

Teach Us To Pray

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Prayer is a humble plea directed to God the Father in the name of Jesus. Prayer is expressing ourselves to a loving father in heaven. In prayer our spirit communicates with God either through words spoken or even in our thoughts. God wants us to speak with Him. We may come to Him with our thankfulness, requests, and disappointments.

Upon praying for the first time, some people say they feel strange, as if they are speaking to nothing. This is what Satan wants us to believe, that we will not pray again. The truth is that the Bible assures us that, wherever we are and whatever hour it may be, God hears our sincere request. "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us" (1 John 5:14).

Prayer is talking to God. Speak directly to Him in a frank and sincere manner, telling Him all that you feel and need. If you do not understand why you feel as you do, tell God about it. The Bible says, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Romans 8:26). When you are frustrated and discouraged or happy and thankful, express yourself to God. It is important to be honest in prayer. God wants to hear how we really feel down deep inside.

Listen to what God may have to tell you. He speaks to us by giving impressions and thoughts. These may come while we are praying. Even the words that we pray can be the result of impressions given by God. God wants to communicate His will to us. He may do this during prayer or afterward. He speaks through His Spirit, through the Bible, and through His servants.

When we pray, we need to shut out the distractions of the world around us and concentrate on our communion with God. While we can pray in any place and in any position, we need a quiet place if possible. As we close our eyes and kneel in reverence to God we are better able to meditate. Our attention needs to be focused on God (Matthew 6:6).

Some people say, "But I do not know what words to use or how to express myself to God." It may be that we say this because we imagine that we need to use a different vocabulary so God will hear us. We may think that we must use many words and speak in a beautiful and elegant manner in order to get His attention. In reality, the Bible gives us various examples of prayer which are very short and simple, and God respected them. For example, a certain man who was a sinner prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13).

Another sinner, broken and contrite, prayed, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom" (Luke 23:42). God does not require a special form of speech for prayer. The Bible contains many prayers of men from various backgrounds with no two prayers being alike.

For our prayers to be effective we must come in humility before the Lord. In 2 Chronicles 7:14 we read, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." To become better acquainted with the Lord, we must respond to the direction we receive - especially in regard to turning away from any sin.

As we communicate daily with the Lord, He gives us vision, stabilizes our lives, and grants our petitions. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7).

Pray in the name of Jesus. He said, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do" (John 14:13). We have no merit of our own; we can only come to God in prayer through Jesus Christ.

Pray often. Listen for and to His voice when He speaks. Obey those inner promptings that He so graciously gives. "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Luke 11:9).

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