

Topic 24: Prayer *Communicating with God*

“Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all saints.” Ephesians 6:18



“Pray until you can pray; pray to be helped to pray and do not give up praying because you cannot pray. For when you think you cannot pray that is when you are praying.”

Charles Spurgeon

I can always talk with my Friend

Explore the Text

What Is Prayer?

In its purest essence, prayer is simply communing with the One (Exodus 33:11) who is nearer to us than we realize (Acts 17:28). Biblical prayer can be silence or it can be an ongoing dialogue with God (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

Why do we pray?

- ❖ *God commands us to pray:* “Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful” (Colossians 4:2).
- ❖ *God tells us that our prayers are eternally significant:* “Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results” (James 5:16, nlt).
- ❖ *Prayer is how we approach God.* “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you” (James 4:8, nasb). Proverbs 15:8 tells us, “The lord . . . delights in the prayers of the upright” (nlt). Even if we don’t know what to say, God’s Spirit prays for us (Romans 8:26). When we approach God with respect, we need not worry about praying wrong.
- ❖ *Prayer aligns us with God’s purposes for our lives.* If we are wise, we recognize that God, being good and loving, desires our best. Consequently, a big part of prayer is learning to relinquish our desires and say “your will be done” (Matthew 6:10).
- ❖ *Prayer is an expression of faith.* “Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him” (Hebrews 11:6).

- ❖ *Prayer gives peace.* “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6–7, esv).
- ❖ *Prayer is powerful.* When Hezekiah was dying, he prayed and wept. God heard and told the prophet Isaiah: “Go and tell Hezekiah, ‘This is what the lord, the God of your father David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will add fifteen years to your life’” (Isaiah 38:5).
- ❖ Prayer changes things and people.

1. What motivates you to pray?

As with any close relationship, prayer needs to be more than, “Can you give me this? And that? And that?” A running conversation with the Almighty should include the same kinds of exchanges found in any intimate relationship:

- Expressions of appreciation and admiration
- Careful listening
- Revealed hopes and dreams
- Admissions of disappointment, frustration, and struggle.

Prayer is an ongoing, back-and-forth conversation that leads to intimacy with God.

How should we Pray?

- ❖ *In Faith* – Mark 11:24
- ❖ *In the name of Jesus* – John 14:13
- ❖ *Unceasingly* – 1 Thessalonians 5:17
- ❖ *Confidently* – Hebrews 4:16
- ❖ *Persistently* – Luke 18:1
- ❖ *With the help of the Holy Spirit* – Romans 8:26
- ❖ *By and with the word of God* – 1 John 2:6



2. Based on these thoughts, how can you improve your prayer life?

- ❖ **Pray with awareness** – so that we can have a genuine connection with God.
- ❖ **Pray with humility** – for this kind of prayer goes directly to the ear of God.
- ❖ **Pray with love and grief** – with delight and thanksgiving, but also with authentic repentance and sincerity.
- ❖ **Pray from the heart** – even if we pray with ‘the words of another’ they should be declared as if they are our own.
- ❖ **Pray with hope and total faith in God** – because He knows our life.

3. With the fact that the Holy Spirit helps us to pray, how will your prayer life be impacted?

What should we pray about?

- ❖ Our prayers should focus in on God – Matthew 6:9-13
 - God’s nature
 - God’s glory
 - God’s Kingdom
 - God’s will
 - God’s provision
 - God’s mercy
 - God’s love
 - God’s protection
 - God’s power and sovereignty

Hit me!

4. When you look at the model prayer that Jesus gives, how could you apply this outline to your own prayer life?

Pray Honestly and Boldly.

The What about Me

An important part of discipleship is learning how to apply God’s truths to your life. Below are two ways you can start thinking about what you’ve learned and apply it to your daily life.

1. Memorize our memory verse, Ephesians 6:18. *“Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.”*
2. Read Paul’s prayers in Ephesians 1:15–23 and 3:14–21.

The Prayer Life of Jesus

- He prayed in the evening (Mark 6:46–47).
- He prayed in the early morning (Mark 1:35).
- He spent whole nights praying (Luke 6:12).
- He prayed in lonely places (Luke 5:16).
- He agonized in prayer (Luke 22:39–46).
- He died praying (Luke 23:46).
- He praised the Father in his prayers (Matthew 11:25).
- He thanked the Father in prayer (John 11:41).
- He prayed for the will of the Father (Matthew 26:39).
- He prayed for his followers (John 17:9).
- He prayed forgiveness for his enemies (Luke 23:34).
- He prayed for children (Matthew 19:13–15).
- He prayed for himself (John 17:1).