

Prayer

1. Why should we pray?

When a baby has just been born, *it needs to breathe*. Praying means „talking with God“ and is like breathing for our spiritual life. God is interested in you and wants a relationship with you. And it's the same as in other relationships: The more and the more honest we talk with each other, the deeper and more intense the relationship becomes.

Luke 11:1-13

What do we learn here about prayer?

What should we pray for?

Philippians 4:6:

2. Six types of prayer

Praise: Worship God for who he is. (Psalms 135:3)

Thanksgiving: Thank God for his mercy and providence. (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

Lament: Cry out your pain and express your complaints to God. (Psalms 13:1-3)

Confessing sins: Ask God to forgive your sins. (1 John 1:9)

Requests: Ask God to meet your own needs. (Philippians 4:6-7)

Intercession: Ask God to meet the needs of others. (1 Timothy 2:1)

3. How God's will affects our prayer

There are 3 different types of prayer regarding God's will:

1. God has already made the decision

Example: „Lord, I want to be born another time and at another place.“

→ *when you pray, nothing will ever change*

2. God knows that our prayer is actually not really good for us but because we continue to pray for it he finally says „okay“.

Example: A small child comes to its parents and wants to cut fruits on his own. The parents first refuse but when the child continues to ask for it they finally give him a knife together with the warning to be very careful. After some minutes the child comes back with a bleeding finger...

→ *You have to take the responsibility for the results*

→ *Is your wish you pray for really good?*

3. We pray according to God's will

→ *He will do it! Find out more about God's will and pray it.*

4. Three answers to prayer

| | | |
|---------|--------------|--|
| „Yes.“ | Green light | God is fulfilling your request, you can proceed. |
| „No.“ | Red light | God has a different opinion, you can't proceed. |
| „Wait.“ | Yellow light | God isn't responding (yet), so you must be patient |

5. It is important how we approach God in prayer

- **Have faith = trust in God:** “But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt.” (James 1:6).
- **Right motivation:** “You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives” (James 4:2-3)
- **Confess our sins:** “If I had enjoyed having sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.” (Psalms 66:18).
- **God's will, not my will** “This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.” (1 John 5:14).
- **Faithfulness:** “...they should always pray and not give up.” (Luke 18:1).

6. Hints for effective prayer

- **We pray in the name of Jesus** (John 14:13)
He is empowering you to act on his account. We should pray what Jesus would have prayed – then he will answer. Important: “in the name of Jesus” is no magic formula by which a prayer becomes automatically more powerful.
- Prayer has many parts: **Praise, Thanksgiving, Lament, Confessing sins, Requests, Intercession.** We should integrate all parts into our prayer life and not neglect one of it
- We can pray in a **normal language** we use naturally; avoid babbling
- We can pray at **any time** and at **any place**.
- God has given us **authority** which we can use in prayer.