Who is Always Near

“Jesus lived fully present to the heavens breaking in all around him, and he invites us to live the same way.”

1. Think of the last time something felt charged with God’s nearness. Where were you, what happened, and what made it holy?
2. What most pulls you out of the present—hurry, your phone, anxiety, resentment, performance? Tell one recent moment it stole your attention.
3. In the busyness of life, what practices or habits could help you tune your heart to the sacred and perceive God’s presence in the ordinary? How might this shift your sense of joy and peace?
4. What does the idea of heaven as a dimension of your everyday life—not just a future reality—mean to you? How might it change the way you experience God’s nearness and live with purpose?

CHAPTER 6

HOLY BE YOUR NAME

Center Us in Your Holiness

“We don’t become our truest selves until our lives orbit the blazing center of his presence.”

1. We have a natural tendency to make God in our own image. What are some of the ways you see that happening in the world around you and in your own life?
2. What are two or three concrete markers you’d expect to see in a God-centered life?
3. According to chapter 6, praying “Holy be your name” is a daily reminder that our true selves emerge “when our lives orbit the blazing center of his presence.” In what ways does this speak to you, your life, and your walk with Jesus?
4. Where do you feel the friction of living differently because God is at the center—whether in money, relationships, or habits—and how could you learn to see that ache as a sign of faith instead of failure?

CHAPTER 7

HOLY BE YOUR NAME

Make Us Your Representatives

“Saying yes to Jesus means we’ve been invited into a bigger story—the story of a people chosen, holy, and royal. Not for our own privilege, but for his purpose.”

1. What message is your life currently communicating to the world? Is it the message you want your life to be communicating? How might inviting God to reshape you help align that message with his purpose for you?
2. How does understanding the biblical context of being a “kingdom of priests” and a “holy nation” deepen your sense of identity and purpose as one of God’s people today?
3. Reflect for a moment. What restrictions and restraints have unleashed a deeper level of freedom in your life?
4. Who is someone you know who carries God's name well? What about their life makes you think that?

CHAPTER 8

YOUR KINGDOM COME

Bring Your Good Rule Through Us

“When you join Jesus in this work, you are bringing heaven here. Not just praying for it. Not just waiting for it. Bringing it.”

1. We all feel that restless ache that things aren't the way they should be—whether in the world or in our own lives. Where do you feel that ache most viscerally right now?
2. Jesus' message wasn't just about believing in him but giving him our allegiance as King. Where do you notice competing 'kings' in your own life—comfort, success, control, approval—that battle for your loyalty?
3. The Lord's Prayer is a revolution, not a safe ritual. If you took Jesus' words 'Your kingdom come' seriously this week, what risk would it push you to take? What would be hardest to surrender?

CHAPTER 9

YOUR KINGDOM COME

Reign in Our Little Spheres

“Discipleship isn’t primarily an educational experience. It’s the slow, lifelong process of moving in with the Master, watching how he lives, and slowly letting his way become your way.”

1. If you thought of yourself as being in full-time ministry right where you are, who would your congregation be? And how could you bless and serve them?
2. How does understanding the cultural and biblical context of discipleship as ‘apprenticeship’ deepen your view of what it means to follow Jesus in your unique sphere of influence?
3. What is the ‘one sermon’ your life is currently preaching? What’s one way you could lean into it more intentionally this week?

CHAPTER 10

DAILY BREAD

Teach Us the Grace of Enough

“When we pray ‘Give us today our daily bread,’ we’ll begin to see daily bread for what it is: provision, grace, and goodness we might have missed otherwise.”

1. When have you chased something you really wanted—only to later realize it wasn’t what you needed? How did that experience change you?
2. How does understanding the biblical context of relying on God for daily provision—like manna in the wilderness—challenge or encourage you in a world that constantly pushes for more? How does it challenge the way you approach control, self-sufficiency, or fear of the future?
3. Scarcity thinking often shows up as “I don’t have enough ____.” If you flipped that script into gratitude, what’s one thing right now you can honestly say, “I do have enough of this, and I’m grateful”?

CHAPTER 11

DAILY BREAD

Be Our Ultimate Provider

“As you receive what you need today, however small, don’t forget: If heaven is breaking in through you, you might be someone else’s provision.”

1. What are one or two moments of need in your past where God showed up and provided?
2. What role might God be calling you to play in extending his provision to others? How can you be someone else’s ‘daily bread’ in this season?
3. What would it look like to trust God as your provider in a tangible way this week, especially in areas where you feel most uncertain or overwhelmed?

CHAPTER 12

FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS

Make Us People of Release

“The Lord’s Prayer makes the audacious claim that forgiveness is such a vital component of the kingdom of heaven, it demands daily attention.”

1. What are some of your go-to management tactics for numbing or ignoring pain?
2. Without naming names, who are some of the people living rent free in your head?
3. We read in chapter 12 that praying “Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors” on a daily basis is “a form of early detection and preventive soul care.” Think of a time when you held onto unforgiveness. How did it affect you? How might praying “forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors” every day catch those things early before they harden in us?
4. What’s one wound, regret, or wrong—whether from someone else or from yourself—that you need to release?
5. What small step could you take today—whether praying, confessing, or reaching out—to begin the process of forgiveness and experience the healing it brings?

CHAPTER 13

FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS

Draw Us into the Forgiving Flow

“Forgiveness is how we join Jesus in saying, The pain stops here. We confess. We release. We refuse to let bitterness harden into legacy.”

1. Reflect on Fr. Ronald Rolheiser’s insight that “Any pain or tension that we do not transform, we will retransmit.” Where have you seen unhealed pain in your own life spill over into how you treat others?
2. The Sea of Galilee gives life because it passes on what it receives, while the Dead Sea hoards and becomes barren. What would it look like in your life to let God’s forgiveness flow through you instead of stopping with you?
3. Corrie Ten Boom admitted, “Jesus, I cannot forgive him. Give Your forgiveness.” Where do you feel that same impossibility in your own life right now—and how might depending on God as the Source change the way you approach it?

CHAPTER 14

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION

Aim Our Desires at What's Right

“Jesus knew how temptation works—how easily we can be worn down or thrown off course. That’s why he taught us to pray, ‘Lead us not into temptation.’”

1. Think about the list of ways we're tempted (as outlined in chapter 14): Spending money we don't have. Giving up when things get hard. Cutting corners when what's right is too costly. Compromising sexually. Keeping our mouths shut instead of speaking up. Eating a gallon of ice cream instead of feeling our feelings. What are one or two areas in your life where you feel the pull of temptation most strongly?
2. When Jesus was tempted, he could see the deeper issue behind the surface temptation. Think of something you're tempted by on a regular basis. What's the “thing behind the thing”—the deeper desire, fear, or need—that drives that temptation?
3. Boundaries aren't about killing desire but channeling it in the right direction. Where do you need to set (or reset) a boundary so your desires lead you closer to God instead of pulling you away?
4. Which of the ideas or strategies for navigating temptation in chapter 14—naming the thing behind the thing, establishing boundaries, or practicing willingness instead of willfulness—resonated most with you?

CHAPTER 15

DELIVER US FROM EVIL

Empower Us for the Fight

“Satan cannot stomach people who walk in truth, and the more God’s truth takes root in you, the more the lies will begin to lose their grip.”

1. If evil’s strategy is to get us to believe and then live lies, what are one or two of the lies that play on repeat in your head? (Think: I’m not enough. This always happens to me. My worth is tied to my productivity, etc.)
2. Jesus fought back with God’s Word, not cleverness or charisma. What Scripture passage have been especially powerful for you, and how has it helped you confront a lie in your life?
3. What practical steps can you take to let God’s truth reshape you from the inside out and resist the compromises that erode your faith?

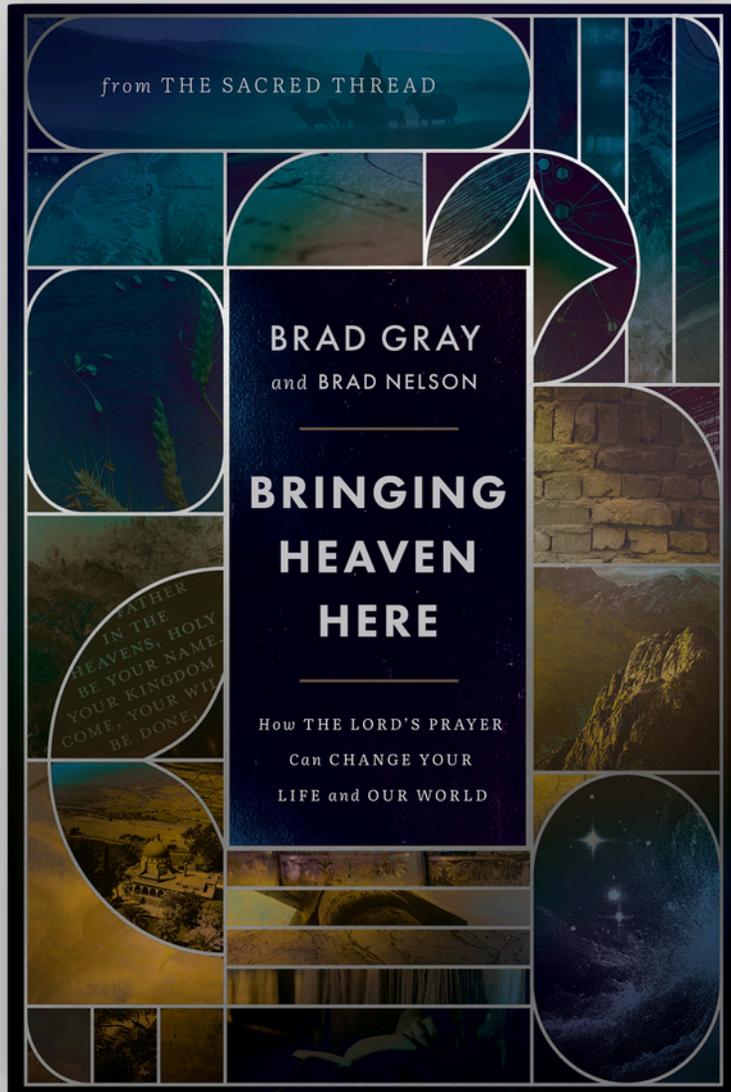
CHAPTER 16

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Living the Glory of Heaven Now

“When this prayer gets hold of you, it doesn’t just inform you. It transforms you. And when you live it, line by line, it reshapes everything.”

1. How has understanding the original context of the Lord’s Prayer changed and deepened the significance of this prayer for your life?
2. What one or two insights from this book have you found most compelling? Why?
3. How familiar were you with the Lord’s Prayer before starting the book, and what impact has it had on your faith and everyday life?
4. Chapter 16 told the story of a man who was so shaped by prayer that it poured out of him even as he battled dementia. When you think about your own legacy, which part of the Lord’s Prayer do you most hope will still shine through your life, even in the end?



**Unlock the power of the Lord's Prayer
as the key to living like Jesus lived.**

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