



Walking into Church.

What are you going to pray?



Meeting a friend.

What are you going to pray?



Doing this brings God into your day and you into God's presence.

You hear a rumour.

What are you going to pray?



Facing a difficult task.

What are you going to pray?



Sensing temptation.

What are you going to pray?



Sometimes the prayer is for others; sometimes it is for ourselves.

Doom scowling facebook/insta/X/ticktok. You see a friend's post.

What are you going to pray?



Something comes up on the church prayer list.

What are you going to pray?

Something goes unexpectedly well.

What should you do?



Thoughts

Sometimes you will suddenly think about someone.

What should you do?

What should you pray?



It was noted above that sometimes the Holy Spirit works in our subconscious. That sudden thought could be God telling you to pray.



You suddenly remember something.

What should you pray?

You get a sudden thought of foreboding

What should you do?

You feel angry.

What should you pray?

You feel depressed

What should you pray?



Conclusion

"For in him we live and move and have our being." Acts 17:28

The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.

Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged! Deuteronomy 31:8

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10

And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.' Matthew 28:20

We should make the most of God being with us.

We should make the most of the privilege of prayer.

Disclaimer no. 2: Before you ask, yes, this is just a different slant on Brother Lawrence's 'Practising the presence of God'.

Going shopping.

What are you going to pray?

Meeting your partner/family member.

What are you going to pray?

Seeing someone you know is a sinner.

What are you going to pray?

You face a decision.

What are you going to pray?

You feel tired

What should you do?

You remember a need

What should you pray?

FREEDOM

Christian Church
Responsive Prayer



Read 1 Thessalonians 5:17

What does this verse tell us to do?

Can you pray all the time?

The Greek is διαλείπτως. It means continually, unceasingly or consistently.

Most of us interpret this verse as a call to pray all the time. We can pray a lot of the time, but praying all of the time is not possible. We have other things to do. So we tend to say that this verse means our lives should be spent in an attitude of prayer. This means we should be constantly talking to God and listening to God. We should be God-aware.

What do you think?



Paul uses this word several times: Romans 1:9, 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3, 1 Thessalonians 2:13

Each of these is linked to prayer.

If we take the third meaning – consistently- then it has another meaning – to not stop in the habit of praying. To not give up praying.

Jesus said this in Luke 18.

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. Luke 18:1

Which parable does He tell after this?

What attitude to prayer do you think Jesus wants us to take?

If this is the case, then 'Pray continually' means keep praying for things you need; don't give up. Value prayer as important.



Responsive Prayer

This brings us to responsive. This is a good way to approach this verse.

Our days are full of things that happen and of thoughts that go through our heads. We constantly interact with the world around us. Responsive prayer is learning to respond to the events of our day with prayer. It is simple



When you hear an Ambulance go by.

What should you do?

If you are driving, get out of the way. But the next thing you should do is pray.



What are you going to pray?

What else could you pray?

Something happened and you responded in prayer.

You see a beggar on the street.

What will you pray?



Here, there are so many things that you could pray, surface things and deep things. You don't have to pray them all. You are likely to see this same beggar any number of times and you can pray something different each time.



The first thing that comes into your head is what you are going to pray.

You are going to trust that the Holy Spirit will be the cause of this first thought.

Can the Holy Spirit work like that?

Bringing life, hope and freedom to people, communities and nations.

Your work mate looks like their pet rabbit just died.

What are you going to pray?



Again, there are many things you could pray. But “*Lord, give me an opportunity to talk to him*”, might be one. Prayer is supposed to lead to action. In fact, in one way or another, prayer should always lead to action.

At this point, responsive prayer is going to lead to a conversation with God. “*Lord, what do I do?*”

How might God answer that prayer?

Most of the time, when you pray a prayer like that, you will know the answer, almost instinctively, like above the Holy Spirit speak into and through our subconscious.



The Effects

If you keep praying into the things that happen around you, then it should have an effect. First. It lets God work in the life of the beggar you prayed for. Prayer is a partnership between you and God. God does not need your prayer; He can work perfectly well without you, but Scripture makes it clear that He is very reluctant to do this. He wants us to be involved, so when we pray, He acts and most of the time, when we don't pray, He doesn't act. He is looking for partnership.



The LORD looked and was displeased that there was no justice. He saw that there was no one; he was appalled that there was no one to intervene; so his own arm achieved salvation for him, and his own righteousness sustained him. Isaiah 59:15-16, Isaiah 63:5



Will you see the result of your prayer in the beggar's life?

Probably not, but by faith we believe that God will act.

Does it matter if you don't see the effect in the person's life?

Prayer never violates a person's free will; it just enables God to work in their life. Often this is a slow process.



The effects, however, are more than this.

If you do this, you will find that prayer becomes the first response to every situation that you face. It becomes a reflex. This means that prayer will become a stronghold in your life.



Doing this responsive prayer enables God to be an active part of your daily life. You will become more aware of Him throughout your day. And as a result much more likely to hear from Him and be led by Him.

"Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know." Jeremiah 33:3



This, in turn, will mean you become more spiritual. More God-centric. More useful in God's kingdom. You will grow. Your abilities will grow. Your relationship with God will develop. This will also increase your faith and your expectancy for God to move in the world around you. You will grow in confidence.



You will start to see the world differently.

How so?

Disclaimer: Responsive prayer is one part of a spiritual walk – there are a bunch of other things that will also deepen your relationship with God.

You will also start to see God at work in the people around you.



How Long

How long should your prayer be?

It was noted above that there are many different things that you can pray in any situation. The idea is to pray one thing.



Read Matthew 6:7

How do we pray?

Why do we think long prayers are better?

How did Paul pray? 1 Thessalonians 1:2 (we read it above.)

What does this mean?

This is going to be a one-sentence prayer. A short sentence. Not even a compound sentence. “*Lord, provide for her needs.*” “*Lord, bring him to know you.*” “*Lord, keep them safe.*”

There is a place to pray more, longer and deeper, but that is not this kind of prayer.

When is that place and time?



How did Epaphras pray? Colossians 4:12

What do you think this means?

How does it contrast with Paul in 1 Thessalonians 1:2?

It is OK to just make mention.



You might find you micro second prayer leads somewhere. God might say – keep praying for them, or add them to your prayer list, or now pray this.

The seven day rule is good here, because there is a limit to the number of things you can pray for in your quiet time; commit to pray for 7 days.



You see a mum pushing a pram.

What are you going to pray?

You see a near miss at your workplace.

What are you going to pray?

Someone gets angry at you.

What are you going to pray?



The Problem

What do you think will be the hardest part of ingratiating this into your life?

For most of us, it is remembering.

What might help?

Does it matter if you only do it sometimes?

It does become habit-forming.

You are not limited to the moment; when you remember, you can pray in retrospect.



What other kind of things might catch your attention throughout the day?

What are you going to pray?



The Regular

All of these have been instances that you observe, but this is not the only place that this approach is helpful. In fact, some of it is institutionalised in our faith.



Breakfast happens.

What are you going to pray?

When you get into your car to start a journey.

What are you going to pray?

By nature, these prayers might be slightly longer. If you are with others, they might be out loud and longer still.



Before you go to bed.

What are you going to pray?

When you take a medicine.

What are you going to pray?

You are walking into work.

What are you going to pray?

Walking back into your home.

What are you going to pray?

Sometimes we pray, but sometimes we bless.