



Now What? - Day 3

How Do I Pray?

What is prayer? Maybe you've wondered this yourself before. Is it some spooky spell, or a crazy formula with big words that you have to say just right? No, prayer is none of those things. Most simply put, prayer is a conversation with God.

Have you ever wanted to get to know someone better? Of course you have, we have all had that moment in our life where we wanted to get to know someone better. In order to get to know a person better you have to do something... you have to do this thing called **TALKING**. In order to really get to know someone better you have to spend some consistent time talking with them.

The same is true in our relationship with God! If we are to ever really get to know God, we have to be willing to consistently talk with God. And it's pretty amazing that the God of the universe, the God that created all things actually wants to talk with us. That's why we have this thing called prayer. We believe that developing consistency in prayer will truly help you become who God wants you to become and also help you get through anything that you may go through in this life. In the tough moments of life, you always have God to turn to in prayer.

It's also important to know that God wants you to prosper, to do well in life. The bible tells us that God has great plans for your life but for you to truly succeed in what God wants for your life you are going to need prayer along the way. We will never have a growing relationship with God if we don't talk with God. So maybe you're new to this and you're wondering where to start.

Jesus himself actually begins to teach his followers how to pray in Matthew 6. In fact, the first thing he shares when he begins teaching about prayer is this:

⁵"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ⁶But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. ⁷And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him."

The first thing Jesus shares about prayer here is that prayer doesn't need to be flashy or formal! Just pray simply.

Step 2: Pray Declaratively

In your conversations with God, we can declare the promises of God to him. When you're going through something tough, you might pray "God, your word says that you work all things for my good so I pray that you will do just that for me". We declare God's promises in our prayers not because he needs a reminder, but because it aligns our heart with his!

Step 3: Pray Boldly

Prayer becomes a lifeless exercise when we're not looking for answers. Jesus invites us to expect God to work.

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you." Matthew 7:7

How much more exciting prayer becomes when we keep our eyes open to watch for God's answers. Sometimes I wonder how many answers we miss because we don't really expect God to respond. My favorite part of prayer is saying **AMEN!** Amen isn't the "period" at the end of your sentence, it's more like an exclamation point. **AMEN** means "it is so." We say **AMEN** at the end of our prayers, because we are believing that God will make "it so"- that he will answer our prayers! We can pray boldly and expectantly.

Step 4: Pray Continuously

If I only talked to my spouse once a day, our relationship might feel pretty distant. We often find ourselves doing that with God, talking to him only once a day. If you want to grow strong in your prayer life, don't be a one and done Christian! Make your prayers an ongoing conversation with God. Prayer isn't confined to a time and place, we can talk to God anywhere at any time, what a privilege that is! Talk to God often, all throughout your day, stay in conversation with him.

Jesus actually modeled prayer for us in Matthew 6:9-13 he said this:

*"This, then, is how you should pray: Our Father in heaven,
May your name be kept holy.
May your kingdom come soon.
May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us today the food we need, and
Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those
Who have sin against us.
And don't let us yield to temptation,
but rescue us from the evil one."*

Let this acronym be a guide and take a moment to **PRAY**.

P - Praise – give God his due. He is worthy of praise.

R - Repent – tell God about your struggles. God's not mad at you.

A - Ask – tell God what you want and what you need. God is good.

Y - Yield – submit to whatever He wants for your life. Lord let your will be done.