

Conversation That Changes Me

If you need wisdom - if you want to know what God wants you to do - ask Him, and He will gladly tell you. He will not resent your asking.

As Christians we believe prayer is a relationship with our Heavenly Father. God created us for a love relationship with Him. If you love someone, you want to spend time with them. If you love God, you want to spend time with Him. The time we spend in God's presence is what we call prayer. One of the best reasons to pray is simply to spend time with the One who loves us and whom we love. God is pleased when we talk with Him, both expressing our appreciation for His friendship and asking for His help and guidance.

God wants us to be like Him in all the wonderful character qualities that give life and hope to the world around us. God wants us to work together with Him to make and remake things that need touches of care and beauty and healing. Prayer is God's way of helping us co-operate together to get the job done.

If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and heal their land.

Prayer is not designed to change God. It is designed to change us. Prayer is not calling on God to bless our activities. Rather, prayer brings us close to God, shows us His will, helps us understand life in a new way, and prepares us to obey this new plan. Prayer reminds us that God is the creator and we are the created. To come to God in prayer reminds us that there is more to life than our own experience and our own perspective.

Jesus promised: ***When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. ... He will convince the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness.***
(John 16)

When we pray God tells us the truth. Our minds have listened to false information so long we are convinced that is how life really operates. We need to have the "familiar" changed for reality. God wants to show us both our true limits and His wonderful possibilities that will transform us and our way of approaching life. God wants to give us the power to choose for new thoughts, new attitudes, and new behaviours.

God promises: "When they call on me, I will answer; I will be with them in trouble. I will rescue them and honor them.

But those who wait on the Lord will find new strength. They will fly high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint. (Isaiah 40)

Life with God is about relationship and for a relationship to be healthy the needs and desires of both parties need to be shared and honoured. What matters to God? What's on God's heart? How can we live our day

in a way that responds to the many ways God has cared for us and helped us? We both benefit when we pray. God's kingdom of love and peace is extended and we experience the purpose and joy that God intended for us. Only God knows what shape and form our lives need to be in to receive His goodness. We can spend lots of time telling God all the things we "want God to do for us" OR we can ask God to show us life as He sees it and to help us pray things that He knows are truly good. God wants to be our friend and live in a love relationship with us. Prayer is God's way of nurturing that relationship.

Questions For Reflection and Discussion

1. What am I doing in my prayer life that takes both God's and my own interests into account?
2. How has prayer changed me and changed circumstances in my life?
3. In what new areas would it be helpful for me to start praying and seeking God?

What should I say when I pray?

- List the many things in today that are good and for which you are thankful.
- Tell God things that you appreciate about Him.
- Tell God the truth about your choices, your thoughts, and your behaviours. Ask for forgiveness for things you have done wrong, things you have believed wrongly, actions you have not taken that would have been responsible and helpful.
- Receive God's forgiveness, God's healing, and God's power to change what is going on inside of you and to give you new power for what is ahead
- Pray for God's will and God's plan in situations around the world