

PRAYER DOESN'T HELP
YOUR RELATIONSHIP
WITH GOD. PRAYER IS
YOUR RELATIONSHIP
WITH GOD.
MARK HART



MARK 1:29-39
YEAR B

HOW TO PRAY

ICEBREAKER

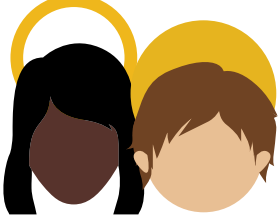


- What's your initial reaction to the word "prayer"?
- Can you list ten different ways of praying?
- Why do you think people pray?
- Do you find it easy to pray?

WATCH THIS VIDEO FROM FR MIKE SCHMITZ (TIPS FOR PRAYING) AND
REFLECT ON THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW:



If you're a believer, prayer is not an _____. Prayer is absolutely _____.



What does having a profound prayer life mean (and is necessary for)?

1st Question: WHEN are you going to pray?

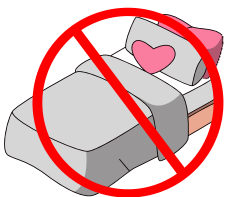
What kind of excuses do people make who skip their scheduled time for prayer?

What does the "when" for your prayer have to become?

What implications does that decision have for how you build your day?



2nd Question: WHERE are you going to pray?



What kind of places are not conducive to prayer?

What kind of places are suitable to use for prayer?

3rd Question: WHAT / HOW are you going to pray?

Name 3 of the types of prayer Fr Mike lists.

If you only have 15 - 20 minutes to pray, what should you do?

What does Fr Mike mean by "commit to a season"?



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4th Question: WHY are you going to pray?

What do many people pray to get from God? _____

What's the problem with that motivation? _____

What is prayer actually meant to create? _____



The battle is just showing up and be there for the whole time, even if it's just 20 minutes.

If you give God 20 minutes of your day, every day for the next 20 years, imagine, what would your life look like? What about the next 40 days? _____

You are called to be a _____-er. What four questions do you have to answer: _____, _____, _____, _____.



Prayer is not always easy, especially if our goal is quick results, or we view it as a vending machine or a magic genie lamp. Sometimes we can get frustrated by our own weak efforts to commit to prayer too. First piece of advice: pray as you can, not as you can't. Make a decision to pray. Some effort is better than no effort. Failing is better than never having tried. It's like strengthening a muscle, the more time and effort you put in, the more results you will see in your own life. It's been said that God has three ways of answering our prayers: **"Yes. Not Yet. I have something better in mind."** Jesus is God, yet we see so many times in the Gospels Jesus praying to His Father in Heaven. Jesus actively communicated with the Father, whether through communal prayer, or personal prayer, in lonely places away from the crowds - a real heart speaks to heart encounter. Prayer isn't easy for us most of the time. Persistence in prayer isn't easy, but Fr Mike's four step guide is a good starting point. And the key is remembering the why - to build a relationship with a God who is already actively pursuing us. The answer to our prayer will always be God's loving heart. That's worth investing 20 minutes a day in!



MISSION!

COMMIT TO A SEASON! PICK ONE TIME, PLACE AND METHOD OF PRAYER TO COMMIT TO FOR THE NEXT FOUR WEEKS. BE REALISTIC BUT BE GENEROUS TO GOD TOO. AS PART OF YOUR PRAYER ASK HIM TO HELP YOU DEEPEN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM. THERE ARE LOTS OF FREE PRAYER APPS LIKE LAUDATE YOU CAN USE TOO!



PRAYER TIME!

Jesus, I want to build a relationship with You. I want to know that You love me and care for me, and that You desire to provide for all my needs. You already pursue me: I just need to lean into that love. Holy Spirit, guide my time of prayer that I may be open to deepening my relationship with God today. Amen



CREATE A PLAYLIST TO LISTEN TO AS YOU REFLECT ON PRAYER IN YOUR LIFE



- Phil Wickham: The Battle Belongs
- Elevation Worship: Talking to Jesus
- Tauren Wells: When We Pray
- Casting Crowns: What if people prayed
- Casting Crowns: Sweet Hour of Prayer
- Anthony Evans: See you again
- Chris McClarney: I'm Listening
- Cory Asbury: Dear God



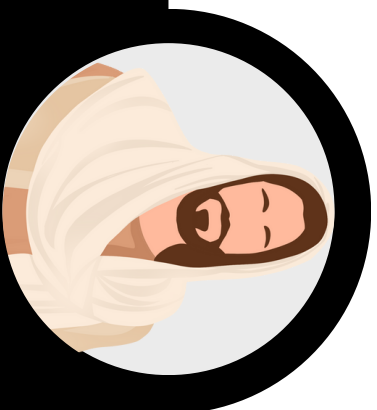
What's your bedtime?
(Fr Mike Schmitz)

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GOD'S THREE ANSWERS TO YOUR PRAYERS!

Yes

Not Yet

I have something better in mind