

Cultivate Reflection Guide

How to Pray: How Can I Begin to Pray?

June 4/5, 2022

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NEW series: If there's one thing that seasoned Christians and new Christians can relate to, it's the struggle with prayer. What are we supposed to say to the God who created the universe? Does he really hear us? What if we get the words wrong? As a church we'll explore these questions and more as we learn how to pray.

Our Reflection Guide is a tool to help you take ownership of your spiritual growth. Use it to start a REAL conversation in your community group or to cultivate God's word into your life through personal bible study. Choose the questions that encourage you to reflect and respond to what we're learning. Pair it with your bible, a journal or any other resource that helps you learn. *It's not about getting through the content, but getting the content through you!*

Read: [Matthew 6:5-13 NIV](#). Highlight, underline or make note of any words or phrases that stand out to you. What from this passage do you want to cultivate into your life and carry with you?

Reflect: As you reflect on the weekend message, what most encouraged, instructed or challenged you? This could be any word, verse or point that got your attention or got you thinking.

Respond:

1. Prayer begins by **imperfectly showing up for it**.

- Describe what "prayer" looks like in your life. This could include when, where, how or even what it means to you. Remember, prayer is personal and there is no perfect pattern.
- As you honestly consider your prayer life, what obstacles or hindrances come between you and praying? These could be practical [time, other priorities, distractions], emotional [thoughts, fears, insecurities] or spiritual [your understanding of God or prayer].

2. Prayer begins **with honesty**.

- How does the encouragement to "lay before God what is actually in you, not what should be in you" free you to pray more?
- Is there anything you want to honestly lay before God right now? God meets us with grace in our prayers. Talk to Him, and if there are people you trust around you, be honest with them too.

3. Prayer begins with **discovery** not just **teaching**.

- How would you like to grow in your prayer life? This could be something you want to START doing or something you want to STOP doing SO THAT you pray more.
- What is a next step you will take to pursue that growth? This may stretch and challenge you, but be sure it's realistic so that you do it! Keep in mind...this is about progress, not perfection!

Prayer: *"Lord, I confess that sometimes prayer can feel like an uphill battle – obstacles, distractions, worries and wandering thoughts at every turn. Remind me that you already know it all. You know my greatest needs and deepest longings before I ask. Father, teach me to honestly talk to you. Help me to imperfectly show up and pray about whatever, whenever and however I can. Thank you for being a safe place for me to be my real self."*

Dig Deeper Opportunity

[Read Philippians 4:6-7 NLT](#). Rather than be anxious or worried, what does this verse instruct us to do? What should our attitude or mindset be as we do that? And what does God promise us in return? Which part of this verse do you most need to cultivate into your life today? Pray and ask God to stand guard over your heart and mind as you live out this verse in REAL life.