

⁵ “And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁷ “And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words.

Matthew 6:5-9 

⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. ⁹ Pray then like this:

***“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.*”**

Matthew 6:5-9

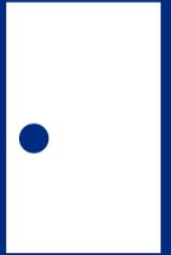


Our working definition of prayer:

Prayer is simply intentionally
communicating with God.



From the Old Testament...



- Prayer was asking God to do what he had already promised to do.
- Prayer was asking God to come through on his covenants.
- Prayer was asking God to answer what He had said in his word.
- To effectively pray, you had to know God and His word; You had to know how he had revealed Himself.

"Our Father"

- By creation
- By adoption

⁴ But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. ⁶ Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." ⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

Galatians 4:4-7

¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.
¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Romans 8:14-17



“We have an impulse to look within to find a reason for His love because we have an arrogant desire to be worthy of His love. We want to find in ourselves some reason to be deserving of His love. It is a false hope that we will discover something within us that inclined God to love us. There is not a thing within us that inclined God to love us. The more you look within the more you will discover reasons for him to correct you, not to love you. And I think this forms the daily challenge for each of us, theologically, personally, and experientially. How can I be certain of His love for me since I am unworthy of His love?”



Russell Moore

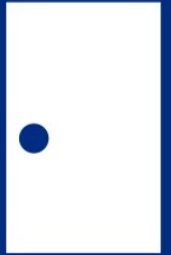
“The greatest sorrow and burden you can lay on the Father, the greatest unkindness you can do to him, is not to believe that he loves you.”

John Owen

When we pray as someone not loved, we feel condemned. We feel despair, fear, anger. We feel never good enough.



When we pray to Our Father...



There is

1. Authority
2. Affection
3. Fellowship
4. Honor

And this disarms all our selfishness, all our pride, all our anger and all our reasons.

1. We imply a special claim to God

"All that compassion and mercy and love and kindness in God is for me, is mine."

2. It implies a community with all the household of God

"I am part of that family; I have been saved to be part of a community."

3. We speak of a bond of society between the faithful children of the same father.

"I am surrounded by other fellow children, other people who are in love with God."



When we say "Our Father..."

1. We excitedly look forward to being in his presence
2. We are bold in his Presence, where there is care, kindness, joy, peace...
3. We compassionately life up others in different situations.



Because he is our Father...

Next Step Questions



1. What gives you confidence when you pray? Is it how good you are at praying or your relationship with God?
2. Examine your motivation when you pray or when you don't pray-- is it because it is a task or a delight?