

# **Pray Like Children**

**Matthew 6:5-15**

5“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 6But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”

<sup>7</sup>“And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. <sup>8</sup>Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

<sup>9</sup>"This, then, is how you should pray:

" 'Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,

<sup>10</sup>your kingdom come,  
your will be done

on earth as it is in heaven.

<sup>11</sup>Give us today our daily bread.

<sup>12</sup>Forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

<sup>13</sup>And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from the evil one.’

<sup>14</sup>For if you forgive men when they sin  
against you, your heavenly Father will  
also forgive you. <sup>15</sup>But if you do not  
forgive men their sins, your Father will  
not forgive your sins.’”

# Learning to pray

“I don’t know how to get started.”

“I don’t know what to say.”

“I can’t pray like \_\_\_\_\_.”

Is Daddy critical of baby’s first words?

If you feel like a baby in the faith, then pray like a little child. In fact, if you don’t pray like a little child speaking to your loving Father, you have a problem.

## **Father's child**

If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God's child, and having God as his Father. If this is not the thought that prompts and controls his worship and prayers and his whole outlook on life, it means that he does not understand Christianity very well at all. (J. I. Packer, *Knowing God*)

# **Pray like children**

**Don't show off like hypocrites.**

Prayer is not public performance but personal conversation. So talk to your Father, not your fans.

**Don't babble like pagans**

Answers to prayer are not prizes in a speech contest awarded by a stranger. You're talking to your Father. He listens because He loves you; he knows your needs because He is wise. So use simple words in simple faith.

# Pray like children

- Daddy
- Wow! Awesome!
- Please
- Thank you
- I'm sorry
- Why? It's not fair!
- I love you
- Silence

# Daddy

God sent forth his Son... so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” (Galatians 4:5-6)

You have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” (Romans 8:15)

“Our Father in heaven” “Holy Father”

# **Wow! Awesome!**

You are awesome, O God (Psalm 68:35).

Let them praise your great and awesome name—he is holy (Psalm 99:2-3).

Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the ages. Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? (Revelation 15:3-4).

Hallowed be thy name. How great thou art!

# **Please**

People in the Bible ask for food and clothing, healing from illness, rescue from enemies, help finding a wife, getting pregnant, blessings for family, dealing with old age, wisdom for decisions, success in missions, government affairs, and more.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.

# **Thank you**

O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever! (Psalm 30:12)

Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of man! (Psalm 107:8,15,21,31)

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thess 5:16-18)

# **I'm sorry**

I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord”—and you forgave the guilt of my sin. (Psalm 32:5) Against you, you only, have I sinned. (Psalm 51:4)

God, be merciful to me, a sinner. (Luke 18:13).

Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

## **Why? It's not fair!**

If the Lord is with us, why has all this happened to us? (Judges 6:13).

Why do you hide your face and count me as your enemy? (Job 13:24)

Why do the wicked live, reach old age, and grow mighty in power? (Job 21:7)

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (Psalm 22:1; Matthew 27:46)

# **I love you**

I love you, O Lord, my strength. (Ps 18:1)

Love the Lord, all you his saints! (Ps 31:23)

I love the Lord, because he has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy. (Ps 116:1)

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength" (Mark 12:30).

# Silence

Be still and know that I am God. (Ps 46:10)

I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child is my soul within me. (Psalm 131:2)

The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing. (Zephaniah 3:17)

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