



Reflection

Praise God that He is the God who hears us.

Admit to God that the privilege of prayer is something you sometimes take for granted.

Thank God that we have the opportunity to come before Him in prayer.

Renew a commitment to God to keep in touch with Him through prayer.

Girls in Prayer Patch Answering Your Questions about Prayer

American Heritage Girls
Pioneers



My best friend, Sydney, is a twin.

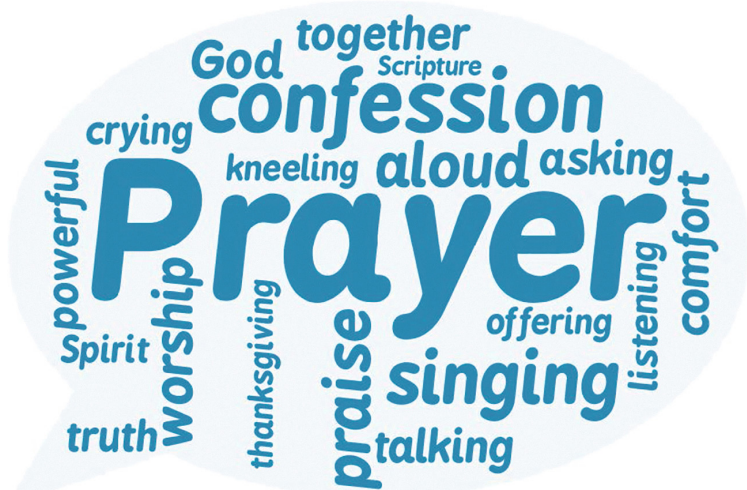
She's funny and caring, loves animals like me, and we always have fun together. She loves to come over to my house and hang out with my family. One night when we all sat down together for dinner, my Mom said, "At our house, we always pray and thank God for the food He has given us." I knew she said that because my friend was here, and Mom wanted her to know why we were going to pray.



Sydney looked right at my Mom and said, "I don't know how to pray." I could tell she wasn't embarrassed, and I was glad, she just didn't understand prayer and didn't know how. At our home, praying is something we do all the time. But I know it can feel tricky and scary to pray. I could have waited for my Mom to explain, but Sydney is my friend and I want her to know and love Jesus. I want her to understand what a gift it is to be able to talk to God about anything at any time.

So I said, "That's okay. Praying is easy. It's just talking to God. Let me show you how."

—Gabriella, Age 12



Decoding Messages from God

Sometimes it feels like receiving messages from God is like decoding a secret message. Use the key below to decode some messages God has given us through His Word. Then write the "Truth" in your own words.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
11	26	6	17	1	23	15	7	24	2	19	14	8
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
21	3	13	22	9	18	4	12	20	10	16	5	25

How should I treat my people who are mean to me?

26-12-4 24 4-1-14-14 5-3-12, 14-3-20-1 5-3-12-9

1-21-1-8-24-1-18 11-21-17 13-9-11-5 23-3-9

4-7-3-18-1 10-7-3 13-1-9-18-1-6-12-4-1 5-3-12.

Matthew 5:44

Truth: _____

Does God even care about me?

6-11-18-4 11-14-14 5-3-12-9 11-21-16-24-1-4-5 3-21

7-24-8 26-1-6-11-12-18-1 7-1 6-11-9-1-18 23-3-9

5-3-12.

1 Peter 5:7

Truth: _____

If it would save your life ... **could you go a month without praying?**

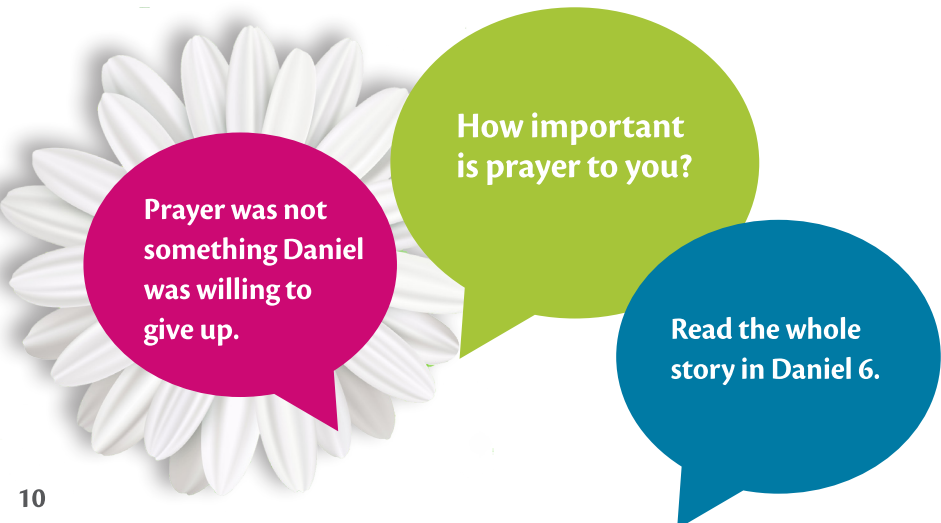
The answer for most of us, if we were really honest, would be probably be, “Yes, if it allowed us to live.” It may seem like a scenario that would never happen, but it did.

Daniel was a servant of the Lord who was captured and taken to the foreign land of Babylon. Although he was probably only a year or two older than you when he was taken, Daniel served God faithfully. As he grew up, Daniel often faced circumstances that would test his faith, and he found courage and strength in his God. His faithfulness made him an excellent leader and worker, but it also made him the target of jealous enemies. In fact, the Bible tells us in Daniel 6:4-5 that his enemies, “could find no corruption in him because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent. Finally these men said, ‘We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God.’”

So they set up a trap and asked the foreign king to make a law that would stop people from praying to any god for thirty days. If they broke this law, they were to be thrown into a den of lions. The king signed it into law before thinking twice.

“Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help.” Daniel 6:10-11

Daniel was thrown into the lion’s den for a night, and this time it was the king who prayed that Daniel would be saved. That night God rescued Daniel because he trusted in his God.



Prayer was not something Daniel was willing to give up.

How important is prayer to you?

Read the whole story in Daniel 6.



What does your prayer life say about you?

1. When you feel frustrated or angry which are you most likely to do?

- A. Call or text your best friend
- B. Get on Facebook or other social media
- C. Bottle it up inside
- D. Talk to God about it through prayer

2. How many times a day do you pray?

- A. 1-2 times a day
- B. 3-8 times a day
- C. 9 or more times a day
- D. I never pray

3. When are you most likely to stop and pray?

- A. When your teacher gives you a surprise test
- B. When your best friend is being mean to you
- C. When you just can't seem to connect with your parents
- D. When you feel confused or afraid of the world we live in

4. Which of the following best describes how you pray (in general)?

- A. By myself in the morning
- B. With others, especially at church
- C. Just whenever, throughout the day, little sentence prayers
- D. Journaling or singing

5. When you pray, which of the following are you most likely to feel?

- A. Happy/Joyful
- B. Frustrated/Angry
- C. Lost/Confused
- D. Hopeful/Trusting



Results ...

What does your prayer life say about you?

1. If you answered ...

A. It's great to have a best friend and to be able to talk to someone about our problems, but like Proverbs 13:20 tells us to choose friends wisely, we want to choose friends that will point us back to God and even pray with us. (James 5:16)

B. Getting on social media when we are upset may seem easier than praying. However, if we are frustrated or angry when we get on social media, we have to be careful not to post something that we will regret later. Do as Psalm 118:8 says and take refuge in our LORD rather than social media.

C. Some of us naturally bottle up feelings of anger and frustration inside, but like shaking up a bottle of Coke or Pepsi eventually it will blow. Instead of bottling it up, release some of that pressure to your God in prayer. (Hebrews 4:16)

D. If you answered D, well done. One of the best things we can do when we feel frustrated or angry is to talk to God in prayer. (1 Peter 5:7)

2. There's no perfect number for how many times you should pray in a day. It's just important that you are talking to God. But based on your answer, you could be like these guys. If you answered ...

A. You are like Job. Job was a man who served and obeyed the Lord. His habit was to rise early and make prayers for his children through sacrifice and offering. Read it for yourself in Job 1:5.

B. You are like Daniel. Daniel made a special point to pray 3 times a day! Read about him in Daniel 6:10.

C. You are like Elijah! Elijah prayed for a sign seven times before the Lord revealed it to him. Read about it in 1 Kings 18:42-44.

D. Sometimes we all go through seasons where we forget to pray or it's hard to pray. If that's you, there's no need to feel guilty or discouraged. God still wants to hear from you. Matthew 7:11 tells us how much God cares for us. You can make the decision to restart your conversation with God today!

3. If you answered...

A. There's nothing wrong with praying if we are in a bind, in fact, sometimes that's the best time! Just remember to talk to God even when you're not in a tight spot.

B. God cares about all areas of your life, even when someone isn't treating you kindly. You can talk to Him about anything!



How to pray when ...

You don't know how you feel ...

Start Here:

God, thank You for knowing everything about me, even when I don't. Sometimes my emotions are difficult for me to explain. Psalm 139 says you formed me and knit me together before I was born. You are a great God, a personal God. Give me the peace and assurance only You can give me today.

You don't know how to pray out loud ...

Start Here:

Lord, I get nervous, and sometimes I don't know what to say. It's hard to even get the words to come out of my mouth. You are patient with me and with my insecurities. Help me to remember that I'm talking to You and not trying to impress others. Thank You that You hear the secret prayers of my heart and the words that come out of my mouth. (Matthew 6:5-8)

You feel scared ...

Start here:

Protector God, Your power is matchless and I know that You are above all things. Nothing can compare to You. I choose to rest in Your arms today. I hand over my fears and worries to You, just as 1 Peter 5:7 tells us. Thank You for being my Protector today.

It feels awkward ...

Start Here:

Jesus, sometimes it feels awkward talking to You, someone I can't see or hear in person. But I trust that You are there no matter what my senses tell me. You said in John 20:29 that there is a special blessing for those who believe without seeing You. Help me learn to pray naturally.

You don't know what to say ...

Start Here:

Father, thank You for being okay with that. You tell me I can pray like Jesus taught in Matthew 6:9-13, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."



Three more reasons to pray

You need wisdom.

Every day there are conversations and circumstances that leave us wondering what to do, or how to move forward. Thank God that He doesn't leave it up to us to have all of the answers because none of us do.

"If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him." James 1:5

Isn't it a relief that God is ready for you to turn to Him and ask for wisdom when you don't know what to do next?

It moves God to act.

It's easy for us to think that our prayers don't make any difference. However, our prayers have power to bring blessings, change hearts, and provide protection for those we love. It may not be in our power to change circumstances or to offer help, but God always has that ability.

"And I will do anything you ask in my name. Then the Father will receive glory from the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name. I will do it."

John 14:13-14

Your prayers have the power to make changes in your life and in others' lives.

Prayer brings peace.

Many times we pray because we are upset, we don't understand something, we are frustrated, or we just feel plain lost. Prayer can change our emotions because through it God changes us. When we feel upset, God uses prayer to give us peace. As we fix our minds on who God is we can be filled with hope and trust that He is in control and working for our good.

"Don't worry about anything. No matter what happens, tell God about everything. Ask and pray, and give thanks to him. Then God's peace will watch over your hearts and your minds. He will do this because you belong to Christ Jesus. God's peace can never be completely understood."

Philippians 4:6-7

Prayer is way for God to provide us with His peace.

C. It's not unusual for two people to disagree, especially parents and kids. Talking to God is the perfect thing to do when you don't understand someone!

D. We live in a big world and it can be very confusing, overwhelming, and even a bit scary. God is in control of the world, so when you feel confused, talking to the one in control is the right way to go!

4. Anytime of day is a great time to pray, in all ways and in all circumstances. The Bible tells us to pray in all these ways:

A. Mark 1:35 tells us that Jesus left the house early to go and pray,

B. When the early church is described in Acts 2:42, they are said to be devoted to many things. One of those things was prayer!

C. Romans 12:12 tells us to be constant in prayer, that means just praying through out the day!

D. Prayer comes in great variety, journaling and singing are great ways to pray, just like we read in Psalm 147:7.

5. The Bible tells us that we can pray to God no matter how we feel and on all occasions (Ephesians 6:18). If you answered ...

A. You are like Miriam! After God had delivered the Israelites from the Egyptians and Pharaoh, Moses led the nation of Israel in a song of joy to God. And in Exodus 15:21, Miriam sings about her joy in the Lord for the great things He had done for them.

B. You are like Hannah! Hannah had a situation where she felt frustrated and distressed. She had been married for a while and wanted a baby SO badly, but she couldn't get pregnant. Then, to top it all off, she was mocked by other women. We read in 1 Samuel 1 that Hannah prayed to the Lord in her distress.

C. You are like Esther! When Esther was faced with a crisis that would kill her people (a whole nation) she fasted, which is a special type of praying. She fasted to seek God's help as she felt lost and confused about the injustice going on around her. Check it out in Esther 4:15-16.

D. You are like Mary! Mary, the mother of Jesus, was told through a conversation with an angel that she would give birth to a son, even though she wasn't married and hadn't been with a man. In Luke 1:38, she sent a response back with the angel that she was a servant of the Lord, that she trusts Him! Then, in verses 46-55 she sings a song to the Lord that not only praises Him but shows how much she trusts Him!




What A Privilege

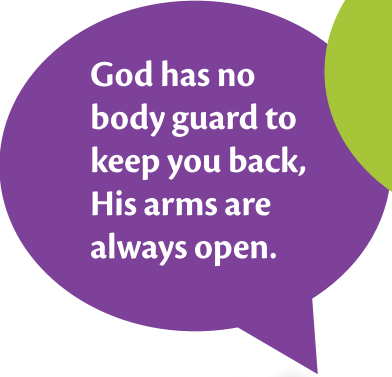
Throughout the Bible, God gives us glimpses of who He is in his nature and character.

He does this so that we can know Him. When the prophet Isaiah saw the Lord in Isaiah 6, the vision of God sitting on His throne high and exalted made Isaiah aware of just how small and unholy he was. Isaiah didn't feel worthy to be in God's presence. God understood that feeling and the truth behind it. None of us are worthy to be in God's presence! He is completely holy, completely powerful, and completely good.

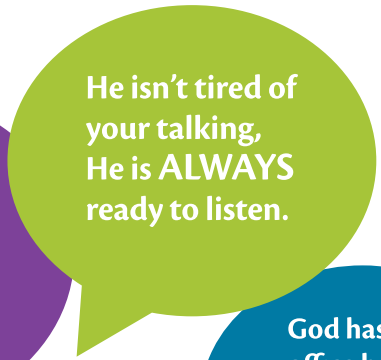
God sent an angel to touch Isaiah's lips so that he could speak to God and for God, and in the same way, God sent Jesus for us. We could never approach the Almighty God without Jesus, who takes away our sin. Have you asked God to take away your sin and thanked Him for sending Jesus to make that possible? And if so, have you thanked Him that we can talk to Him day and night?



He simply invites you to come.



God has no body guard to keep you back, His arms are always open.



He isn't tired of your talking, He is ALWAYS ready to listen.



God has no office hours, His door is ALWAYS open to you.

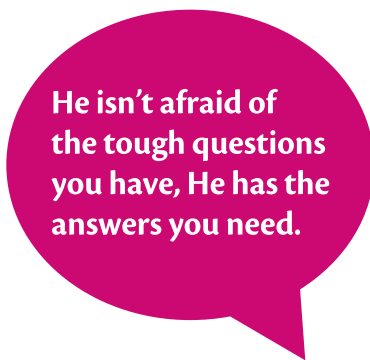
Maybe You Wonder ... Why Pray?

Great question! Our faith isn't just a religion but a relationship with God. Like other friendships, our relationship with God takes time, conversation, and effort. We have conversations with God through prayer that involves listening and speaking.

Jesus knew the importance of keeping in communication with His Father. Matthew 14:23 says, "After he had sent them away, he went up on a mountain-side by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone." Jesus was serving God and busy with His people, but needed the wisdom and strength only His Father could give. We pray to keep a strong relationship with God too.


What if He says "no"?

It can be so hard to understand why God doesn't always answer our prayers the way we want Him to. Sometimes it can even be difficult to wait for an answer. This is where our faith grows strong as we trust Him. Because the Bible tells us that God is always good, always loving, and always kind, we can trust His heart even when we don't understand.



He isn't afraid of the tough questions you have, He has the answers you need.

Why Tell God things He already knows?



Psalm 139:4, "LORD, even before I speak a word, you know all about it."

Proverbs 16:9, "In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps."

We're glad you're asking tough questions. You're right, God is omniscient, that means He knows everything. He knows everything that ever happened in the past and everything that will happen in the future. But part of God's plan is that we would partner with Him through prayer to see things happen in our world. That means there are certain things that won't happen if we don't pray.