

Priorities of Faith

DAY 5 — FOCUSING ON THINGS THAT MATTER IN OUR PRAYERS

“Pray then like this: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.’” (Matt. 6:9, 10, ESV)

A New Focus in Prayer

Focusing on God and things that matter is important in our prayer life as well. Often our prayers are weak and ineffective because they center only around ourselves. We pray to God about what *we* wish to have. We focus on *our* needs and the challenges *we* face rather than on God.

Prayer that is pleasing to God has a refreshingly different focus. The focal point is no longer our “want-to-have list” but God Himself. This perspective is the key to a new prayer experience. Prayer that is pleasing to God first recognizes God as my faithful friend whose companionship I seek because *He* is important to me, not because I want something from Him. *Who He is*, is much more important than the things He gives me. Knowing Him is the reason I want to talk to Him in the first place. Without Him, my life is de-centered and lacks the proper perspective. More important than anything I can ask for should be my desire to be with Him. His presence and who He is become the center of true prayer.

God-centered Prayer Transforms

Prayer that is pleasing to God begins with a desire to be with Him. It does not start with my wishes and requests. When my prayer requests are not anchored in this loving relationship with Him, they circle more around myself than God and His will. Once I understand that my relationship with God is the center of prayer, my requests gain a totally new focus. I begin to think and pray from God’s perspective. I start to view my requests, my wishes, my yearnings, and my whole life through His eyes. This perspective ennobles prayer. Remove the relationship aspect from prayer, and prayer becomes one-sided, selfish, and wrong. God-centered prayer frees my thoughts from revolving around myself. It allows me to become honest with God. In the light of His love and holiness, I begin to see myself differently. The true purpose of prayer is not the fulfillment of my wishes but deepening my relationship with the life-changing God. It is so easy to ask God for something before I have enjoyed His companionship.

When I consciously think about God’s character, His qualities, and what He is able to do, and when I express my adoration in my own words, my prayers are filled with spiritual life, admiration, and awe. No longer are my prayers centered on my problems but on God, who is the Master of all my needs. Such prayer lifts me up into His presence. It does not change God; it changes me. Why not start praying like that? It will change your life.

Let’s pray together.

Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)**Praying God's Word — Matt. 6:9, 10**

"Pray then like this: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.'"

"Our Father in Heaven, Hallowed Be Your Name"

Our kind Heavenly Father, You are God. You are almighty, all-knowing, wonderful, and magnificent. You are beautiful and marvelous. You are Truth, Righteousness, and Love. We desire to know You so much more. We want to daily appreciate Your character, Your abilities, Your personality, and Your will. Free us from our selfish focus, and make our prayers centered around You. Amen.

"Your Kingdom Come, Your Will Be Done"

Lord, Your kingdom is the only governmental entity we want to pledge our full allegiance to. You reign in love, truth, justice, and righteousness. Our ideas, plans, and methods are imperfect, but Your will is always perfect. Spread out Your kingdom in our hearts and lives today. Make known to us who You are. Amen.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

Our Church: Pray for regional and world church needs (see separate sheet with requests).

Local Requests: Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

Listen and Respond: Take time to listen for God's voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: Holy, Holy, Holy (#73); How Great Thou Art (#86); Sweet Hour of Prayer (#478)

Other Songs: Father, I Adore You; His Name is Wonderful; Is He Worthy?; Jesus, Name Above All Names