



THE ARK CHURCH

PRAYER



What is prayer?

- Prayer is communication between people and God. It is the primary way to communicate our emotions and desires with God and to fellowship with God. In prayer, **people should not only talk to God but also listen to Him.**
 - If My people who are called by My name **will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.** 2 Chronicles 7:14
 - **He will call on me, and I will answer him;** I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver and honor him. Psalm 91:15
 - Then **you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.** Jeremiah 29:12
 - **Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.'** Jeremiah 33:3
 - **You will make your prayer to Him (God), He will hear you** Job 22:27
 - Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that **if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.** 1 John 5:14

Why should we pray?

- Jesus modeled the importance of prayer for us during His earthly ministry and calls us to pray. God answers prayer and is ready and willing to communicate with us because He loves us and wants to be known by us. Prayer to God is like a child's relationship with their father. It is natural for a good father to encourage their child, answer their questions and give them guidance. Likewise, it is natural for a child to tell their father they love him, thank him for what he has done, ask him for the

things they need and ask for forgiveness when they have done something wrong. Prayer is the place where burdens change shoulders, from us to God.

- But **Jesus often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.** Luke 5:16
- Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that **they should always pray and not give up.** Luke 18:1
- **Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving.** Colossians 4:2
- "Until now you have asked nothing in My name. **Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.**" John 16:24
- Therefore, confess your sins to each other and **pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.** James 5:16
- Be anxious for nothing, but **in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.** Philippians 4:6-7

What and how should we pray?

- Whatever is on your mind matters to God, because you matter to Him. As you develop the habit, or spiritual discipline, of praying, over time you will gain a sense of what things God is talking to you about and what He is directing your attention toward. Try not to get tripped up on exactly what you should pray about or trying to sound a certain way. Simply have a conversation with God. Here are a couple of models that can help you pray. One is

The Lord's Prayer found in Matthew 6, where Jesus' disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray. The other is **ACTS**, an acronym to help guide us through prayer.

- **The Lord's Prayer: This, then, is how you should pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.** Matthew 6:9-13
- We don't have to pray the Lord's Prayer word for word every time we pray. There are times we will but it helps us understand important elements to include in our prayers.
 - "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name" – **Worship God**
 - "your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" – **Pray to understand and submit to God's purposes and plan**
 - "Give us today our daily bread" – **Pray for God's provision**
 - "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." **Repent and pray for forgiveness of our sins**
 - "And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one." – **Pray for God's protection**
 - "For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever." – **Recognize God's sovereignty and His ability to answer your prayers and be glorified through them and your life**

- The **ACTS model** is
 - **Adoration** – Worship and praise God for who He is
 - **Confession** – Acknowledge and repent of our sin to God and ask for His mercy and forgiveness
 - **Thanksgiving** – Thank God for His blessings and all He has done, is doing and will do in our life
 - **Supplication** – Pray for the needs of others and yourself
- Prayer is not about getting things from God it is about properly relating to God in fellowship and giving Him priority in our lives. Through prayer we can understand and come into alignment with God's agenda and plans.
 - **Show me the right path, O Lord; point out the road for me to follow.** Psalm 25:4

How long should I pray for something?

- The Bible tells us to persevere in prayer. You should pray until something happens. Keep praying until God has changed you, changed the situation and/or changed the other person.
 - Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. **8 For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.** Matthew 7:7-8
 - Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, **being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.** Ephesians 6:18

When and where should we pray?

- You can pray anytime and anywhere throughout your day. Whether morning, evening or somewhere in between, it's good to find a consistent distraction-free time and place. God desires and deserves that we are present and fully focused on Him, and we will find it harder to listen to Him in a busy place. Some people create a space in their homes for this purpose. Others will choose a favorite place outside of the home to take time out with God. The most important thing is that you spend time with God consistently!
 - But Jesus **often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.** Luke 5:16
 - Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, Jesus went out and departed **to a solitary place; and there He prayed.** Mark 1:35

What posture should I have in prayer?

- You can bow, kneel, lie prostrate on the floor, stand, or walk around when you pray. God will hear you whatever you do, so choose a position that helps you focus on God in an attitude of humility & respect.

Should I pray out loud?

- You can pray out loud or silently when you are praying alone, depending on the situation you are in. If you are praying with a group of people you can choose to pray out loud or agree and pray silently.

Can anything hinder answers to prayer?

- Yes. If we embrace a sinful lifestyle & have unconfessed sin (Isaiah 59:2, Psalm 66:18); ask with wrong motives (James 4:3); have unforgiveness towards others (Mark 11:25-26); have unbelief that God can & will answer our prayer (James 1:6-7) and have marital conflict (1 Peter 3:7)