

## **HOW TO PRAY**

### **Read Matthew 6:7-14**

One of the most important expressions of love is by communication. We need to communicate with God - That is prayer.

In Matt 6 Jesus taught his disciples **how to pray**. This is like receiving a recipe to bake bread, with all the ingredients and sequence. Jesus gave his disciples instructions how to pray. He pointed out which ingredients should be in it. In what sequence the ingredients should be added. Each of the parts of this prayer has its specific role.

*Matt 6:8 ... for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.*

Your father knows what you need before you ask him. The question is why should you pray? The purpose is therefore not to inform God. Yes, we know he listen and he grant us our request. But the prayer is much to do with changing us. When I pray in the format Jesus gave us, it changes me. Question – how much does your prayer change you?

Matthew 6:9-14 provides a guideline, or structure of our conversation with God. These are points of discussion.

1. Our Father – identity
2. Hallowed be your name – worship God and lift up his name
3. Your kingdom come – lets make sure you are king in every area of my life.
4. Your will – in my life, family life and in society
5. Daily bread – lets talk about my needs
6. Then we talk about forgiveness – God forgive me and all the other people I need to forgive.
7. Temptation and delivery from the evil one.

So these are the discussion points. The agenda. Make sure you discuss each one of these points when you have your conversation with God. Each part is important. Think of baking bread – yeast, flour, water – all are important. Leave one of them out and you don't have bread.

So, let's go through each of these steps and, firstly explain why each of these steps are important and secondly to make it practical. When you leave here you must go and do it.

#### **1. Our Father**

This is a very important beginning of this conversation, to define and confirm who is part of this conversation, me and my Father. You and your Father. This sets the atmosphere - a father and child conversation, there is love, accessibility, care, acceptance, provision, forgiveness, closeness. This tells us that this is going to be a two-way conversation, me with Him, He with me. I don't send this message in to space. No, there is a person on the other side of this discussion.

The fact that I can call him my father, should do so much for me. This defines our identity. He is the Father – I am the son or daughter. I am adopted into the family of God. I am no longer a servant, but an heir of God. There is an inheritance waiting.

We live in an imperfect world – many have negative connections to Father. Correct that. Study that. This should be all positive.

## 2. **Hallowed be your name:**

Means - made holy, greatly revered and honoured. When someone says "Hallowed be your name," they are expressing reverence and respect for God's name, acknowledging its sacredness, and recognizing God's greatness and majesty. It is an acknowledgement of God's holiness and an affirmation of the worshiper's commitment to honor and glorify God in all that they do.

What is the importance of this part of the prayer:

First - God is worthy to be praised. The whole universe declares the glory of God, and we as humans were created to worship and glorify him. So, when you worship him – see how the worship goes to heaven and how God father rejoices when you express your admiration to him.

The other important point is it changes our mindset. WE get this big picture of God. The greater our vision of God, the more faith we have in Him. So this creates the foundation from which we will have all further conversations by just praising and magnifying Him, honoring His name.

A well know writer A W Tozer once wrote: 'What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.'

Practical points how you can do it:

- Sing and use music instruments to worship him. Here, at the gathering of the church we use that. Make that a habit in your own life. If you can sing, sing. Play worship music in your car, house, workplace. Your subconscious minds sing with and worship God.
- Read bible and pray scripture. Almost every page in bible contains worship to God. Read and pray it. The bible say that Holy Spirit will help us to pray. This is a good idea to use the holy spirit inspired word of God to pray.  
Make this your life mission to get to know as much as you can from God. There are so many different methods. CD with names of God. Do bible study on the miracles of the bible. We did fun activity with children to guide them to read passages from the bible and write attributes of God on a big canvas. Use that when we pray.
- Nature is an excellent place to worship God. Psalm 19:1-4

Remember – the better you do this part, the more faith you will have for the rest of the prayer.

## 3. **Your Kingdom come**

This is important to God. The Law given to Moses confirms it. Exodus 20:- 4

We as humans have a sinful tendency to put other things on the throne. Example: Eve – “you will be like God”, or the fallen Kings who had this charge against them that they worshiped other Gods and idols.

We do not have an idol which you worship, but there can be other things. Money of things that money can buy, or another person, or a hobby.

Pray this with deep introspection and make sure God is King of each area of your life - personal, family, business, etc.

4. **Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.:**

This part of the conversation is about asking God what His will is and also evaluating everything we do, whether it is indeed in God's will. If there are decisions that you have to make, I lay them before the Lord and say, "Lord, I now have to decide whether I'm going to do this, what do you say to me".

In most cases the bible gives clear instructions on what we should do and what not. Those clear instructions are not open for debate. If you pray this and the holy spirit shows you where you are in contradiction of God's word, you need to go and rectify that a.s.a.p.

Now there are things which the bible is not so clear about, like what career decisions, where you should live, purchase of things, etc. Those are the type of things you discuss in this part of the prayer.

You will be surprised to experience how the Lord speaks back to you, like when you address something when you have finished speaking it, then you just get that feeling inside you of "yes" or "no".

5. **Give us today our daily bread:**

Here we part where we talk about our needs, what we want from God, bread and all other physical things, so here comes the list of needs. Here I can list and say, "Lord, we need this and that.

Jesus said in verse 8, *for your Father knows what you need before you ask him*. Why then should we ask for provision? First of all it make use realize that we are dependent on him for everything. When we realise that, it makes it easier to thank God for what we receive.

6. **FORGIVENES:**

*<sup>12</sup>And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors*

This prayer has two parts, firstly we ask God to forgive us for our sins and secondly that we must forgive other people. Both are very important.

The first part is where we ask God to forgive us, That is the basis of the salvation that Jesus gave us, because through the blood of Jesus we are forgiven. That is the good news. You can do it every day. You can do this with using communion 1Cor 11:23-26.

The latter part of this prayer deals with us forgiving other people. Jesus actually connected God's forgiveness to us, with our forgiveness to other. Forgiveness towards others is a very serious matter

to God. Make it a habit to ask for forgiveness of your sin, and rejoice in the knowledge that you are forgiven. Ask God to help you to forgive other. Ponder on this point – ask the Holy Spirit to point out to you those whom you have not forgiven, and then forgive them.

7. **Deliver us from the evil one:**

For many people it feels like this is mostly an irrelevant prayer because the evil spirits are only involved where there are gangs, or Satanism, or in the dark underworld. Here where we live there is no such thing. How true is that?

The Bible is very clear about the fact that the devil like a roaring lion is constantly walking and looking for people to tear, his plans are to steal and destroy. When Jesus was on earth, this was part of his ministry, everywhere we read what he did of places where he came, he preached, healed the sick and cast out demons. When he sent out his twelve disciples one of the commands was, "Go and cast out devils", when he sent out the 72, he said, "Go, heal the sick and cast out devils", at the end of Mark , where He gives His instruction just before He ascended, He says, "Go and cast out devils". Now I can't imagine that we think that devils are less active now than they were then, that they stopped working after Jesus ascended to heaven. What are the chances that we don't have them all around us?

We must be alert, and we can ask the help of the one who has more power than the evil one.

How do we do this?

I see myself in the spiritual realm, just asking God to put his angels everywhere. I put them around the house, in the different rooms, in our office, in the church – everywhere. Especially those areas where the devil is tempting you. If you need chains to be broken.

**End:** *For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*