



What is prayer?

Prayer is simply our intimate, ongoing interaction with God. It is spending time with Him, talking to Him, listening to Him, asking Him questions, sharing our hurts, our joys, and our sorrows. Prayer is having an ongoing conversation with God about the ordinary things in life and about the life changing moments we have encountered, are experiencing, or have on the horizon.

Why is prayer important?

Prayer is important because Jesus prayed, gave us examples of how to pray, and invites us into the opportunity to communicate with God. Jesus had an intimate relationship with the Father, was the very Son of God, and yet he prayed. He constantly prayed to spend intimate time with His Father and to build their relationship.

- He prayed alone (Mark 1:35, Matthew 6:6, Matthew 14:23, Luke 5:16, Luke 9:18, Luke 22:39-14).
- He prayed with other people in community. (Luke 9:28)
- He prayed for his friends. (John 17:9-26)
- He even taught us how to pray (Matthew 6:5-15)

As children of God, prayer is one of the best ways to develop our relationship with Him. As a Father, he wants to spend time with us, speak to us, and hear our joys, our pains, our sorrows. As Richard Foster says, *“God listens in compassion and love, just like we do when our children come to us. He delights in our presence.”*

How do I pray?

There is no certain method to pray, but there are helpful models that may work for you. The ACTS model is one such model that you can use. It is not a rigid model to follow but serves as a guide to help you.

- Adoration – Begin your time of prayer by praising and adoring God. Praise Him for who He is and everything He has done for you.
- Confession – Tell God where you have fallen short. Ask Him to forgive you and believe He will freely according to His goodness and faithfulness.
- Thanksgiving – Thank God for his love, his mercy, his grace, and for anything else you are thankful to God for. Express how thankful you are for what He is doing in your life, for Jesus dying on the cross, and for the Holy Spirit for being with you and never leaving you.
- Supplication – Pray for your needs and for the needs of others, no matter how big or small it seems.

It is also helpful to keep a prayer journal. Record your thoughts, prayers, and anything you feel like God may be saying to you. There are no rules with a prayer journal. You can do anything that works best for you. With a journal you can tangibly see how your relationship with God has changed over time, and it is amazing to see it happen in your own words.

You will also want to include reading Scripture in your time with God, and you can either read before or after your time of prayer. You can even pray through the Scriptures as you read, like if you are reading

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through Psalms and want to pray along with the words of the Psalmist.

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