

How to pray to our Heavenly Father

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[0 : 00] This comes in sort of two parts. As we showed the children, it's that point when Jesus' disciples! teach us to pray because we've been working through the life story of Jesus according to Dr. Luke.

And we're going to continue tonight around our devotions. So we'll do this part and then come back at six o'clock and we'll do another part with regards to that same topic when the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray.

Now this morning's part, because as I said earlier, crew wasn't on, it's a little bit adapted for the crew guys but as it happens they've all went out to help out with Sunday school so they're not here. So take it for yourselves. And I think I'll crack on with my video, Daniel, which is really for crew but we'll watch it anyway and get started. Thanks, Daniel. Hello there. Hi. This is Evan Baxter.

I just wanted to say thank you for everything. Thank you for the new car and for the house. The house is great. I love it. I mean, I picked it out but you created matter and everything.

[1 : 29] So, um, I just wanted to say that I think Joan makes a good point and that I am now in a position of great power and I know that with great power comes great responsibility.

So, God... Please help me change the world.

Okay. That's it. I'm hanging up now. God bless, well, you guys. God bless.

In fact, as the movie tries to portray, he probably hasn't prayed ever. And he isn't so sure what to do. He's confused about how to start.

There's an awkward ending and then he's left, as the film goes on, wondering, did I pray the correct way? Ask for the right things?

[2 : 59] ever, ever, ever been there yourself, it's often rather normal. And it's certainly okay.

It's certainly okay. In fact, it's okay so much that in the 11th chapter of Luke's biography, we read that Jesus' very own disciples asked him, Lord, teach us to pray.

Verse 1 of Luke 11 reads, One day Jesus was praying in a certain place.

When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, Lord, teach us to pray. Amazing, isn't it? Ten incredible chapters of power moving, mission boosting, work preaching, teaching miracles, all the lot.

They know Jesus very well by this point. They have a good friendship with Jesus 10 chapters in.

Yet it's here where they and I ask, Lord, teach us to pray.

[4 : 26] It's actually rather reassuring for us less than professional Christians. It's rather reassuring for us less than professional Christians to know that even the 12, halfway through their life with Jesus, had to ask, teach me to pray, Jesus.

Prayer is our vital way to directly communicate with God. And so Jesus is always more than king to drive home deep teachings as to just what exactly prayer is.

Jesus regularly delves into parables, instructions, teachings, and encouragements all about prayer. Have you ever noticed how many chapters from Jesus' life account have something about prayer?

For example, Matthew 6, 12, 17, 20, 21, 23, 24, Mark 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, Luke 3, 4, 6, 8, 11, John 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, to give you a few examples of how often Jesus brings prayer into his teachings.

All of these chapters, something about prayer is taught, encouraged, or explored.

[6 : 01] But we, of course, get his most comprehensive teachings on prayer in Matthew 6. So let's go to Matthew 6.

Matthew 6. The very famous sermon on the mount. And verse 5 there.

So imagine these disciples back in Luke that have asked, teach us to pray. And Jesus says, 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 others.

Truly I tell you, they have received the reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door, and pray to your Father who is on scene.

Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.

[7 : 22] Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. So just a moment. Jesus begins with a very clear example of what prayer is not.

He is clear that prayer is not a show. And to be clear, this teaching is as fully relevant in 2025 as it was back then in the first century.

Jesus points out the hypocrites in society who choose to pray openly in public or in some other sort of building scenario to be seen by others but who go back home and live the opposite of God's ways.

Jesus points them out and says, that's not prayer. Why? And we'll come back to this because that's not friendship.

That's not a relationship. What am I always saying here? Jesus is offering a friendship to us. He's not offering a regulated religion.

[8 : 46] And that sort of praying, it's just religious. It's hypocritical. It's not prayer. And he continues. He says, by the way, prayer is not a word contest.

It's not about great, well-written, wonderfully carved, penciled words and eloquent sentences.

Far from it. And it's not about needing to fill the time with endless words or even naive thoughts such as, I need to fill God in with every detail of what's happening or he won't know.

Again, far from it. In fact, Jesus uses the phrase, don't babble. Don't babble in your prayers.

Repeating the same words over and over like magic won't guarantee God will hear your prayers any better. prayer. To be clear, to be clear, it's not wrong to be persistent with prayer requests, which of course Jesus encourages in some of those other chapters I mentioned.

[10 : 08] But his problem here is those who repeat in a shallow manner for the sake of it. There is a massive difference in continuously offering a constant prayer to the Lord for the likes of one's healing.

When each prayer is an individual plea or an individual tear for that same thing. There's a big difference between doing that than when someone just auto-repeats the same line for the sake of it thinking that will cover my prayers today.

The big difference between persistently individually requiring God to do something than just auto-repeating it to get your prayers done. And on that note of just auto-repeating to get your prayers done Jesus says prayer is not a demand it's not a burden it's not something we are ordered to do because again that's not a relationship with God.

In fact to extremely drive the point home deeper than ever Jesus then says write with that out of the way what prayer is not.

Here's what prayer is real prayer verse 6 and I want to read you this one from the Good News Bible verse 6 Jesus puts it that's all what prayer is not so here's what prayer is go into your room close the door and pray to your father who is unseen and your father who sees what is done in private will reward you.

[12 : 08] Maybe it's a bit simple but in other words get a cuppa go into your room close the door and have a good chin wag with God that's prayer because that's friendship of course there is a place for regular and daily prayer in public places when we gather as a fellowship or when a whole family prays together but Jesus' emphasis here is on the relationship with us because ultimately before anything else when it comes to me in you he first and foremost his first and foremost concern is our relationship with him and that's private prayer our relationship with God grows and is fueled and is daily maintained by making sure we pray privately every day and that happens alongside the other times of prayer here in church and of course that even adds fuel to the ability to come and pray alongside with others at church but it begins at home in your room and on that note

Jesus very very helpfully concludes it all together with a fantastic model of prayer for us to follow called the Lord's prayer Matthew 6 verse 9 our father in heaven hallowed be your name your kingdom come your will be done on earth as in heaven give us today our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we have also forgiven our debtors and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one Jesus give this to us as the perfect model to help aid our prayer life i.e.

we should as in the prayer praise God pray for his work in the world pray for our daily needs pray for our forgiveness forgiveness forgive others etc etc etc we Christians pray the Lord's prayer daily personally and together as the rightly divinely carved crafted lines that enable us to be close to Jesus our but in just as much this pattern can also guide our prayers as we take time to add our personal private words to the prayer as well such as as we all know the prayer begins our father in heaven indicating that as we begin our prayers we are talking to yes the almighty powerful God but just as much to our lovely gentle father across the first 18 verses of Matthew 6 Jesus calls father god father ten times because he is so kind to drive home the point that the new covenant is a family of believers and god is our father hence relationship and when one truly gets their minds around all the amazing loveliness of god as father god you just want to worship him don't you hence why right on cue after addressing god as father the next line is hallowed be your name praise him honour him express your love for him i suppose this is where that guitar comes out your favourite worship music songs poems psalms and all such come out and god welcomes it all and then because you love him so much it would naturally make sense that you would want to see father god's kingdom come so the next line is your kingdom come his kingdom is good his ways are perfect ultimately one day his kingdom will replace this old earth he will restore us back to the garden of ease and life no religion no structures no curtain no temple all gone and so yes indeed as with the christians of the last 2000 years we pray come soon lord jesus bring your kingdom here now we also pray that the ways of the kingdom i.e. the values presented in the sermon on the mount should be lived here on earth in the meantime and in our lives today and so we naturally follow on with well your will be done on the earth as in heaven those good righteous holy divine ways we pray them into our government our armies our councils our services our workplaces our schools our universities we pray his ways into them but it's also as much about praying for his kingdom ways in our lives as well praying for his kingdom values lives in your individual life and this bit gets very very very personal because only you know what you truly need to talk to him about there what truly needs to happen in your life to enable you to be living the kingdom valued way hence why

Jesus says there really is an important place for private prayer in the room door closed then give us today our daily bread because if we truly believe all that we have just prayed above all those first lines then we truly believe God is our ultimate and only sustainer we believe he provides physically yes but his daily bread i.e.

[19:08] his daily provisions can go so much further because we also believe he provides strength wisdom courage holy spirit to lead us so having respectfully followed the correct order that Jesus laid out praying all the stuff above by this point in the prayer we can now rightly and freely request from God this is where we can now tell him those things that we feel like we need ask for it and as we do so as we pray in this manner we are acknowledging God is creator and that's why he can't provide everything because he's the creator and so by acknowledging him as creator praying to him in that way we are in turn acknowledging that only he has the authority to then forgive only he can rightly forgive our sins so again we find ourselves rightfully rightly and naturally right on cue moving from that line to forgiveness spending time focusing on repentance and moving on from sin but the second part here carries extreme importance as we forgive others such a hard thing to do to begin with seems impossible but that's why we're asking the creator to enable us to forgive because of his help of his strength we can forgive others so purposely and truly seek God in forgiving others and so following the pattern it then makes sense to pray following that pattern and eventually praying for forgiveness it makes sense to then pray so lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one help me stop somebody help me go forward and live better just before you finish praying and enter the day ahead or leave the room to face others and the world get the defending strength of the

Holy Spirit all around you in you and over you to your left to your right and front and behind to help you flee temptation flee on righteousness on godliness on holiness the acts of the flesh and instead run towards righteousness holiness godliness and the fruits of the spirit lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one amen the hebrew word meaning sure certainly i really mean this prayer god and then across the first century after praying such powerful words church leaders influenced by holy spirit felt it right felt it appropriate felt it very naturally amen to tie it all together with its own doxology that reflected his greatness i.e. we should finish for yours is the kingdom the power and the glory forever and ever amen this is the perfect model of god and live in a relationship

with him let's pray our father in heaven you are great peaceful and good we worship you hallowed be your name your creator forgiver sustainer lover and so we pray your kingdom come rain on the earth lord take us home but until then your will be done on earth as in heaven impact our area our city our country with your values take our lives and make them reflect you in every way and please give us this day our daily bread please provide our needs god thank you that you do we can all witness to that you do and going forward we know that you will continue to forgive us our sins lord we're sorry help us repent and by your strength forgive others and so lead us not into temptation but deliver us steer us on the right path lord jesus keep us focused on right living lord jesus for yours is indeed the kingdom the power and the glory forever and ever amen and so hopefully right on curie thinking about the power and the glory i know it's not easter but thine be the glory if you're able to stand please stand with us as we sing this fantastic song come back tonight 6pm we'll do a little bit more on prayer father god we exalt thee lord jesus we will praise your name every day and as we go forth send us out to live out that worship and that praise help us live it out in action and in word and so to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and of great joy to the only god our saviour be glory majesty power and authority through jesus christ our lord before all ages now and forevermore amen