

Prayer 101



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Key Scriptures:

If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.
Matthew 21:22 NIV

And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, He departed and went out to a desolate place, and there He prayed.
Mark 1:35 ESV

Step out of the traffic! Take a long, loving look at me, your High God, above politics, above everything.
Psalm 46:10 MSG

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NIV

When you pray...
Matthew 6:5a NLT

Don't be pulled in different directions or worried about a thing. Be saturated in prayer throughout each day, offering your faith-filled requests before God with overflowing gratitude. Tell Him every detail of your life, then God's wonderful peace that transcends human understanding, will guard your heart and mind through Jesus Christ.
Philippians 4:6-7 TPT

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Summary

WHAT IS PRAYER?

- Prayer is a two-way conversation with God.
 - » Speaking to God
 - » Listening to God (being quiet before Him)
 - » We are inviting heaven's resources to intervene in our earthly situations.
- Keep in mind, God is omnipotent!
 - » Matthew 21:22 NIV
- Prayer is an act of worship. It helps us acknowledge that we don't have all the answers, and that we need God.

HOW SHOULD WE PRAY?

- There is no special formula that you have to follow.
- Prayer shouldn't be rushed or hurried.
- Jesus is our ultimate example for how to pray.
 - » Check out **Let's Discuss...Prayer Part 2_How Has Your Prayer Life Grown?** for more on Jesus' example in the Lord's Prayer.
- Ideally, try to remove distractions.
 - » Jesus would find secluded places to pray.
 - » Mark 1:35
- When you come to a dedicated time of prayer, it can be helpful to:
 - » Pause & sit quietly
 - » Breathe, be fully present
 - » Let go of the stuff that weighs you down (to do lists, wants, needs, etc)
 - » Allow scattered thoughts to settle and align
 - » Centre yourself before God
 - » Reflect
 - » Psalm 46:10 MSG

HOW OFTEN SHOULD WE PRAY?

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NIV

- How often you pray may depend on your lifestyle, season of life, and relationship with God
- Prayer was an essential part of Jesus' life on earth and should be for us too.
- The more prayer becomes a consistent practice for you, the more opportunity you create to grow deeper in your connection with God
- Jesus expected that His followers would pray. In Matthew 6:5a He said, *when you pray...*, not "if you pray".
- We were created to live in loving relationship with God. Like a baby connected to its mother, connection with our Source is live-giving, soul-sustaining, and identity-shaping.

HOW DOES PRAYER RELATE TO THE GOSPEL?

- The book of Luke records multiple situations where Jesus prayed:

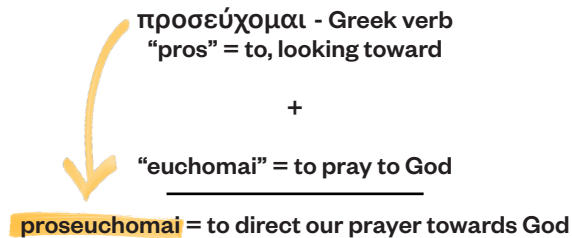
Luke 3:21	At His baptism
Luke 5:16	After a day of working miracles
Luke 6:12	Before choosing His 12 disciples
Luke 22:40-44	Before giving His life as a sacrifice for our sin
Luke 23:34	During his crucifixion

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- The message of the Gospel reminds us that like a loving parent, God desperately wants to be there for us in every area of our lives. He invites us to simply turn toward Him.



One day when the crowds were being baptized, Jesus Himself was baptized. As He was praying (proseuchomai), the heavens opened...
Luke 3:20 NLT

Definitions

omnipotent: having unlimited power. God's omnipotence is a key aspect of His character.

προσεύχομαι
proseuchomai: Greek verb denoting to direct our prayer towards God

prayer: communicating with God

Let's Discuss...

- What does your prayer life look like right now? What effect do you find that has on you?
- If the constraints of life were not an issue, what would your ideal prayer life look like? Are there any steps you could take today that could bridge the gap?
- As Philippians 4:6 mentions in TPT, do you believe that God is interested in *every detail* of your life?
- Prayer, or something like it, is valued in many faith traditions. Why do you think that is? Are there aspects of prayer that are unique to the Christian tradition?
- Why are you interested in learning more about prayer?

Let's Pray...

Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you...
Matthew 7:7 NLT

- Ask God to help you as you develop your prayer life. Pray for the persistence to keep on seeking, asking, and knocking for the things He lays on your heart to pray for so that as you begin to see answers to prayer, your faith will continue to evolve and grow deeper and stronger.

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Let's Go Deeper...

- *How to Pray* by Pete Greig [book]
- *The Prayer Course* by 24/7 Prayer [online course]
- *The Normal Christian Life* by Watchman Nee [book]
- *The Complete Works of E. M. Bounds on Prayer: Experience the Wonders of God Through Prayer* by E M Bounds [book]
- *The Prayer Practice* by Practicing the Way [online course]
- *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God* by Timothy Keller [book]
- *Praying Like Monks, Living Like Fools* by Tyler Staton [book]
- *Pray As You Go* [app]
- *Hallow* [app]
- *Glorify* [app]
- *Reimagining the Examen* [app]