

## International Conversation Cafe

Bible Topic: What is Prayer and Why Do We Pray?

Prayer is a word used to describe our communication with God. It is how we talk to him.

There are many reasons why people talk to God. Some times people ask God for a favor: like to be healed or to have money to pay a bill, or for safety in danger.

When the disciples were threatened, they prayed, "Now Lord, consider their threats and enable your servant to speak with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus." Acts 4:29-30

Sometimes people recognize how kind and loving God is and they will express how grateful they are to him and praise him for how great he is.

Praise the Lord.

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever. Psalm 106:1

Prayer is done in private alone or with 2 or three.

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place where he prayed. Mark 1:35

Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them. Matthew 18:19, 20

Sometimes prayer is done in a public place with many people, like in a worship service. This was the practice of the early church.

Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. Acts 2:46-47

Prayer can be guided or impromptu. There are many guided prayers in the Bible. They are useful because they remind us of important things to say to God.

Our Father in heaven, holy 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 also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. Matthew 6:9-13

Impromptu prayers are also important because we can express to God our gratitude and praise, or our worries or concerns at any time. God wants us to be honest with him always. He knows us anyway.

Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge. Psalm 62:8

*What steps can you take to develop better communication between you and God?*

### **What is God's response to our prayers?**

God loves to answer our requests because he is a loving father who longs to meet the needs of his children.

Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! Matthew 7:9-11

God is also a wise father who knows that everything we ask for may not be good for us. Sometimes he answers with no, or wait. He also knows when we ask with the wrong motives.

And my God will meet all your **needs** according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19

You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. James 4:2-3

*Tell about your frustrations with prayer?*

*Is it ok to tell God about your frustrations? Why or why not?*

*What additional insights about prayer do you now have?*

