

“Virtues to Live by”

Before You Begin – An overview for teachers

Prayer

“Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.”

(Jeremiah, 29:12)

Definition

You spend time with God, listening to God, resting in his presence. You tell God that you love him, that you cherish his tenderness, his closeness in every situation, and his love that protects you. You grow in a loving friendship with God. Your prayer comes from the heart; it is a sign of warm love for God.

Biblical sources:

“And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them. Your Father already knows what you need before you ask him.” Matthew 6:7-8 “This, then, is how you should pray: ‘Our Father in heaven: May your holy name be honoured; may your Kingdom come; may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today the food we need. Forgive us the wrongs we have done, as we forgive the wrongs that others have done to us. Do not bring us to hard testing, but keep us safe from the Evil One.’” Matthew 6:9- 13

“Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise.” James 5:13

“I call on you, my God, for you will answer me; turn your ear to me and hear my prayer.” Psalm 17:6

“pray continually” 1Thessalonians 5:17

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” Philippians 4:6

“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.” Colossians 4:2

The parable of the Widow and the Judge Luke 18:1-8

“Ask, and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks will receive, and anyone who seeks will find, and the door will be opened to those who knock.” (Matthew 7:7-8)

Why Practice Prayerfulness?

We pray because we need to; it is part of what it means to be human. We depend upon God for everything; everything we have is a gift. It brings us closer to God. Prayer reveals the wisdom of God. It gives us time to be calm, be still and be in the presence of God.

How do we practise prayerfulness?

We can be still, we can reflect, we can rest. We can listen, we can speak, we can adore, we can praise, we can thank. We can make time for God. We can punctuate our day with the rhythm of prayer, e.g. morning, Grace before/after meals, end of the day etc. We can bring everything to God, our whole selves, our whole lives. We can find peace in Him. It promotes Christ centred living.

Key Words:

God, prayer, praise, adore, reflect, listen, speak, meditation, mindfulness, Holy Spirit, silence, stillness, focus. Closeness, friendship

Signs you are prayerful:

I spend time with God

I listen to God

I rest in His presence

I tell God I love Him

I grow in friendship with God

I pray from the heart

Reflection Questions:

How do I give time and space to pray regularly?

How do I listen to God?

How do I develop a relationship with God?

When do I feel close to God?

Quotes:

“Why do people pray? Because God exists. Deep inside, people have a longing for God. And God longs for them. That’s why people of all cultures and religions of the earth, pray. As Christians we pray to our heavenly Father through Jesus Christ, our Lord. The Holy Spirit is the inner teacher of Christian prayer.” (YouCat for Kids, p. 196)

“When your heart is with God, it doesn’t matter whether you talk or you are silent. God hears you when you talk to him through a prayer you know by heart. And he hears when you simply tell him in your own words what’s going on in your heart.” (YouCat for Kids, p. 200)

“It isn’t God who must change but the person. This is the obvious goal of prayer.” (Pope Francis)

“We are loved by God! We are dear to Him! “God is love”! This certainty is what leads us to worship God with all our heart, because “He first loved us”. (Pope Francis)

“I pray because I can’t help myself” (C.S. Lewis)

“Prayer is simply talking to God like a friend and should be the easiest thing we do each day” (Joyce Meyer)

“A day without prayer is a day without blessing” (Edwin Harvey)

“Prayer is not asking. Prayer is putting oneself in the hands of God, at His disposition, and listening to His voice in the depths of our hearts” (St Teresa of Calcutta)

“For prayer is nothing else than being on terms of friendship with God” (St Teresa of Calcutta)

“God speaks in the silence of the heart. Listening is the beginning of prayer” (St Teresa of Calcutta)