

HOW SHOULD A NEW BELIEVER PRAY?

KEY TEXT

MATTHEW 6:9

Learning to speak with God according to His Word

PRAYER IS FELLOWSHIP, NOT PERFORMANCE

Prayer is the believer speaking to God with reverence, honesty, gratitude, and dependence. It is not a religious speech, a way to impress people, or a formula for forcing God to give us what we want. Through Jesus Christ, believers may come confidently to the Father and make their requests known.

01

Come to the Father through Jesus Christ

The believer does not approach God on the basis of personal goodness. Our access rests in Christ, our great High Priest, who died, rose again, and brings us near to God. We pray to the Father in the name of Jesus - trusting His merit, seeking His honor, and asking consistently with His character and will.

ACCESS

Christ has opened the way to God. Prayer is a privilege of grace, not a reward earned by spiritual performance.

CONFIDENCE

Believers may speak openly and honestly, knowing that the Father understands every need and cares for His children.

REVERENCE

Confidence is not casual disrespect. We come as children to a holy, wise, and sovereign Father.

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

HEBREWS 4:16

02

Pray sincerely, not mechanically

Jesus warned against praying to be seen by others and against using vain repetitions. Long prayers are not automatically spiritual, and repeated words do not make God more willing to listen. Speak truthfully, simply, and thoughtfully. God already knows the need, yet He invites His children to depend upon Him in prayer.

PRIVATE PRAYER

A quiet place helps remove distraction and exposes the true motive of the heart. Prayer is first communion with God, not a performance for an audience.

PUBLIC PRAYER

When praying with others, speak clearly and reverently for the good of the whole group. Do not use public prayer to preach at people or display spirituality.

WHAT SHOULD I PRAY ABOUT?

Let the priorities of Scripture shape the content of prayer.

03

Begin with God, not merely your needs

The model prayer begins, “Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.” Prayer should lift the heart toward God before it turns to personal requests. Praise Him for who He is, thank Him for what He has done, desire His kingdom, and submit your plans to His will.

WORSHIP

Praise God for His holiness, mercy, wisdom, faithfulness, power, and grace. Let Scripture supply the language of worship.

SUBMISSION

Ask that God's name be honored, His kingdom advanced, and His will obeyed - including in your own decisions.

THANKSGIVING

Name specific mercies. Gratitude turns attention from what is missing to the goodness God has already shown.

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”

PHILIPPIANS 4:6

04

Bring every part of life before God

God invites believers to pray about daily needs, spiritual growth, temptation, decisions, relationships, ministry, and the burdens of others. No concern is too small for His care, but prayer should not become a list centered only on comfort and success.

CONFESS

Agree with God about sin. Do not excuse, rename, or hide it. Receive His cleansing and ask for strength to walk uprightly.

ASK

Request daily provision, wisdom, courage, purity, opportunities to serve, and grace for present responsibilities.

INTERCEDE

Pray for family, church leaders, fellow believers, the lost, civil authorities, missionaries, the suffering, and even enemies.

05

Pray with an open Bible

Scripture keeps prayer grounded in truth. Turn a passage into praise, confession, petition, and obedience. When reading a command, ask for grace to obey it. When reading a promise, thank God without claiming what the context does not give. When reading about God's character, worship Him for who He is.

A SIMPLE EXAMPLE

After reading James 1:5, you might pray: “Father, You are generous and wise. I lack wisdom for this decision. Help me think according to Your Word, receive counsel humbly, and choose what honors You.”

HOW DOES GOD ANSWER PRAYER?

His wisdom, will, and timing are better than ours.

06

Ask according to God's will

Biblical faith is not confidence that God must approve every request. It is confidence in God Himself. We may ask specifically and earnestly while submitting the outcome to His wisdom. God may grant the request, answer in a different way, require patient waiting, or withhold what would not serve His purpose and our good.

HIS WILL

God never answers contrary to His holiness, truth, or revealed purposes. Scripture shapes what believers should desire and request.

HIS WISDOM

We see only part of the situation. The Father understands consequences, motives, timing, and needs that remain hidden from us.

HIS TIMING

Delay is not abandonment. Waiting can expose motives, deepen dependence, develop endurance, and prepare the believer for God's answer.

“And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.”

1 JOHN 5:14

07

Examine the heart when prayer is hindered

Not every delay means that the believer has sinned. Yet Scripture teaches that wrong motives, cherished sin, unbelief, selfishness, and broken relationships can hinder fellowship and prayer. Honest self-examination should lead to confession and renewed obedience, not despair.

WRONG MOTIVES

James warns about asking in order to consume things upon our lusts. A request may sound spiritual while the real desire is pride, revenge, control, or self-exaltation.

UNCONFESSED SIN

Sin should not be protected while asking for God's blessing. Confession restores fellowship and brings the heart back under the authority of His Word.

08

Continue in prayer without trying to control God

Jesus taught believers always to pray and not to faint. Persistence is not unbelieving repetition or an attempt to wear God down. It is continuing to seek Him while trusting His character. Paul prayed repeatedly about his thorn, then accepted the sufficient grace God supplied instead of the removal he requested.

WHEN THE ANSWER IS NOT WHAT YOU EXPECTED

Do not measure God's love by whether a particular request was granted. Return to what Scripture has revealed: the Father is wise, Christ is sufficient, grace is available, and nothing can separate the believer from the love of God in Christ.

HOW CAN I BUILD A PRAYER HABIT?

Begin simply, remain honest, and continue faithfully.

09

Choose consistency over intensity

A new believer does not need impressive language or hours of prayer before beginning. Set aside a realistic time, remove avoidable distractions, open the Bible, and speak honestly with God. A short, attentive prayer offered regularly is better than occasional emotional promises that are quickly abandoned.

A TIME

Connect prayer to an existing part of the day - after waking, during a break, or before sleep - and protect that appointment.

A PLACE

Use a quiet location when possible. Keep the Bible, notebook, and prayer list ready so that preparation does not become delay.

A LIST

Record people and needs, but do not merely recite names. Pray thoughtfully, update requests, and note answers with thanksgiving.

“Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.”

COLOSSIANS 4:2

10

Use the P.R.A.Y. pattern

This simple pattern is not a rigid formula. It is a guide that keeps prayer balanced and centered upon God. Some days one part may receive more attention than another.

THE BIBLICLIST P.R.A.Y. PATTERN

- P - PRAISE: Worship God for His character and thank Him for specific mercies.
- R - RESPOND: Answer what you read in Scripture. Confess sin, believe truth, and commit to obedience.
- A - ASK: Bring personal needs and the needs of others before the Father with humility and confidence.
- Y - YIELD: Submit the request, the timing, and the outcome to God's wise and loving will.

Keep praying throughout the day

A regular prayer time supports a continuing life of dependence. Pray briefly before decisions, during temptation, when receiving good news, when someone shares a burden, and whenever anxiety begins to take control. “Pray without ceasing” means living in continual readiness to turn the heart toward God.

FINAL REFLECTION

Will I make prayer a real part of my walk with God?

BIBLICLIST

Man's Questions. God's Answers.

bibliclist.org

Prayer grows as the believer knows God through His Word, confesses sin honestly, brings every need to the Father, and trusts His wisdom with the answer. Begin today. Speak plainly, pray biblically, remain thankful, and keep coming to the throne of grace through Jesus Christ.