

Teach Me to Pray

We are in good company when we ask how to pray. Luke 11:1

What is prayer?

According to the 1976 American Heritage Dictionary it is “*a reverent petition [request] made to a deity or other object of worship*”.

Prayer is the communication of the human soul with the Lord who created him. Prayer is a way for the believer in Jesus Christ to communicate with, and fellowship with, God.

The essence of prayer is coming before God Almighty, soaking in His presence, and partnering with Him in seeing His will done on earth.

True prayer is from the heart. The words are not as important as your heart. We know God knows our thoughts Psa 139:1-2

You might argue, since God already knows our thoughts. Why bother praying? And won't God's will come to pass even if we don't pray? These are valid questions. God is not against us asking questions. Many of the Psalms involve the author questioning God. We also see in the Books of the Prophets men asking God questions. When Jesus walked the earth, He knew people's thoughts and answered before they even verbalized their questions (Matthew 9:4; 12:25; Luke 9:47; 11:17).

It doesn't have to be complicated. In fact, Jesus was against the way the Pharisees prayed – using lots of words and praying so others will see. What did Jesus say about prayer? Matt 6:5-13

God wants us to seek Him for Him, not for show. A simple heart-felt prayer is better than a long, flowery prayer. Matt 15:25, Matt 20:31, Luke 18:9-14

Did you know God can hear your prayer even if you don't say it out loud? 1 Samuel 1:10, 13

What did Jesus Himself teach about prayer?

Luke 11:2-4 (as well as Matt 6:9-13). We pray to the Father for His will to be done on earth.

Luke 11:5-8 Come with boldness.

Luke 11:9-10 Keep Asking, Seeking, Knocking

Luke 11:11-13 God gives good to those who ask. He can and He will.

Luke 18:1-8 Don't lose heart

James, half-brother of Jesus, also had a bit to say about prayer.

James 1:5-8 says we should pray in faith because a prayer of unbelief is not heard.

James 4:1-3 prayers never prayed don't get answers and selfish prayers rarely do.

James 5:16 states that the fervent (to be active, efficient, effectual, be mighty in) prayer of a righteous man avails much (i.e. are powerful). Prov 15:29 As a believer in Jesus you are a righteous person Rom 5:17

To conclude, it's good to want to know how to pray according to the Bible. God has a lot to say about it. However, there is no need to follow a formula or get fancy. A heart felt "Help Me" is heard before the throne. Jesus taught us to pray to our Father Who is in Heaven for His will to be done on earth, to come boldly with your requests persistently, expecting God to give us good gifts when we ask and to not give up. James taught us ASK (be direct with our requests), not asking for our gain and pray in faith, knowing our prayers have power.