

Creating a daily prayer routine

WHY?

Prayer is as essential to your existence as sleeping, eating, drinking, and even breathing. Jesus knew of the importance of prayer.

Throughout the gospels, he regularly went away by himself at specific times and to specific places to talk to God in prayer.¹ Jesus' example shouldn't be lost on any who follow him today.

HOW?

Spending time in personal prayer each day is one of the single most important tasks for followers of Jesus in today's world. It is absolutely necessary for your spiritual growth. And there's more. Your confidence in praying together with others will more likely flow and grow as a result of the time you spend praying on your own.

So, as you think about creating a personal prayer routine that will keep you going and growing in prayer each day, here are seven things to keep in mind:

- 1 / Pick Your Time** When will you pray? First thing in the morning? Last thing at night? On your daily commute? During your lunch break? When the kids are sleeping? After your workout? As a general rule, you should give God your best time of day when you're most awake and aware.
- 2 / Pick Your Place** Where will you pray? You can pray anywhere. A loft. A garden. A spare room. A park bench. Wherever you decide, it's important that you find a place away from the constant noise and distraction of everyday life – somewhere you can be still and know God.²
- 3 / Pick Your Posture** How should you pray? What posture is best for you? Sitting on a chair, a sofa, or the floor? Kneeling? Standing? Walking? Lying down? Whatever you decide, come as simply and naturally as you can manage, with your focus fixed firmly on God.
- 4 / Start Small** How long should you pray for? 1, 5, 10, 15, 30 minutes, or longer? There's no "right" answer. Simply start where you are, not where you feel you should be. If you don't currently pray each day, start by aiming to pray for 1-5 minutes. Increase this time as you become more confident and comfortable. If you regularly pray for 10-15 minutes each day, consider increasing your prayer time as you are able.
- 5 / Listen Before Speaking** What should you say? Before praying, it often helps to let God speak first. The best way to do that is by reading a verse or passage from the Bible. The words of the Bible are living, active, precious and true. So, start by putting God's words into your ears, and let what you read inspire you as you pray.

- 6 / Pray as You Can** So, what should you say? Thankfully, God isn't looking for perfect prayers. Instead, he simply wants to spend time with you and hear your voice. You don't need to try to sound more holy or pure or spiritual than you are. Just pray as you can. Worship God for who he is. Thank him for blessing you. Confess your sins and struggles. Tell him your worries. Ask him for help. And pray for others.
- 7 / Enjoy Praying** Your daily prayer time should be enjoyed, not endured! If it helps, make yourself tea or coffee. Sit by a window you love. Savour the quiet, or listen to some worship music. Go outside. Pray while walking or whilst doing some other kind of activity. If you find praying quietly or out loud hard, try writing your prayers out on paper instead. Ultimately, work with your personality, not against it.

GIVE IT A GO

It's time to pray! Use the model below as a guide for your prayer time. This example should take around 10 minutes to pray, but feel free to adjust the timings and take it at your own pace.

- Rest / 1 minute** Stop. Be still. Sit quietly, emptying your mind of distractions and to-do lists. Picture God as your good, kind, and loving heavenly Father. Rest in the encouragement that he sees you and hears you.
- Read / 2 minutes** Read a verse or short passage of Scripture. Let the words sink in. What captured your attention? What do you notice about God? What words or phrases can act as a launch pad for prayer in your own words?
- Rejoice / 2 minutes** God is Creator, loving, compassionate, patient, faithful, almighty, friend, strong, redeemer, rescuer, generous, everlasting, and so much more. He also blesses us with many wonderful gifts, not least salvation and a place in his family. With wonder, worship God for who he is. With joy, thank him for all that he has given you and done for you in your life. If it's helpful, listen to a worship song.
- Repent / 2 minutes** Sin is serious, and something we're all guilty of doing. Review the last 24 hours, allowing the Holy Spirit to challenge any sinful actions and inactions, thoughts, words, and deeds. With sorrow, come clean with God about these things. But don't remain there. With thankfulness, remember the cross and the empty tomb to remind yourself that in Jesus, you are forgiven and set free.
- Request / 2 minutes** Tell God what's on your heart. Pray through your day and the things you need. Then, with urgency and confidence, pray for your family, friends, church, local community, country, and the world. Be bold when you pray, asking that God's kingdom come and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
- Ready / 1 minute** Stop. Be still. Sit quietly. Before embarking upon the rest of your day, pray the Lord's Prayer out loud.