

Pray Directly to God

Prayer is an amazing privilege. The fact that we can come to the Creator of the Universe, the Alpha and Omega, the all-seeing, all-powerful God and talk to Him as if talking to a loving parent is...truly mind blowing.

But it begs the question: why? Why is an all-powerful being willing to spend time listening to our problems?

The answer is simple, He loves us. God loves us, and He wants a relationship with us.

Prayer is an integral part of having a relationship with God; it is how we communicate with Him.

This relationship with God has been made possible through the work Jesus did on the cross.

Hebrews 10:1-23 (NLT) “The old system under the law of Moses was only a shadow, a dim preview of the good things to come, not the good things themselves. The sacrifices under that system were repeated again and again, year after year, but they were never able to provide perfect cleansing for those who came to worship. If they could have provided perfect cleansing, the sacrifices would have stopped, for the worshipers would have been purified once for all time, and their feelings of guilt would have disappeared.

But instead, those sacrifices actually reminded them of their sins year after year. For it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. That is why, when Christ came into the world, he said to God, ‘You did not want animal sacrifices or sin offerings. But you have given me a body to offer. You were not pleased with burnt offerings or other offerings for sin. Then I said, ‘Look, I have come to do your will, O God—as is written about me in the Scriptures.’

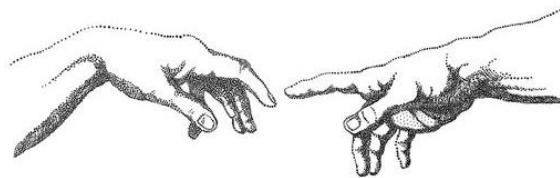
First, Christ said, ‘You did not want animal sacrifices or sin offerings or burnt offerings or other offerings for sin, nor were you pleased with them’ (though they are required by the law of

Moses). Then he said, ‘Look, I have come to do your will.’ He cancels the first covenant in order to put the second into effect. **For God’s will was for us to be made holy by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all time.**

Under the old covenant, the priest stands and ministers before the altar day after day, offering the same sacrifices again and again, which can never take away sins. But our High Priest offered himself to God as a single sacrifice for sins, good for all time. Then he sat down in the place of honor at God’s right hand. There he waits until his enemies are humbled and made a footstool under his feet. **For by that one offering he forever made perfect those who are being made holy.**

And the Holy Spirit also testifies that this is so. For he says, ‘This is the new covenant I will make with my people on that day, says the LORD: I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.’ **Then he says, ‘I will never again remember their sins and lawless deeds.’ And when sins have been forgiven, there is no need to offer any more sacrifices.**

And so, dear brothers and sisters, **we can boldly enter heaven’s Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus. By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place. And since we have a great High Priest who rules over God’s house, let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him.** For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ’s blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water. Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise.”



Pray Only to God

There are some belief systems which would try to tell us that we have to petition other beings to talk to God for us.

But why would we ask others to talk to God when God not only **allows** us to talk directly to Him, He **wants** to hear directly from us.

The God of the Bible is real, He hears, and He answers.

Philippians 4:6-7 (ESV) “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

1 John 5:14 (NIV) “This is the **confidence we have in approaching God:** that if we ask anything according to his will, **he hears us.**”

When we pray it does not land at the feet of beings who cannot help or do not care to help. The Prophet Elijah demonstrated this difference between the God of the Bible and others when he challenged the Prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:20-40). And the Bible repeatedly talks about how foolish it is to pray to anything besides God, Himself.

Jeremiah 10:3-16 (ESV) “For the customs of the peoples are vanity. A tree from the forest is cut down and worked with an axe by the hands of a craftsman. They decorate it with silver and gold; they fasten it with hammer and nails so that it cannot move. Their idols are like scarecrows in a cucumber field, and they cannot speak; they have to be carried, for they cannot walk. Do not be afraid of them, for they cannot do evil, neither is it in them to do good.

There is none like you, O LORD; you are great, and your name is great in might. Who would not fear you, O King of the nations? For this is your due; for among all the wise ones of the nations and in all their kingdoms there is none like you. They are both stupid and foolish; the instruction of idols is but wood!

Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish and gold from Uphaz. They are the work of the craftsman and of the hands of the goldsmith; their clothing is violet and purple; they are all the work of skilled men. But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God and the everlasting King. At his wrath the earth quakes, and the nations cannot endure his indignation.

Thus shall you say to them: "The gods who did not make the heavens and the earth shall perish from the earth and from under the heavens." It is he who made the earth by his power, who established the world by his wisdom, and by his understanding stretched out the heavens. When he utters his voice, there is a tumult of waters in the heavens, and he makes the mist rise from the ends of the earth. He makes lightning for the rain and he brings forth the wind from his storehouses.

Every man is stupid and without knowledge; every goldsmith is put to shame by his idols, for his images are false, and there is no breath in them. They are worthless, a work of delusion; at the time of their punishment they shall perish. Not like these is he who is the portion of Jacob, for he is the one who formed all things, and Israel is the tribe of his inheritance; the LORD of hosts is his name."

Pray Openly and Honestly

Praying is just like communicating in any other relationship. It's as easy as thinking and talking.

Prayer not only gives God the opportunity to respond to us by answering prayers but prayer also changes those who pray. It reminds us to think of God throughout the day, and when we are God-conscious as individuals, our behavior is different than if we rarely think about God.

Be open and honest, God already knows the secret parts of our hearts anyway. We need to talk with Him honestly, acknowledging the truth of what we think and feel in order to properly work through stuff with God. This builds a stronger relationship between us.

Don't worry about wording things perfectly in prayer. God will even help us with our weaknesses in prayer.

Romans 8:26-27 (ESV) "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God."

God won't misunderstand or pretend to misunderstand what it is we need and are asking for. God loves us and will help us in ways we cannot even think to pray for. He will answer our prayers by giving us what we need and what is best for us.

Luke 11:9-13 (ESV) "And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? **If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"**

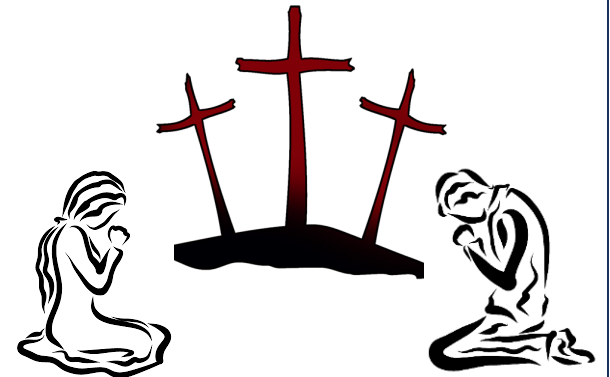


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Prayer



- Pray directly to God
- Pray only to God
- Pray openly and honestly

