

Source night Prayer

What is Prayer? Communion with God. Drawing close to his heart.

Prayer is...like building up a relationship by talking together.

Prayer is not... like using a vending machine.

Prayer is not... our method in getting God to do our will.

God wants us to both pray alone and with others Matthew 6 v6 Acts 1 v14

If God knows the future, why pray?

God is sovereign and omniscient. Luke 1 v37 Jeremiah 32 v27 He knows the future e.g. Genesis 15 v13

1. Jesus, understood the nature of his father, yet prayed to him. e.g. Matthew 14 v23
2. Jesus knew Peter would deny him, for example yet prayed for him. Luke 22 v31-34
3. God wants to work with us, and prayer is our way of taking part in his work
4. He has told us to pray. Obedience is more important than logic and our understanding. Matt 26 v41
5. God can work in us when we pray. Changing us can be more important than changing events.
6. God can change things because of our prayers James 4 v2
He knows both the future and all potential futures
7. Parents may know what their children need but still like to be asked, rather than taken for granted.
8. We need prayer, more than God needs our prayers. Isaiah 55 v8-9

} Jesus did

Why do some prayers seem to go unanswered?

“When I lay these questions before God I get no answer. But a rather special sort of 'No answer.' It is not the locked door. It is more like a silent, certainly not uncompassionate, gaze. As though He shook His head not in refusal but waiving the question. Like, 'Peace, child; you don't understand.'”

— C.S. Lewis

1. Answers aren't always 'yes'. Jesus taught us that God is a father, who knows best.
2. God's time isn't ours. We can get a 'yes' but we will have to wait for God's perfect time.
3. We need to be on God's agenda, not ours John 15 v7, James 4 v3
4. We need to get into a right relationship with God first. Isaiah 1 v15-16



“We have to pray with our eyes on God, not on the difficulties.” — Oswald Chambers

“I have so much to do that I shall spend the first three hours in prayer.” — Martin Luther

“Any concern too small to be turned into a prayer is too small to be made into a burden.” — Corrie ten Boom

“In prayer it is better to have a heart without words, than words without a heart.” — John Bunyan

“Prayer and sin can never live together in the same heart. Prayer will consume sin, or sin will choke prayer.” — J.C. Ryle,



How to Pray and Preparing to Pray

How do we prepare to pray?

Worship: John-17:4. What we behold we become.

We learn how to pray firstly by worshipping God, as we worship and adore God we receive His burning love for us which enables us to love Him back in the same way. As we behold Christ we become like Him. As we worship God we more naturally love others. This I believe is the foundation of all prayer.

“To gather with God’s people in united adoration of the Father is as necessary to the Christian life as prayer” - Martin Luther.

The Holy Spirit. Romans 8:26-27.

We need the Holy Spirit to teach us how to pray.

Humility: 2Chronicles.7:14. The first thing we are asked to do in this scripture is to **Humble** ourselves.

“It is no great thing to be humble when you are brought low, but to be humble when you are praised is a great and rare attainment” Bernard of Clairvaux”

“The only humility that is really ours is not that which we try to show before God in prayer, but that which we carry in our daily conduct” Andrew Murray.

Repentance: Psalm, 66:18. If we have unconfessed sin in our lives our prayers will be hindered.

**“Prayer will make a man cease from sin, or sin will entice a man to cease from prayer”
- John Bunyon.**

Now let us learn how to pray!!!

1 Thess. 5:17. Scripture teaches us to pray at all times. The Greek means “Pray without intermission”, without allowing prayerless gaps to intervene between the times of prayer. I think George Muller perfectly describes this when answering someone who asked him how long he prays “Hours every day, but I live in the spirit of prayer. I pray as I walk and when I lie down and when I rise. And the answers are always coming”.

To pray with our whole being, Rom. 15:30. The original word for strive in this verse is translated Agony, So Paul was calling us to agonize in prayer. John Calvin summed this up perfectly, “Our prayer must not be self centred. It must arise not only because we feel our own need as a burden we must lay upon God, but also because we are so bound up in love for our fellow men that we feel their need as acutely as our own. To make intercession for men is the most powerful and practical way we can express our love for them”

Fasting: Voluntary weakness. 2Cor. 11:25-27, 2Cor. 12:7-9. Voluntary weakness is testament to God’s ability rather than our own. Prayer is reaching out for the unseen, fasting is letting go of all that is seen and temporal. Fasting helps express, deepen, confirm the resolution that we are ready to sacrifice anything, even ourselves to attain what we seek for the Kingdom.

“Satan does not care how many people read about prayer if only he can keep them from praying.”

- Paul E. Billheimer



What prayers have been answered for you?

When has God not appear to answer your prayers, do you now understand why?

What role has prayer and fasting? Why have we ignored fasting?

