



What it
means to
Pray?

Prayer – what is it?

- In it's simplest and most immediate form
– asking God for help!
 - The act of making a reverent petition to God, a god, or another object of worship

Oxford English Dictionary

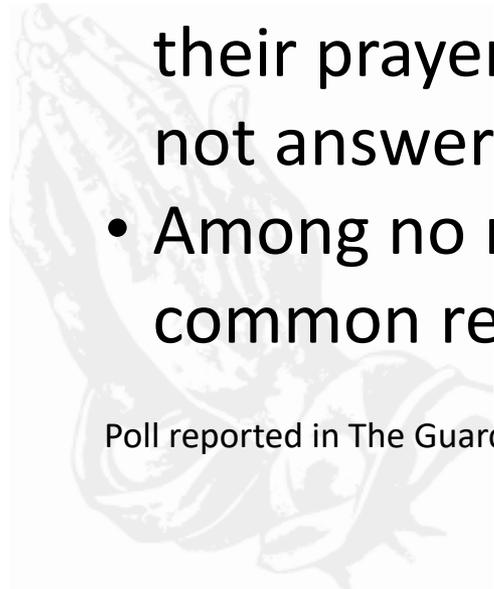


Prayer – Why pray?

Form of communication with God.

- 20% adults admit to praying despite saying they are not religious
- >50% of all adults in UK pray
- <50% of those who pray say they believe God hears their prayers – slim majority feel their prayers are not answered
- Among no religious personal crisis or tragedy most common reason for praying

Poll reported in The Guardian, carried out by ComRes on behalf of Tearfund



Prayer – Why pray?

Form of communication with God

Adoration

Pause

Confession

Rejoice

Thanksgiving

Ask

Supplication

Yield

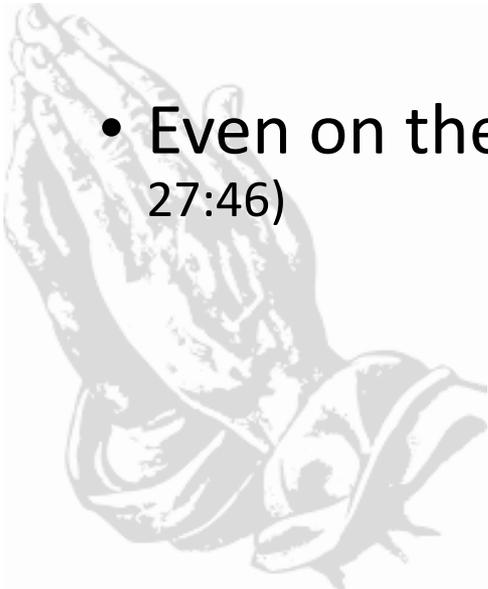


“...if my people who are called by my name humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”

2 Chronicles 7:14



- Very early in the morning while it was still dark, Jesus went to a solitary place and prayed (Mk 1:35)
- After feeding the five thousand he went up on a mountainside by himself and prayed (Matt 14:23)
- One day Jesus was praying in a certain place (Lk 11:6)
- In the garden of Gethsemane he prayed (Matt 26:36)
- Even on the cross Jesus cried out to his Father (Matt 27:46)



JESUS PRAYED!

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples”

Jesus gave them what has now become known as The Lord’s Prayer. (Matthew 6: 9-14)



Matthew 6

- v 1 - 4 Giving
- v 5 - 15 **Praying**
- v 16 - 18 Fasting
- v 19 - 24 Treasures in Heaven
- v 25 - 34 Worry



- And **WHEN** you pray..... v5
- But **WHEN** you pray..... v6
- And **WHEN** you pray..... v7



Space and time for prayer

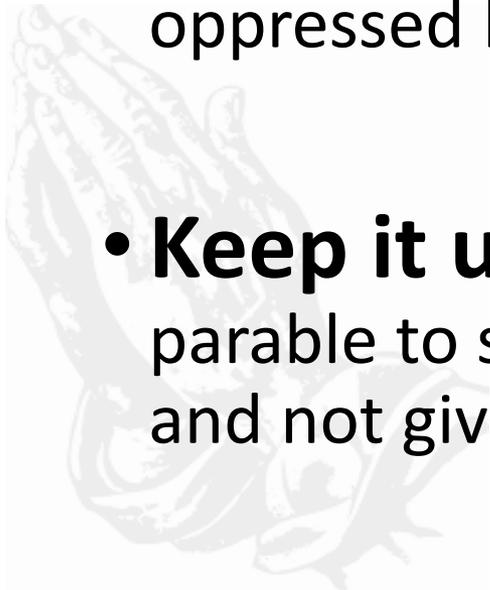
Nothing wrong with prayer on the run or with arrow prayers but if we want an intimate relationship we need time and space

Be still and know that I am God – Psalm 46:10





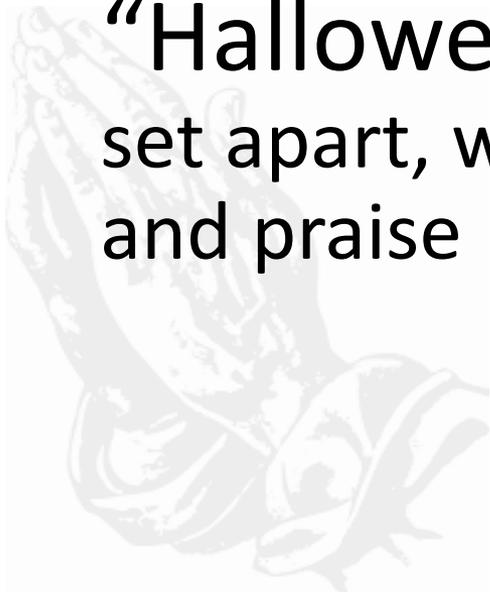
- **Keep it simple** – “and when you pray do not keep on babbling like pagans for they think they will be heard because of their many words” Matt 6:7
- **Keep it real** – “I say to God my Rock, ‘Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by my enemy’” Psalm 42:9
- **Keep it up** – Then Jesus told the disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. Luke 18:1



Then this is how you should pray....

“Our Father in heaven” – direct recognition of who He is (and who we are – His Children)

“Hallowed be your name” – He is holy, set apart, worthy of our worship, adoration and praise



“Your kingdom come” - prayer of intercession for others. Standing before God in the gap on behalf of the land.

Ezekiel 22:30 “I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so that I would not destroy it, but I found none.”



“Your will be done....” –
acknowledgement that God is sovereign

What happens when our prayer seem to go
unanswered?

Matthew 26:39 “My Father, if it is possible,
may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I
will, but as you will.”



Vulnerability with friends.

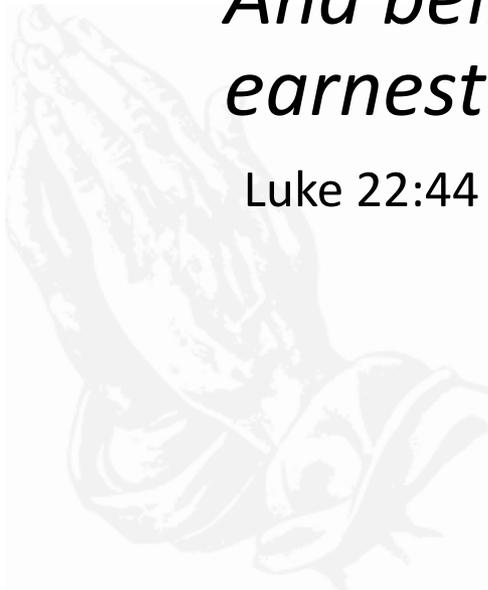
He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled....'stay here and keep watch'

Mark 14:33-34

Pushing into prayer.

And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly.

Luke 22:44

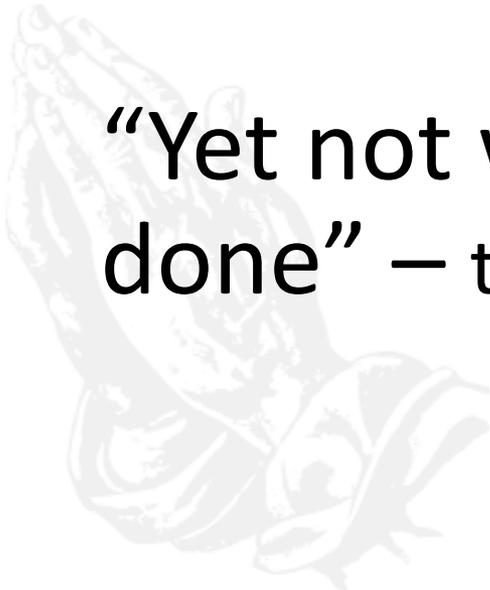


“Abba Father.....” – hold onto God’s love

“Everything is possible for you” – hold out for God’s power

“Take this cup from me” – be honest

“Yet not what I will, but your will be done” – the prayer of relinquishment



“...on earth as it is in heaven.” –
Heaven is God’s throne and the earth His
footstool (Isaiah 66:1)

Contemplative prayer – “loving attentiveness
to God, talk recedes into the background and
feelings come to the foreground” – (Richard Foster –
cited in How to Pray Pete Gregg)



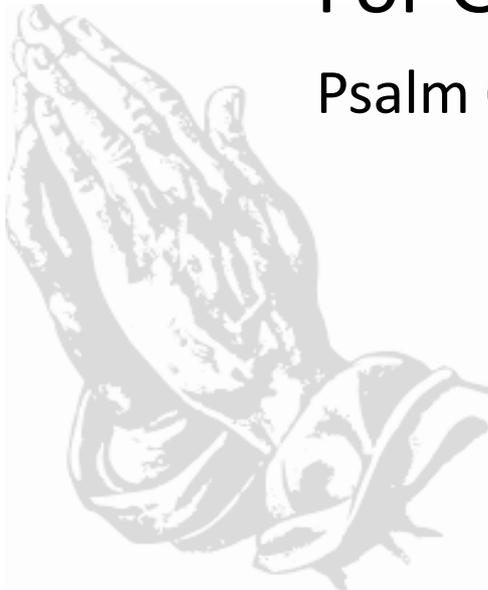
- Discerning
- Biblical
- Focused on Jesus

Let the words of my mouth and the **meditation of my heart** be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

Psalm 19:14

For God alone **my soul waits in silence;**

Psalm 62:1



Meditation – “me and God” stage

Contemplation – “God and me” stage

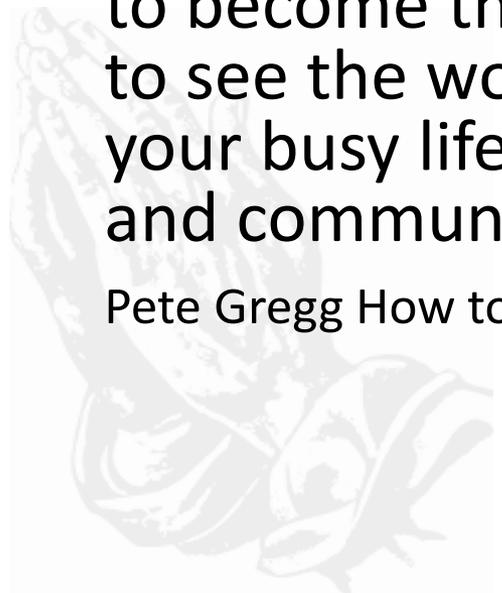
Communion – “Only God” stage



Why practice contemplative prayer?

“Your soul is crying out for a deeper encounter with Christ and, if your faith is to thrive for years to come, if it is to survive the coming seasons of darkness and pain, if you are to know and be known by Jesus in a richer, more fulfilling way, if you are to engage with him when words no longer have meaning, if you are to become the loving person he wants you to be and to see the world he sees it, you must make space in your busy life for regular meditation, contemplation and communion with God”

Pete Gregg How to Pray



“Give us this day our daily bread.” – daily provision, the necessities of life, not necessarily the luxuries.

Why do we need to ask?..... Does God not already know what we need? Matt 6:32



- Relational
- Vulnerable
- Intentional

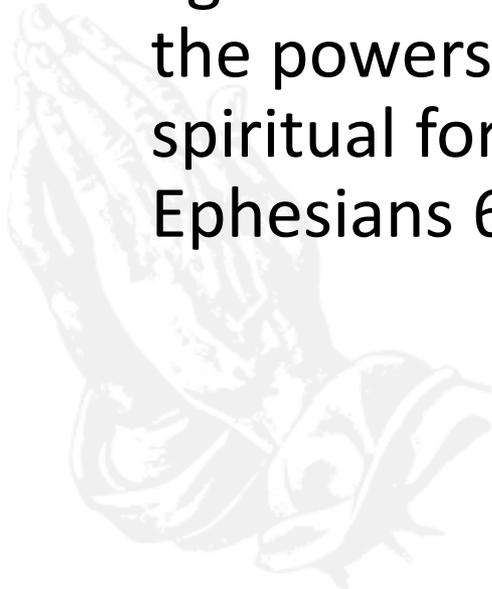
“Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors.” – confession and reconciliation



“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one” – we are in a spiritual battle which is real.



- When tempted no-one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. James 1:13-14
- For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Ephesians 6:12



“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one” – we are in a spiritual battle which is real.

Know how to fight:

- Sword of the Spirit
- Shoes of the Gospel of Peace

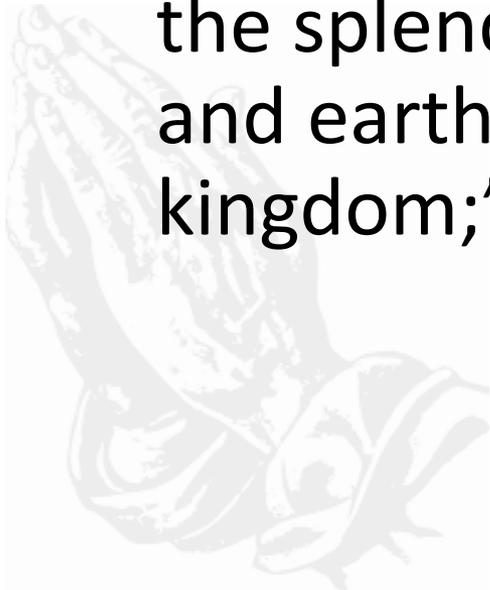
- Belt of Truth
- Breastplate of Righteousness
- Shield of Faith
- Helmet of Salvation



“For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever.” – prayer comes full circle.

“Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendour, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom;”

1 Chronicles 29:11



“Amen” – Yes! I agree!



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.
For the kingdom, the power
and the glory are yours
Now and forever
Amen

