

ILLUMINATED: OUR FATHER

So you say you follow Jesus...

Yes.

But you're not really doing that?

Because I don't know what that means!

How do I do that?

What, follow Jesus? Oh. You know... that's a great question... I don't think many people wonder what to do day to day. Okay. Um. Well, there's a prayer that can get us started with the basics. Do you know the Lord's Prayer?

Yeah, it starts with "Our Father," right?

Yep! Jesus taught it to his disciples.

Wait... Jesus said it? Does that mean God talks to himself? Because Jesus is God... [camera wanders as thoughts wander]

Another good question. But let's stick with the basics. For now. [camera jerks back to the prayer]

The Lord's Prayer starts with "Our Father in heaven, holy is your name..." So step one--
who are we following?

God.

Right. Easy. And here he's called holy.

Holy. Holy... holy moly...

[holes are drawn on the God silhouette]

No, no. It means sacred. Set apart. He's not like any other Being in the physical or spiritual realms.

He should be respected, held up, and fill us with awe because he's just that spiritually awesome.

Uh... it's sounding like maybe
I should *stay away* from him...

No, you shouldn't! See, he's also called Father.
He's not just some nameless, faceless Being above... He's family. And we can talk to him like we'd talk to a loving parent.

So... he's holy and rules from heaven...
and he's like our Dad?

Yeah, he actually knows us and
cares for us as his children!
That's who you're walking with.

We keep saying "walk" with God. "Follow" Jesus.
Am I supposed to be going somewhere?
Where am I headed?

Right, back to the prayer. "Your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." This
is where we're going, every day into eternity.
His kingdom.

Oooh, ooh! I've heard that! Sounds like some ye
olde speak. "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on Earth as it is in-"

Are you finished?

Well what does that have to do with me?

His kingdom is where we're going and we want it
to be real on Earth, too. When we say His "will be
done", we're asking for Him to rule this world, now.
It means we want what God wants

and hope it happens.

Most of the time, I just want what I want.

Sure. That's natural. But this reminds us that God knows best. He's Lord of our life. And if we want the best for ourselves and everyone else, we should always ask-- am I doing what I want? Or am I doing what God wants?

For glory!! I follow thee, holy father, and do thy bidding! God wills it!

Wait, what does he will? What *does* God want?

Let's see...

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

Oh good... I'm starved!

I mean, yeah, sometimes it literally means food. God provides for us. Some people focus on this line to say we don't have to worry about tomorrow, but to rely on God each day for all the things we need.

Makes sense. Now show me the snackage!

But to answer "what does God want?" we go with another definition of "bread." One used by Jesus.

Pizza? Pastries! Oh, I bet God loves donuts...

Donuts... hey! No. I'm talking about his Holy Scriptures. Jesus said, "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." We need to read the Bible every day.

And eat it all up! Om nom, nom!
What's the most filling book of the Bible?
There's a supper in the gospels...

I bet God loves donuts.

I bet He does too.

This walking with God thing doesn't sound so bad.
Following the big guy in charge who knows
everything, eating up some delicious wisdom.
Thanks! I feel better. We're done?

Nope. Here comes the hard part.
"Forgive us of our sins..."

Right! That part's awesome! We're free and clear—

"...as we forgive those who sin against us."

Ugh... really?

Forgiveness is key to walking with God. One BIG
THING we know he wants is reconciliation.

Listen to you. Fancy pants...

He wants to fix his relationship with us and we
model that by fixing relationships with each other.
We forgive each other when someone hurts us.

...what if I don't want to?

Then you might be forgetting how thankful you are
that God forgives you by the death and
resurrection of Jesus. We've been forgiven. So with
joy and gratitude, we forgive others.

I thought this was going to be easy! Step one, two, three, and you're good. That kind of thing. Following Jesus and walking with God is a lifelong thing. And sometimes it's really hard.

Following Jesus doesn't sound hard... it sounds practically impossible. Is there a cheat code? Can I change the difficulty level? Maybe do this whole thing on easy mode?

The last part of the Lord's Prayer does something kinda like that. "Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from the evil one." Following God won't be easy, but we are supposed to pray that God wouldn't let what we want get the best of us...

Oooh.... Shiny....

...and when it does, because it will, that He'd save us from our enemy... the one that would use it against us and stop us from walking with God.

Heh heh! He's with us every step of the way, huh? So God *knows* we're going to mess up. And He's still on our side?

Yep.

And he can squish the enemy so we can keep walking...

Every day. Right back to the beginning!

God is HOLY!! And our Dad. He rules his kingdom and we want His kingdom here, now! So we say, God wills it!! And try to want what he wants. To know Him and understand what he wants, we eat up the Bible every day, om nom! But we *know* he wants forgiveness for us and others, because

Jesus died and came back for us. And he's with us every step of the way... we can ask for help to not mess up... but when we do, he can save us.

Yeah! I think you got it! Those are the basics.
That'll get you walking with God.