

Believe Series

“Prayer”

How do I grow by communicating with God?

We usually pray in Crisis.

About that time Hezekiah became deathly ill, and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to visit him. He gave the king this message: “This is what the Lord says: Set your affairs in order, for you are going to die. You will not recover from this illness.”

When Hezekiah heard this, he turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord, “Remember, O Lord, how I have always been faithful to you and have served you single-mindedly, always doing what pleases you.” Then he broke down and wept bitterly.
2 Kings 20:1-3 (NLT)

“...I have heard your prayer and seen your tears. I will heal you, and three days from now you will get out of bed and go to the Temple of the Lord. I will add fifteen years to your life, and I will rescue you and this city from the king of Assyria. I will defend this city for my own honor and for the sake of my servant David.”
2 Kings 20:5b-6 (NLT)

David begged God to spare the child. He went without food and lay all night on the bare ground. The elders of his household pleaded with him to get up and eat with them, but he refused.
Then on the seventh day the child died.
2 Samuel 12:16-18a (NLT)

Prayer is more than giving God a to-do list.

We pray to know God.

*I cry out to God; yes, I shout.
Oh, that God would listen to me!
When I was in deep trouble,
I searched for the Lord.
All night long I prayed, with hands lifted toward heaven,
but my soul was not comforted.
I think of God, and I moan,
overwhelmed with longing for his help.*

*You don't let me sleep.
I am too distressed even to pray!
I think of the good old days,
long since ended,
when my nights were filled with joyful songs.
I search my soul and ponder the difference now.
Has the Lord rejected me forever?
Will he never again be kind to me?
Is his unfailing love gone forever?
Have his promises permanently failed?
Has God forgotten to be gracious?
Has he slammed the door on his compassion?
And I said, “This is my fate;
the Most High has turned his hand against me.”
But then I recall all you have done, O Lord;
I remember your wonderful deeds of long ago.
They are constantly in my thoughts.
I cannot stop thinking about your mighty works.*

Psalm 77:1-12 (NLT)

Prayer is communication with God.

We pray to find direction for our life.

Before daybreak the next morning, Jesus got up and went out to an isolated place to pray. Later Simon and the others went out to find him. When they found him, they said, “Everyone is looking for you.”

But Jesus replied, “We must go on to other towns as well, and I will preach to them, too. That is why I came.”
Mark 1:35-38 (NLT)

One day soon afterward Jesus went up on a mountain to pray, and he prayed to God all night. At daybreak he called together all of his disciples and chose twelve of them to be apostles.
Luke 6:12-13a (NLT)

If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.
James 1:5 (NLT)

Prayer is connecting with Gods purposes.

We pray to lay our requests before God.

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.

Philippians 4:6 (NLT)

He walked away, about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine."

Luke 22:41-42 (NLT)

Prayer is a cry for God's provision.

SO WHAT?

**We pray to God to know him,
to find direction for my life,
and to lay my requests before Him.**

*Come and listen, all you who fear God,
and I will tell you what he did for me.*

*For I cried out to him for help,
praising him as I spoke.*

*If I had not confessed the sin in my heart,
the Lord would not have listened.*

But God did listen!

He paid attention to my prayer.

*Praise God, who did not ignore my prayer
or withdraw his unfailing love from me.*

Psalms 66:16-20 (NLT)

What will you do?

Growth Group Questions

(Questions and Scriptures for further study)

Read Believe Chapter 12: Prayer.

1. Tell of a time you were in crisis "hanging upside down from a telephone pole" and prayed fervently for something or someone.

How did God answer your prayers?

2. How has prayer been modeled for you in your life?

3. Re-read 2 Kings 20:1-3 & 2 Samuel 12:16-20. When did you last pray in a Crisis?

How does your prayer life differ when not in Crisis?

4. Re-read Mark 1:35-38, Luke 6:12-13, Luke 22:39-44. Jesus prayed before major events in his life. Do you naturally go to God when you are facing a major decision? Why or Why not?

How do you listen for God's voice on big decisions?

5. Re-read Philippians 4:6. What requests do you find hard to bring to God?

What request do you need to bring to God today?

6. What attributes do you find in people who regularly connect with God through prayer?

7. How can you improve your prayer life this week?