

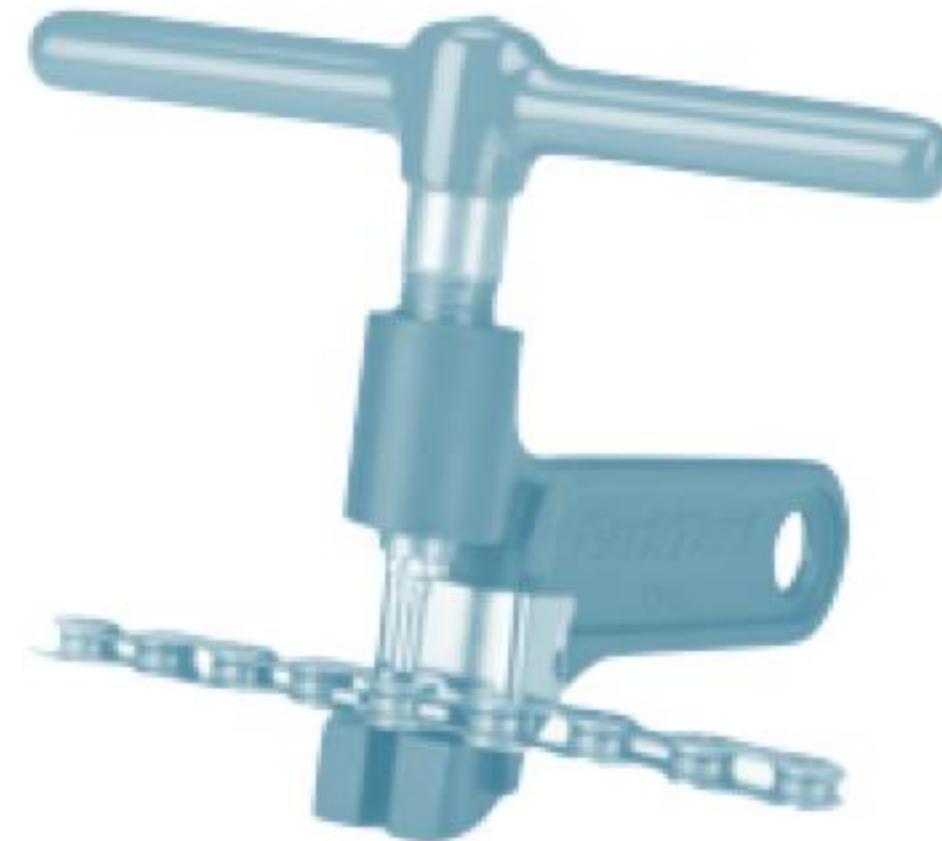
When You Pray...

NOvember 2025

NOVEMBER

Saying NO to the flesh and the enemy

Saying YES to the power of The Spirit



Our annual opportunity to fast and pray together at Elim Aberystwyth
Ask The Lord to inspire you as to when and how to fast during the month

When you fast...

What do we mean?

- Giving up something that we think we need in order to teach ourselves what (who) we really need...
- Fasting leads us to a place of reliance and relationship with The Lord
- This is expressed in our communion and communication with Him - it leads us to prayer

Fasting and prayer go together
like a horse and carriage!

5 “And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.

Matthew 6

6 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

7 And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.

Matthew 6

8 Do not be like them, for
your Father knows what
you need before you ask
him

Matthew 6

When you pray...

No 'ifs' or 'buts'

- Praying is perhaps the 'bottom line' practice we might expect to see evidenced in the life of a person of faith
- Praying may not be easy or come naturally to everyone and can take on various formats - intercessory prayer, breath prayers, 'gunshot' prayer, praying in tongues, 24/7, lifestyle
- We need to develop a discipline of regular time with the Lord

When you fast...

How not to do it

- There are wrong ways to pray - sometimes expressed in the 'how' but mostly to do with the 'why'
- It would have been common to see people praying in public places in a way intended to appear spiritual and godly
- Jesus does not say it is never right to pray in public, He says it is hypocritical to pray in order to be seen

1 Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

Matthew 6

When you pray...

How to do it

- 'Go into your room' - get into a helpful place in nature / sit in your favourite chair / find a place of solitude
- 'Close the door' - turn off your phone / stop whatever else you can be busy with / remove distraction / shut others out
- 'Pray to your Father who is unseen' - our greatest reward is in our relationship with our maker, not how others see us

When you fast...

How not to do it - part 2!

- There are wrong ways to pray - it is not just about how many words we can find!
- The pagans thought they could twist the arms of their gods through their own effort and the amount of their words
- God already knows - time in prayer is more (but perhaps not exclusively?) about us aligning with Him than Him with us!

‘The Lord’s Prayer’ was not given just for liturgical recital

“The Lord’s prayer may be the single set of words spoken more often than any other in the history of the world. Jesus Christ gave it to us as the key to unlock all the riches of prayer yet it is an untapped resource partially because it is so very familiar.”

Timothy Keller, Prayer, p109

The Lord's Prayer

Or not?

- Jesus prayed a number of times... for His cup of suffering to pass (Mt 26), for His followers to be united (Jn 17:21), 'Father forgive them...' (Lk 23:34) and so on
- I would perhaps describe these as 'The Lord's Prayers'
- The words spoken here in Matthew 6 are more like guidelines or principles for prayer - as illustrated by Luke 11

‘The model of prayer that Jesus taught His followers’

9 “This, then, is how you
should pray:

“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,

Matthew 6

Our Father

In Heaven

- Jesus starts His prayer guide with an unexpected and potentially controversial address - Abba Father
- This loving and intimate term is deliberately chosen by Jesus rather than 'God' or 'Lord' to make it relational and rooted in our identity in our Creator
- But also with an 'otherness' in acknowledging He is in Heaven

Hallowed Be Thy Name

- The first request of the prayer is that God be glorified and honoured for who He is - this is where we start and finish!
- This is about the name of The Lord being kept holy - in our lives, our churches, our families, our communities, our nation
- Thy name - this is about the very person of God, not the set of letters and sounds that constitute what He is called

“Ask as simply and trustfully as a child asks bread. You can do this because God has “sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts crying Abba Father” The spirit is in you to give you childlike confidence”

Andrew Murray, Prayer Topics, p15

10 your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

Matthew 6

Your Kingdom Come

Heaven on Earth

- This is our primary mandate in this life - to seek, and be ambassadors of, God's Kingdom and righteousness on earth
- We live in the tension of the reality of the 'now' and 'not yet' of His Kingdom - between the first and second advent of Jesus
- We pray for His Kingship to be real in our lives, our churches, our families, our communities, our nation

Your Will Be Done

Heaven on Earth

- Heaven is where we will experience the fullness of the will of God - the realm where His purposes go uncontested
- We can make our own choices to live according to His will that is revealed to us in scripture and in Christ
- We see the tension of humanity's wrestle with the will of God most poignantly illustrated in the Garden of Gethsemane

“Jesus himself prayed in the garden of Gethsemane, under circumstances far more crushing than any of us will ever face. He submitted to his father’s will rather than following his own desires, and it saved us.”

Timothy Keller, Prayer, p112

11 Give us today our daily
bread.

Matthew 6

Daily Bread

Strength for today

- Daily here reminds us that we ought to seek His provision for our lives every single day - a great challenge to the affluent
- God knows what we need (better than we do) and delights to give good gifts - what father gives a stone in place of bread?
- For Jesus in His earthly ministry, His bread was to do the Father's will - what is it that we really need?

Give us

Please!

- This is not a demanding order but a humble request in faith and gratitude in the knowledge that He is YHWW Yireh
- To ask is to acknowledge the source of true life and in whom we have sustenance and abundance of life - the Bread of Life
- But we do not come grovelling, we come like a child to a loving parent - who knows what best to give us

There is no good thing that we lack when we are in The Lord - if we have asked something of Him by faith and have not yet received it then the only reasonable conclusion can be that it is not ours to have or it is not ours to have yet!

“God asks to ask for at least three reasons. First, because the act of asking is relational in a way that a wishing is not...

The second reason that asking is necessary is that it is vulnerable. To make a request is to admit to some area of personal need. It extends trust towards the person asked...

Third, asking is intentional. It involves the activation of our wills...”

How to Pray, Pete Greig, p77

12 And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven
our debtors.

Matthew 6

“should we daily pray for forgiveness? Yes, we should - but not out of sense of “if I don’t I might lose my salvation.” We pray daily for forgiveness because we want to stay in close fellowship with God, with nothing hindering our ongoing relationship with Him.”

David Guzik

www.enduringword.com/should-we-pray-for-forgiveness-daily

Forgive us

As we forgive

- Debts, trespasses, sins - whatever interpretation use, each of us needs to regularly confess and forgiveness
- This is the only entreaty in Christ's prayer guide that has a clause included - we have to hold to our side of the contract
- This is about our relationship with God AND our relationships with one another

Forgive us

As we forgive

- Forgiveness is vital: in the following verses, Jesus goes so far as to say that if we do not forgive others, God will not forgive us!
- Forgiveness is at the very heart of the reason by for the incarnation, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus
- The parable of the unmerciful servant in Matthew 18 is a stark and clear warning echoing the golden rule: 'do unto others...'

“Jesus tightly links our relationship with God to our relationship with others. It works two ways. If we have not seen our sin and sort radical forgiveness from God, we will be unable to forgive and to seek the good of those who have wronged us. So unresolved bitterness is a sign that we are not right with God. It also means that if we are holding a grudge, we should see the hypocrisy of seeking forgiveness from God for sins of our own.”

Timothy Keller, Prayer, p115

13 And lead us not into
temptation [testing], but
deliver us from [evil] the evil
one.

Matthew 6

Lead Us Not Into Temptation

Overcoming the flesh

- This is a complexity - just a couple of chapters previously, The Spirit of God 'led' Jesus to be tempted in the wilderness
- Overcoming trial and temptation are not only necessary, but indeed they are good for us in attaining to godliness
- Our problem arises if we 'enter in' to the the temptation - this is about overcoming the desires of the flesh

“The powers that had been so obvious in Hong Kong seemed completely absent, or at least invisible, in my own culture. But as I prayed, I began to see that the way we fetishise the shopping mall, the hours we spend worshipping at the shrine of social media, even the way some men spend their Sunday mornings kneeling before their cars, is really not so different to the way those rural Chinese offer oranges and incense to plastic Buddhas in Hong Kong.”

How to Pray, Pete Greig, p177

Deliver Us From Evil

Overcoming the enemy

- This acknowledges the reality of the spiritual battle we are in the midst of - the enemy rages against the Kingdom of God
- Our real battle is not against flesh and blood (people) but against the world's spiritual principalities and powers (Eph 6)
- God has always delivered, is currently delivering and will one day in the fullest sense deliver His people - trust Him

Amen

Wait, what about the other bit?

This is not what Jesus taught, but is what Jesus taught!

- "For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen" is not actually included in the earliest manuscripts we have, but is in the 'Didache' - the 'Lord's teaching teaching through the twelve Apostles to the Nations'
- It would seem these words were not recoded by Matthew or Luke in their gospels but were introduced by the early church, either as a fitting conclusion or as a result of oral tradition

Some simple ideas for prayer...

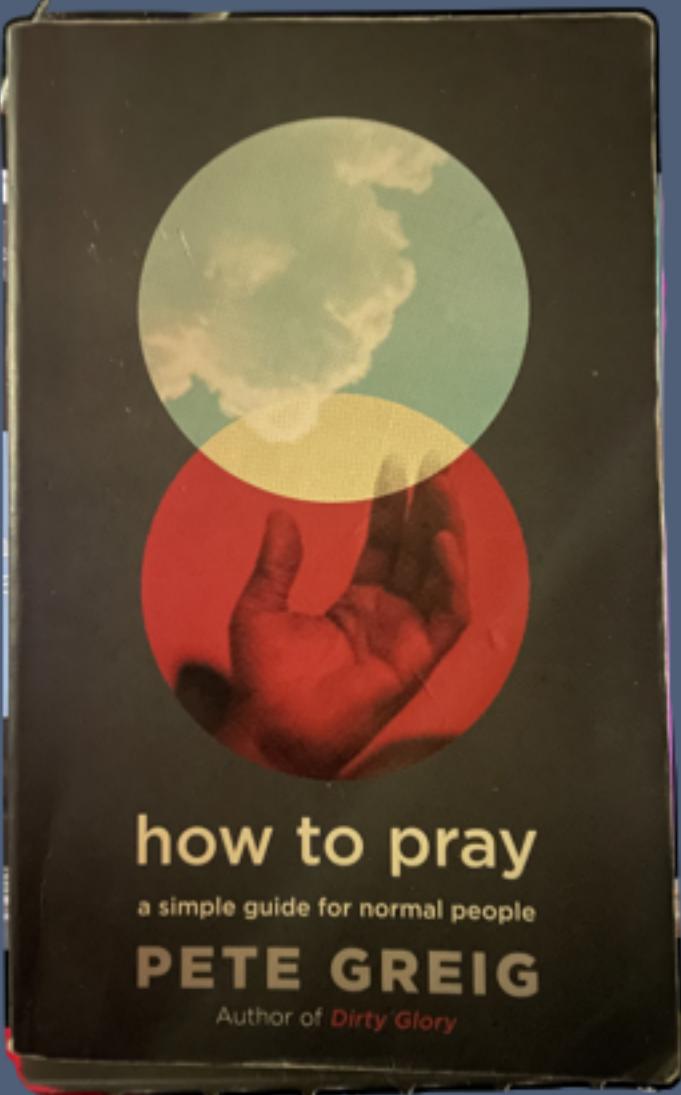
Get with God - be intentional
about this or it will not happen

Pause - away from distraction

Rejoice - worship thanksgiving

Ask - honest & earnest in faith

Yield - submit to God's will and ways



Principles taken from: How to Pray, Pete Greig

In The Name of Jesus...

Know Him and know His will

“Does it mean just adding the words ‘and all this we ask in the name of Jesus Christ’ at the end of our prayers?

Many people apparently think that it does but have you ever heard - or offered - prayers full of self will and selfishness which ended up in that way, “for Christ sake. Amen”?

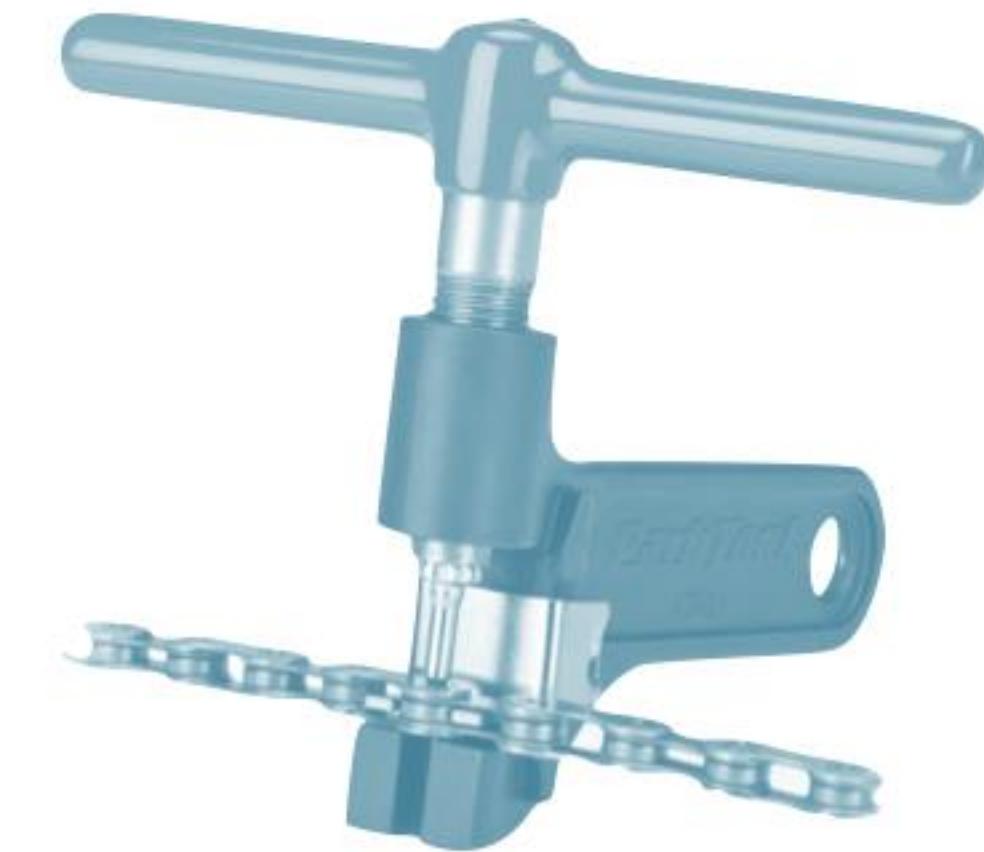
An Unknown Christian, The Kneeling Christian, p66



UNLIMITED
#WhenYouPray

End of NOVEMBER

Thanksgiving, Praise & Prayer



“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. (Jeremiah 29:13)

Sunday 30th November | 5pm-6pm