

How to Pray...

Matthew 6:9-15

New International Version (NIV)

⁹ “This, then, is how you should pray:

“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,

¹⁰ your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today our daily bread.

¹² Forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.’

Being someone who has been a Christian for a long long time, I realize that I take many things for granted. I realized this when someone who was looking as to what Christ was all about asked me a question that caught me off guard. As much as I had responded with the appropriate Biblical answer, it made me think! We tell those non-Christians and new Christians with out a thought about it, that they should pray.

The pat answer is that praying is talking to God. We never give a thought as questions such as:

- **When should I get on my knees to pray?**
- **What am I allowed to ask God?**
- **Should I pray in front of others?**
- **Is there a specific time I should pray?**
- **Where should I pray?**
- **Why should I pray before I eat?**

These are but a few questions about prayer, that those who do not know will ask. When I became a Christian, I asked these questions myself, and no one tried to answer them. When I was 11, I just though that they did not care to answer them and eventually others who called themselves Christians made me feel like I was stupid because I did not get it. So I gave up asking. It took many years of pain, along with study of the Bible, to understand what prayer was.

Imagine how I could of grown spiritually if someone took the time to tell me, how to pray! I spent many times alone and unsure of how to talk to God. How I wanted someone to teach me to talk to God. With the questions I have received lately, I realize there are many out there, struggling out there as I did. Wondering deeply what prayer is all about.

My definition of prayer stands, as having an intimate contact with God. Prayer sometimes is not just words, sometimes it is crying, laughing, and even screaming at or with God!

Matthew 6:5-8

New International Version 1984 (NIV1984)

Prayer

⁵ "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. ⁷ And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

Matthew 6:5-8, was given as an example of how not to pray, I love how Jesus immediately follows it up with a way on how to pray in Matthew 6:9-13 on how we should pray.

To answer some of the questions I was asked earlier, now these are not the perfect answers to these questions. But these are from the answers from my experience about prayer!

When should I get on my knees to pray? When you feel led to, when you feel you need to give God your full attention. The phrase I live with concerning this question is, "Get on your knees and fight like a man!"

What am I allowed to ask God? Anything, remembering that sometimes you might not like God's answers

Should I pray in front of others? Yes, as long as you remember you are there to glorify God and not yourself. As well if you are praying for someone in front of others, that you have their permission before doing so.

Is there a specific time I should pray? No, there is no specific time. But you should try to set some time regularly to pray!

Where should I pray? Anywhere. Be it as simple as thanking God, or as you travel down the street. Everywhere

Why should I pray before I eat? Do this to remember that all you have comes from God. And it only shows respect for your Father in Heaven.

It's my hope and my prayer, that those who have been Christians for a period of time are ready and open to answer this most important challenge. The challenge of teaching others what prayer is all about. As well to have the patience, to understand those new at praying might struggle. And realize as I have learned, that even with prayer I still have much to learn!

Amen and Amen...

Neo... February 5, 2012