

Discussion Questions

- 1 When you pray, do you imagine someone is listening?
- 2 What thoughts do you have about the idea of God answering prayer?
- 3 Have you ever seen coincidences happen when you pray?
- 4 Nicky Gumbel gives various reasons for praying. Which of these do you relate to and why?

Read Matthew 6:5 - 13 The Lord's Prayer

This is part of the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus is teaching His disciples to pray.

- 1 Does Matthew 6:5 – 6 suggest that it is wrong to pray in public? What was Jesus really teaching about public prayer?
- 2 What can you do to reduce the distractions that get in the way of your time alone with God?
- 3 What is the difference between the repetition in prayer that Jesus denounces and the persistence in prayer that He recommends?

Is the Catholic Hail Mary repetition or persistence?

Hail Mary, full of grace.
Our Lord is with you.
Blessed are you among women, and
blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death.
Amen.

- 4 Have you recently seen answers to any of your prayers?



Alpha

A Practical Introduction to Christianity

Session 5 Why and How Do I Pray?

Introduction

What Is Prayer?

Does God Always Answer Prayer?

How Do We Pray?

When Should We Pray?

Conclusions

What is Christian Prayer?

Prayer is the most important activity of our lives

- Matthew 6:5 - 13

Prayer is something that involves the whole Trinity

- Pray to the Father – Matthew 6 - 14
- Pray through the Son – Ephesians 2:14–18
- Pray in the Spirit – Romans 8:26 - 27

Why Pray?

Prayer is what Jesus did

- Mark 1:35
- Luke 6:12
- Luke 9:18 and 28
- Luke 11:1
- Matthew 6:7

Pray to develop a relationship with God

The rewards of prayer

- Matthew 6:6
- Joy – John 16:24
- Peace – Philipians 4:4 - 7

Results of Prayer

- Matthew 7:7 - 12

Does God Always Answer Prayer?

Barriers to answered prayer

- Unconfessed sin
Isaiah 59:1 – 2
Luke 6:12
Luke 9:18 and 28
Luke 6:7
- Unforgiveness – Matthew 6:14 – 15
- Disobedience – 1 John 3:21 – 22
- Wrong motives – James 4:2 – 3
- Misunderstanding the will of God, that God gives only “good gifts” – Matthew 7:11
- The answer may be yes or no or wait
- If no, the requests are "either not good in themselves, or not good for us or for others, directly or indirectly, immediately or ultimately."—J.W.R. Stott

How Do We Pray?

The ACTS Model

- A - Adoration
- C - Confession
- T - Thanksgiving
- S - Supplication

The Lord's Prayer Model - Matthew 6:9 – 13

- 9 Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name
- 10 your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

God's rule and reign in people's lives
Future return of Christ
Presence of God's Kingdom now
Commit your way to the Lord (Psalm 37:5)

- 11 Give us today our daily bread.
- 12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

John 13:1 - 17
Matthew 6:14 - 15

- 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

When should we pray?

With others
Matthew 18:19

Alone
Mark 1:35

Always
1 Thessalonians 5:17
Ephesians 6:18

Conclusions

**Satan laughs at our words
Mocks at our toil
But trembles when we pray.**