

## Prayer is Conversation

Maybe you enjoy talking with God, but you don't know how to go deeper. Or maybe prayer makes you uncomfortable because you are afraid of saying the wrong thing. Sometimes, talking with God gets weighed down by our misconceptions about what prayer *should* be.

Prayer is simply having honest conversations with God, but you need to discover ways to take your conversations with God to a deeper level. For me, the deeper level came through praying the Lord's Prayer.

When you see the word 'prayer', what thoughts or images come to mind? Does talking to God come easily to you? Do you struggle to pray?

Over 2000 years ago, Jesus taught his disciples to pray:

'This, then, is how you should pray:  
"Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from the evil one"  
(Matthew 6:9–13).

This is now a famous example of how to pray. But do we apply it to our everyday twenty-first century lives?

In Matthew 6:6–8, Jesus also tells us quite clearly how not to pray. He says we are to go into a room and privately pray and we are not to use repetitive, rote prayers. If we're praying to impress people or treating people like a box to tick, then we're missing out on the power of prayer.

Prayer isn't simply about the words we say. I believe prayer is, and always will be, a dynamic conversation with God. When we realise this, the Lord's Prayer becomes a 'space of freedom' that helps us talk to God every day.

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