

## Alpha: Session 5 – Why And How Do I Pray?

Q1. If you could have a superpower, what would it be?

- Why do you think people don't always get what they pray for?

Q2. What questions come to mind when you think about prayer?

- If you were in charge of answering prayers, how would you decide how to respond?
- Have you ever tried praying? How did it go?

Q3. If you had to describe prayer to someone, what would you say?

- How do you feel about the idea that God is with us when we are struggling?

### ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS:

- If God knows all of our needs, why does the Bible tell us to pray?
- Ben talked about going through a challenging time and experiencing peace when he prayed. Have you ever experienced anything like that?
- What do you think about the tips on prayer? Keep it real, keep it simple, keep it going.

### THE BIG IDEA

Simply put, prayer is talking with God. Jesus makes it possible for us to have a personal relationship with God. Just like all of our relationships, our relationship with God grows through communication. Through prayer, God transforms situations, gives us peace, changes our perspective and shows us more of what he is like.

### KEY QUOTES & SCRIPTURES

- For through him [Jesus] we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. EPHESIANS 2:18
- You can pray about anything - little things and big things. God cares about everything, from what's happening in your family, to what's happening around the world.
- But 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. MATTHEW 6:6
- Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7
- When a train goes through a tunnel and it gets dark, you don't throw away the ticket and jump off. You sit still and trust the driver. CORRIE TEN BOOM

### SUMMARY:

#### 1. WHAT IS CHRISTIAN PRAYER?

Prayer is the most important activity of our lives.

'For through [Jesus] we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.' (Ephesians 2:18)

- To the Father:
  - '... to your father' (Matthew 6:6)
  - '... in heaven' (v.9)
- Through the Son
  - 'I have called you friends' (John 15:15)
- By the Spirit
  - '... the Spirit helps us' (Romans 8:26)

## 2. WHY PRAY?

- Develops a relationship with God
- Rewards of prayer (Matthew 6:6)
  - Presence of God                      - Peace (Philippians 4:6–7)
  - Perspective                              - Power
- Results of prayer (Matthew 7:7–11)
 

'When I pray, coincidences happen, and when I don't, they don't.'

William Temple, The Former Archbishop Of Canterbury

## 3. DOES GOD ALWAYS ANSWER PRAYER?

- Yes – you receive what you prayed for, sometimes immediately.
- No – sometimes an obvious reason why not; other times we may not understand straight away why the answer is no
- Wait – for the right timing

## 4. HOW DO WE PRAY?

- Thank you – count your blessings, not your problems
- Sorry – confess your sins (John 13:6–10)
- Please – 'Give us today our daily bread' (Matthew 6:11):  
ask for anything you need.

## 5. WHEN SHOULD WE PRAY?

- Anywhere, anytime
  - (Ephesians 6:18)
- Alone (Matthew 6:6)
  - Regular pattern
  - Best part of the day (Mark 1:35)
- With others
  - There's power in praying together
  - 'Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in their midst.' (Matthew 18:20)

## RECOMMENDED READING:

- *God on Mute*, Pete Greig
- *How to Pray*, Pete Greig
- *Prayer*, Philip Yancey