



Session 2: Prayer - Living in the Father's Love

What Is Prayer?

Jesus taught his followers to think of God as their Heavenly Father. Prayer is communicating with your Heavenly Father and hearing back from him. It is a conversation with someone who loves you dearly. What a privilege for the believer to go directly into God's presence and talk with him about whatever is on your heart. He desires to hear from us, and he promises to listen!

“And this is the confidence we have before him: that whenever we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in regard to whatever we ask, then we know that we have the requests that we asked from him.” (1 John 5:4-15)

The Holy Spirit helps us to pray (**Romans 8:26**) and teaches us how to pray in faith—learning to trust in God's goodness in how and when he answers our prayers. As you study God's word to you in the Bible, the Spirit will teach you who God is and how to enjoy your prayer relationship with him.

As you learn about prayer, a **key Question to ask is**: What words come to mind when you think about the character of God? Is he someone you can know?

It's important to understand that God is a good and loving Father in whom we put our trust as we pray (**2 Corinthians 6:18**; 1 John 3:1; Matthew 7:11; Psalm 119:68).

Communicating with Your Heavenly Father

Now that you know your heavenly father is good and loving, you shouldn't be afraid to approach him in prayer. As his child, you are always welcome in his presence. Go to him...boldly!

“Therefore, let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace whenever we need help.” (Hebrews 4:16)

You Can Talk to God Anytime and Anywhere

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You can talk with God throughout the day, telling him your needs, asking him for guidance, and thanking him for all of his many blessings. And your prayers do not have to be especially long. You can shoot up an “arrow” prayer to God anytime: “Father, I need your peace,” or “Please comfort me right now.” You can talk to him at work, while you drive in the car, even when you are talking with other people! He loves you that much.

You Can Talk to God about Anything

Your Heavenly Father loves you very much and wants to hear what is on your mind. When you talk to him about your thoughts and needs, it shows him that you trust him. You can call out to him, and He promises to answer—what a wonderful guarantee! Your prayers do not have to be anything fancy. God is pleased with honesty, not impressed with formality. Just start today by telling God what is on your mind and asking him to speak to you through his word in the Bible.

You Can Talk to God with Confidence that Hears and Responds

God has given his word in the Bible to teach you what his will is in many areas of life. You can pray with confidence when you pray according to his will.

“And this is the confidence we have before him: that whenever we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in regard to whatever we ask, then we know that we have the requests that we asked from him.” (1 John 5:4-15)

And you can ask God what to do in other situations and believe he will guide you. Pray with humility, wanting to be dependent on him and learn from him.

“But if anyone is deficient in wisdom, he should ask God, who gives to all generously and without reprimand, and it will be given to him.” (James 1:5)

Developing a Life of Prayer

As a Christian, you can approach prayer as a conversation with someone who loves you dearly. As with any relationship, living in the Father’s love requires spending regular time with him. Plan a daily time that works for you to have focused time with your Heavenly Father. Many Christians call this a “Quiet

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Time.” It helps to have a place with few distractions. Jesus, as our example, got away from the people surrounding him so that he could spend time talking to his Father (Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; Matthew 14:23)

Key Question: *In your daily life, when could you set aside focused time to communicate with your Heavenly Father? How would you minimize distractions?*

You can start talking to your Father in the morning before you even get out of bed. For example:

“Thank you, Lord. Today, before I get going, I just want you to know I love you...and want to live for you today!”

“Lord, today, I am going to trust you to direct my steps as I choose to live my life your way.”

God’s Perfect Timing

Do not be discouraged when some of your prayers seem to go unanswered. God in his goodness may choose to delay the answer or he may not answer your prayers the way you expect. Countless Christians will tell you stories of God’s faithfulness in answering prayers after many years of continual praying.

God delights in you bringing him your requests since doing so is an act of faith, obedience and trust in him. Keep asking him for things that are within his will as revealed in the Bible. He promises to answer those prayers, still, in his time!

Remember to Be Thankful!

God has done so much for you that your heart should want to thank him in prayer and adore him because of his greatness and his unending love for you.

“Do not be anxious about anything. Instead, in every situation, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, tell your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7)