

PRAYER

Intro: Today "How to make a connection w/ God!"
- We have misconceptions about prayer

QT: Chuck Swindoll "I used to think God Created prayer just to make me feel guilty!"

QT: Martin Luther "To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing."

Trans: Jesus gives us specific instructions on how to make contact with God...



APPROACH PRAYER WITH THE RIGHT ATTITUDE (Matthew 6:5-8)

1. Be **REAL**.

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. Verse 5

Ex: Don't be Pharisee, Catholic, and Muslims (all showy)

Note: Don't try to impress GOD or OTHERS!

2. Be **RELAXED**. **Note:** "HURRY" is the death of prayer!

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. Verse 6

Note: 2 EXCUSES; No time, No Place

Ex: Susana Wesley (19 kids, 1700s, 1 hr/day, pulled apron over head, trained kids to be quiet!)

3. Be **REVEALING**.

Don't recite the same prayer over and over as the heathen do, who think prayers are answered only by repeating them again and again. Verse 7

Note: Make prayer conversational – not in King Jameth! ;-)

Ex: **READ How NOT to ask for grocery money!** ("Oh Almighty procreator of our family..."; ;-)

USE THE MODEL JESUS GAVE US (The Six Parts of Prayer)

["Lord's Prayer IN Beatitudes]

Matthew 6:9-15 "This then is HOW you should pray..."

Not WHAT we should pray...

1. **PRAISE:** "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name..."

"I give God my LOVE"

A. I begin by **EXPRESSING** my love to God. Two kinds of praise:

1. "Adoration" - Praising God for **WHO** He is. **!!! Try praying without saying "I", "My", "Me" ...**
2. "Thanksgiving" - Praising God for **WHAT** He has done. **Ex. SING to God** (My hymnal)

*Psalms 100:4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise. Be **thankful** unto him, and **bless his name.***

2. **PURPOSE:** "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven..."

"I give God my LIFE"

A. I Commit myself to God's **PURPOSE** and **WILL** for my life. Which means... **Means: "I SUBMIT to God"**

Note: Three keys to praying within **GOD'S WILL:**

1. Make sure you prayers are **GOD-FOCUSED**.

***Psalms 37:4** NIV Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart.*

2. Make sure you prayers result in **GOD'S GLORY**.

***John 14:12-14** NIV And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.*

3. Make sure you prayers are in accordance with **GOD'S WILL**.

***1 John 5:14-15** NASB And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.*

EX: Even when life is **HARD** — **Me flunking out of school:** Trusted him- he used it for good!

3. **PROVISION:** "Give us; today our daily bread..." **NOTE:** Bread = LIFE

"I give God my **WORRIES**"

- A. What needs can I pray about? Absolutely **EVERY** one of my needs!
Philippians 4:19 God will supply all your needs from his riches in glory because of what Christ Jesus has done for us.
James 4:2 You do not have ... because you don't ask God!
PIC: Kids asking: **Jospeh** asking to wrestle (even when I'm tired, say "sure!")
- B. The key to answered prayer: Be **SPECIFIC**.
EX: Write down your requests (Ex. Me praying for \$50,000! (Got it a day later -\$27,000 check & Provo build out!

4. **PARDON:** "Forgive us our debts ..." Four Steps to a Clearer Conscience...

"I give God my **GUILT**"

Trans: As believers, don't have to feel guilty (Heb 10:17 – Not remember; Mica 7 Deep seal)

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to **REVEAL** any hidden sin.
Psalms 139:23-24 Examine me, O God, and know my mind, test me, and discover my thoughts. Find out if there is any evil in me.
EX: Magnifying glass, NOT microscope! (Usually pretty clear ... i.e. marriage)
2. Acknowledge and repent of each sin **SPECIFICALLY** as he brings them to mind.
Proverbs 28:13 NASB He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.
3. Make **RESTITUTION** to others when necessary.
Matthew 5:23-24 When you remember your brother has something against you ... go at once to make peace with him, then come back and offer your gift to God.
EX: Chris Minor – after saved, confessed to neighbor: Stealing tools.
4. Thank God for His **FORGIVENESS**.
Acts 10:43 All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."
EX: False vs. REAL guilt. Christian: Forgiven! Ex. Donahue: "You are going to heaven!" – How does he know!?!?

5. **PEOPLE:** "...as we have also forgiven our debtors."

"I give God my **HURTS**"

EX: Man to John Wesley: "I could never forgive them!", Wesley: "Then, I hope you never sin!"

- A. I Pray for other **PEOPLE**.
1 Timothy 2:1 Pray much for others, plead for God's mercy upon them; give thanks for all he is going to do for them.
NOTE: People WILL hurt you! **EX – Man told John W.** "I could never forgive them!", **Wesley:** "Then, I hope you never sin!"
- B. If you want to know how to pray for others, read the **PRAYERS** of Paul.
Ephesians 1:15-19, Colossians 13-12, 1 Thessalonians 1.2-3, 11 Thessalonians 1:11-12
NOTE: These will invigorate you. **KNOW** you are praying God's will! ;-)

6. **PROTECTION:** "And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one."

"I give God my **FEARS & TEMPTATIONS**"

- A. I Ask For spiritual **PROTECTION** from God.
NOTE: God will ALWAYS provide a way out! (1 Cor 10:13) -
- B. Believers face a spiritual **BATTLE** every day. Satan wants to defeat you through temptation and fear. By praying for protection, you will have the confidence to face every situation during the day.
John 4:4 The Spirit who is in you is more powerful than the spirit who is in those who belong to the world. I
Ex: Young man feeling "Attacked" in his mind last Sunday (Prayed!)

Conclusion: Prayer is not just a good weapon – it's our **BEST** weapon and connects us with God!"