



SPIRITUAL PRACTICES: PRAYER

A. WHAT is the Spiritual Practice of Prayer?

Communication between man and God, as part of a two-way relationship in which we not only talk to God, but also listen to Him. In other words, it is just a conversation with our Father.

B. WHY Should We Pray?

1. Jesus prayed.
2. Prayer is how we get to know our Father and grow closer to Him.
3. Prayer changes us by aligning our hearts to the Father's heart.
4. There are many reasons, but some additional reasons include:
 - Prayer is how we acquire wisdom. (James 1:5)
 - Prayer is how we fight temptation. (Luke 22:32; James 4:7)
 - Prayer brings healing. (James 5:15-16)
 - Prayer is what brings and develops more disciple-makers. (Matthew 9:38)
 - Prayer is how we accomplish the impossible. (Mark 11:23-24)

C. HOW Should We Pray

Then Jesus said, this is how you should pray:

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. ”

Matthew 6:9-13

We use this “model of prayer” as a springboard (or to riff off of):

- **“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,”**
 - “Our” is a reminder that we are part of a larger family;
 - Abba - Aramaic for Father, implies great intimacy, respect and removes the requirement of formalities;
 - Abba reminds us that we are His sons and daughters, and can come to Him as His children;

- “Hallowed” means the most beautiful and the most worthy, and is an invitation to just praise God for who He is instead of what He can do for us (can focus on God’s characteristics, names, metaphors, etc.).
- **May “your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”**
 - Reflect on the Kingdom coming in bodily form in the person of Jesus;
 - That it is not about our plans, but joining God in His;
 - Can pray Scripture (promises, his warnings, his invitations, and his commands);
 - Pray for the Kingdom of God to breakthrough today through healing for those in need, for the poor, hope for the lost, all of those in our life that need His presence;
 - Take time to listen for Holy Spirit’s promptings.
- **“Give us today our daily bread.”**
 - We are focused on this day and our dependence on Him for our needs today;
 - Jesus is the bread of life;
 - Pray for physical, mental and spiritual needs of yourself and others.
- **“And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.**
 - We seek and need His forgiveness continually;
 - We are reminded of the gift of forgiveness that came at great cost (the Cross);
 - We cannot be forgiven unless we allow that forgiveness to extend to others.
- **“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”**
 - Reminder that we are in a daily, spiritual battle
 - Pray from temptations (pleasure, possessions, power) and evil that caters to those internal temptations;
 - Reminder that we are all sinners and are dependent on His grace;
 - Pray over the pieces of spiritual armor found in Ephesians 6;
 - We are reminded that we can overcome temptation because Jesus’ victory over sin.

D. Additional Prayer Resources

- *A Simple Way To Pray*, Martin Luther
- *The Praying Life*, Paul Miller
- *Just Ask*, J.D. Grear
- *Principles of Prayer*, Charles Finney
- *God Do You Hear Me*, Dr. Derwin Gray
- *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*, Tim Keller
- *The Circle Maker*, Mark Batterson
- *Dangerous Prayers*, Craig Groeschel

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