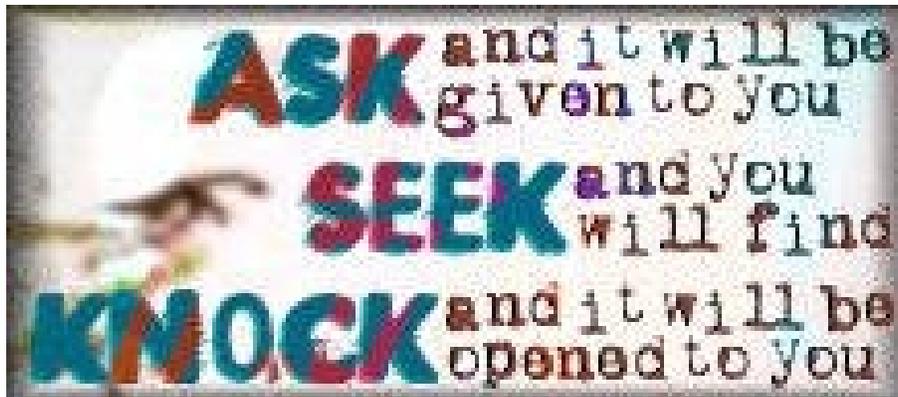


How To Pray

By: Paul Webb

"Pray Without Ceasing"
1st Thessalonians 5:17



(Matthew 7:7)

Preface

I would like to start out by saying that any prayer, even if you think you are really bad at it...is better than no prayer at all, so if this is stopping you from praying, get over it. Please remember that our Lord loves you, and wants to hear from you, whether you're good at it or not!

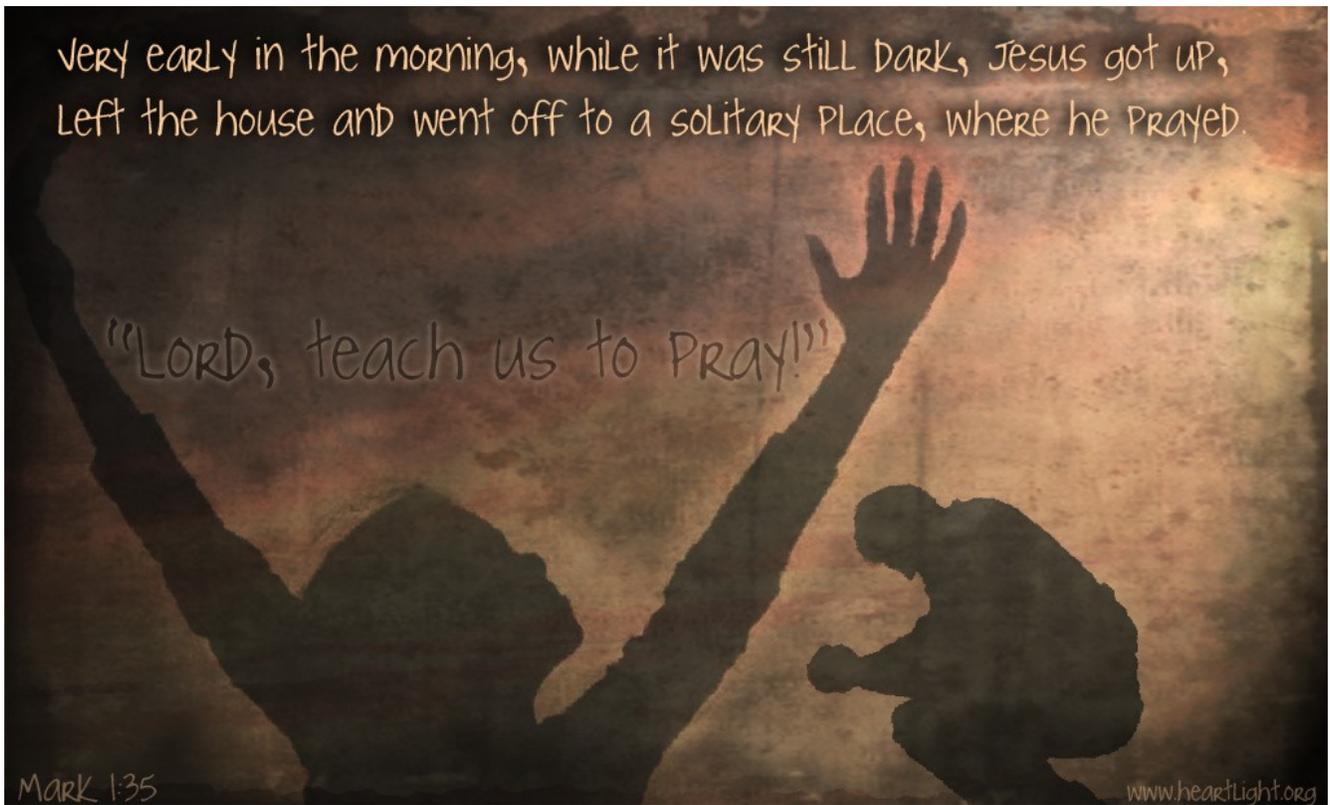
Prayer is simply...communicating with God! This includes talking AND listening! It doesn't matter how you decide to pray, or when, or where. It is not for only clergy and church going people...prayer is for everyone.

If you are not yet a Christian, and have not accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, I invite you to fix that right now. I am going to suggest that you drop to your knees and say these few words. "My Dear Lord Jesus...I don't know how to pray, but I am asking you to come into my life and make me whole. I am a sinner Lord, and I pray that you forgive me of my sins. Thank you Lord Jesus! Amen"

A very short and sweet prayer, but what you have just done is asked our Lord and Savior to come into your life! You also asked him to forgive your sins, and the moment you asked, your sins were forgiven! It makes no difference what you may have done in the past, you need to forget them, and you need to quit beating yourself up for them, because they have been forgiven...and yes, forgotten! Never again do you have to think of your past, because Jesus has already paid for those sins with His life! Believe me, there is nothing like being accepted into the fold! There is nothing like having Him to talk to any time, day or night. He understands you better than you understand yourself...and He has been waiting for you!

I was of a mind a few short years ago, that maybe God wasn't answering my prayers, simply because I was bad at it. Well, I could play all these games in my head as much as I wanted, but the truth was, he was saying no because the only time I prayed was to ask for something. I never thought of giving praise to Him, and thanking Him for the blessings I had been receiving all along.

We all try to teach our children to say please and thank you...well God is no different in that manner because we are His children, and wants us to follow the same rules that we lay down for ours.



The Lord's Prayer

There is no better way to learn how to pray, then to study the words of the original Teacher, Jesus Himself. Who else to give you a direct line to the Father, than from the Son? When asked by a disciple on how to pray, Jesus taught his disciples this.

Our Father, who art in Heaven,
Hallowed Be Thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
On Earth, as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil
For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory
Forever...Amen

This may sound pretty, and it is an awesome prayer, but do we know what we are saying when we pray that prayer? Let's break it down so that we may truly understand.

"Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name."

Here we are revering our Father as Holy and Sacred. In the beginning of our prayers, lifting our God up beyond all things should be paramount. This is OUR time with God, and we do not want any thoughts in our mind other than speaking with him.

"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done...on earth, as it is in heaven"

In this phrase we are simply stating a fact of all believers and doers of God's word. Our Kingdom is waiting for us if we adhere to his wishes. There is no sin in heaven, and that is exactly what he is asking of us to be done on earth.

"Give us this day, our daily bread"

This is basically where we ask God to grant our prayers to him. Our daily bread is more than food. It is what we want from life...our dreams for our futures, our dreams for our children, and so on.

"And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us".

We are asking God to forgive our sins, as we are forgiving those who sin against us.

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil".

We are asking God to keep us safe from those who may do us harm...or who may lead us astray. God has granted us the right to choose between good and evil. It is up to us which road we choose.

"For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever"

Once again, we are revering God's majesty! He IS the way! He is the power, and all glory is in Him.

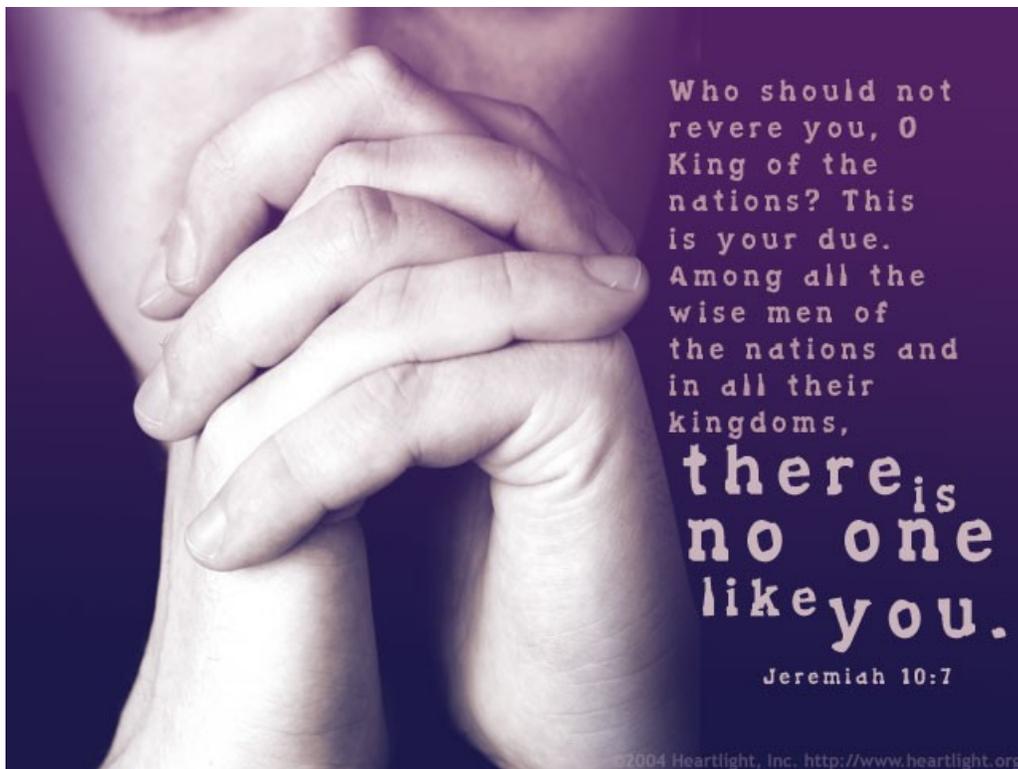
"Amen"

Let it be! Amen!

The Lord's Prayer is the most powerful prayer ever in my opinion. People have been saying this prayer for almost 2000 years, and like I said before, was taught by Jesus Himself! Now, instead of just reciting the prayer...we can FEEL the prayer in all its glory!

Jesus didn't just pull this prayer out of thin air. He not only taught it...He used it Himself to pray to His father. Jesus had a relationship with his father, and that is what God wants for, and from you...a relationship with Him. If you don't have a relationship with God...how on earth can you pray to him.

I have an example of what I am trying to say here. God blessed me with a singing voice. I sing on the worship team at my church. You will understand what I am saying in a moment. God not only blessed me with a voice, but He also blessed me with the capacity to FEEL what I am singing. There is a HUGE difference between someone who just sings a song, versus someone who FEELS a song. The emotion is what sells a voice...and emotion is what sells a prayer. I hope you comprehend what I'm saying here.



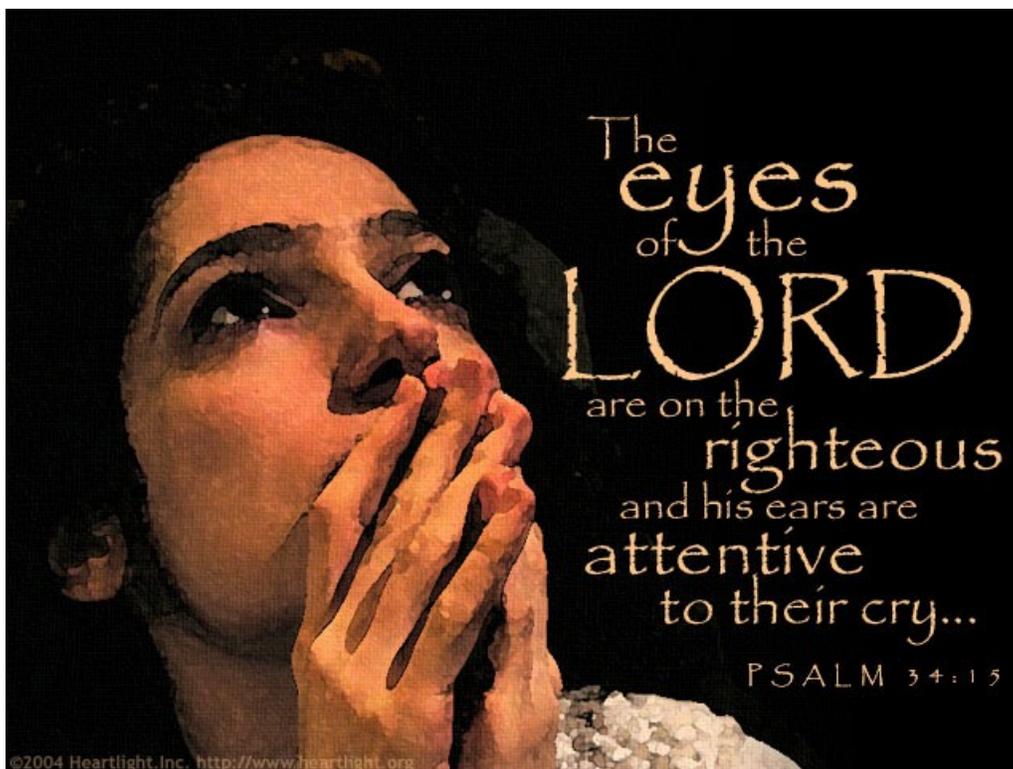
Revere The Lord In Prayer

In all prayer...in all things....revere the Lord.

Time after time I see people, men and women alike, who think that everything they have, or anything they do well, has everything to do with them, instead of lifting their heads and giving thanks to the One who makes it all possible.

It is truly a miracle that you are even here on this earth, and without the blessings of God, you would not even exist. People have either forgotten that, or never knew it in the first place. When you pray, remember to thank the One who has made it all possible. It is not coincidence, or by luck that you are here...it is only by the grace of God that we even exist. We have all seen baseball players who have just hit a home run who look up and point to the sky. They are giving the glory to the one who deserves it, and it warms my heart every time I see it.

Always revere the Lord in your prayers, and he will revere you in return.





Picture Prayer

One of my favorite hymns states, "What a privilege to carry, everything to God in prayer". That one actually makes me cry...as does many of the old hymns. The point here is, prayer IS a privilege...and yet, many people don't use that privilege to its capacity. That is where the "Pray Without Ceasing" comes in. It is there for you...any time of the day or night.

Picturing prayer is really a simple concept, but it is POWERFUL!

When you bow your head to say your prayers, I encourage you to picture in your mind a positive image of what you're praying about. If you are praying for someone who is going in for an operation for example, as you pray, picture them in full health. Picture them the vibrant and fun loving person that you've always known.

In another example, if you are praying for employment, picture yourself already having the job that you are praying for. See yourself going off to work in the morning, performing your duties as if you already have the job. Be joyful in your prayers. This is a time to be positive and focused...and with joy in your heart! I'm not talking about name and it and claim it, just pray about it, and by faith see the thing you are praying for come to fruition.

It says in Psalms 100:

1 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.

2 Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

3 Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

5 For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

Also in Psalms, it talks more about singing. Actually, many of the Psalms tell us of singing joyfully unto the Lord.

Psalms 66:1 Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands:

2 Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious.

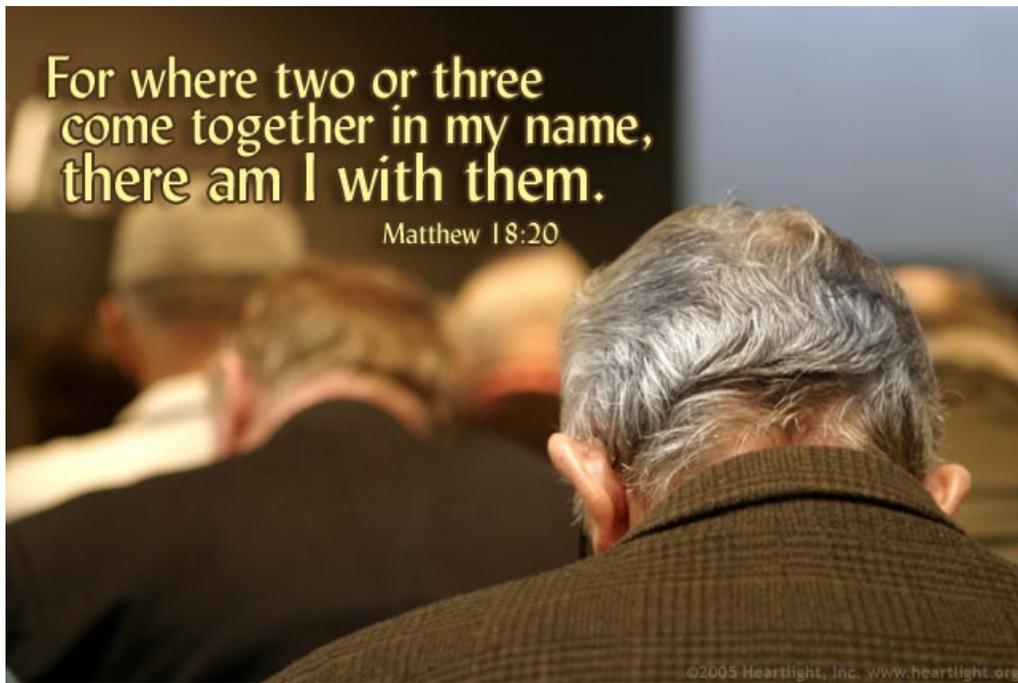
Singing God's praises is the one way that I have found that my mind does not wander into other realms. I am focused on praising the Lord in the song I am singing. It doesn't even matter if you can't carry a tune in a bucket, because you are singing your praises to the Lord...and He LOVES your voice...he DID make it after all.

There are many other instances in which we can use the power of prayer in a powerful and positive light.

Are you looking for a better relationship with God? Picture yourself speaking directly to God, like he is in the chair next to you. This is kind of difficult when you first start out, but the more you do it, the easier it gets.

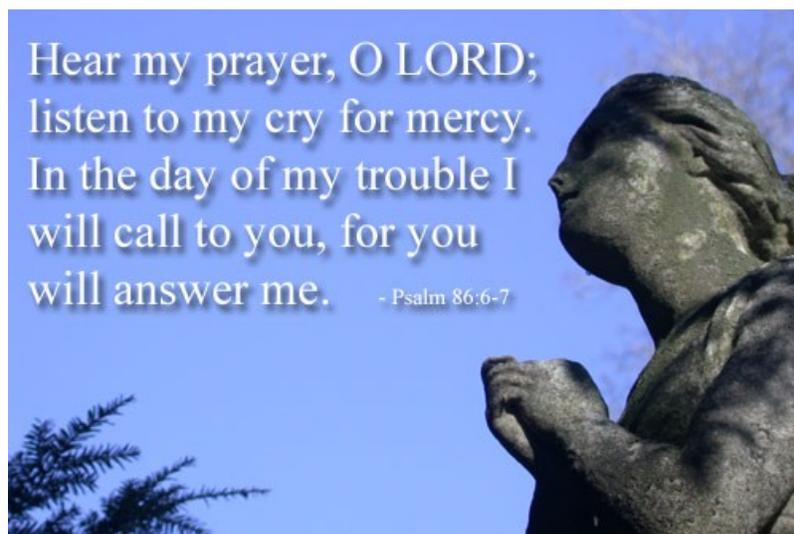
Are you looking for healing? Whether you are looking for physical, or mental healing, or even a healing from financial woes, these can all be done with a positive image in your mind. You do not have to be sullen, or sad to ask God about these things. Lift him up in joy, present the image to God through your thoughts. Picture yourself as well, before the affliction took hold of you. Picture yourself as a financially well person. It goes a LONG way in prayer. Just try this...and you will notice the changes in your thought patterns, and you will start becoming a more positive, focused person who is giving it to God!

We all know someone in our lives that need prayer, perhaps several. My proposal to you is that you share this with your friends who are praying for the same thing. A prayer chain with positive images is mighty powerful!



While prayer from an individual works well...imagine the case where several people get together and pray for the exact same thing. God loves people gathering in His name to pray! Prayers chains, prayer groups, prayer in our churches. This is POWERFUL, and should be used whenever possible...and remember the positive images. Everyone should be concentrating on that positive image.

This seems simplistic, I know...but put it to the test. Start praying with that positive picture for anyone you pray for.



Pray For Our Leaders

We need prayer **especially** for our leaders. The President, The Congress, Senate, and our local leaders such as the Mayors. This may be difficult for many of us to do as we do not see eye to eye with them. We also need prayer for our protectors. The police, firefighters, and EMT's. In our particular circumstances in our world today, it is crucial to pray for those who make decisions for our countries, and for the ones who put themselves in harms way to protect us from danger.

Special prayers should also be said for our military and their families, who give SO much to ensure the freedoms that we have come to enjoy.

I'm going to share a story about a leader that NOBODY wanted to pray for. His name was Adolph Hitler. In the United States, a coalition of pastors got together to start a prayer chain to start to pray for Hitler. People thought they were crazy...and UN-American. It was decided, however, that congregations would start praying for Hitler.

It was only a matter of months since people started praying for Hitler, that the Third Reich started having problems. They began to crumble. At the point of the beginning of the prayers, Hitler was winning the war. Within one year, the war in Europe was over. How's that for the power of prayer?

Let God Handle It

Whenever I start feel overwhelmed, it is at a time when I have forgotten to turn it over to God and let him handle it. I guess sometimes we are so anxious for something, that we forget that it is NOT in our hands...but in God's. Maybe that's where the old adage comes in, "All things in God's good time".

I think I try and force the issue sometimes...which is really dumb, but, after all, I am human and therefore flawed. If you are like me, you want everything yesterday, but unless it falls into God's time line for you, you're barking up the wrong tree.

This is when we need to humble ourselves before God, and ask him for what we want. If it is in his plans for us...it will be known to you soon enough...but don't rush it.

In Philippians 4:6-7 Paul said, "In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus." Simply put, pray and ask God for everything you want, and need...and in all prayers, give thanks.

Another thing I found out is that God has a sense of humor. My wife and I were very content in our lives. Our kids were grown and gone, and it was now time for some leisure. Not much to worry about, which was fantastic. Then our great-great neice came into our lives and has been with us since.

Within a few weeks after our daughter was married we had a new baby in the house. It has been ten years now, and after many many prayers we are still going strong. It hasn't always been easy but God is always faithful, and has supplied our every need in raising this new "daughter."

See...I truly believe that it was all God's plan all along. We think it's our idea in the beginning, but then God shows you differently. Tell me He doesn't have a sense of humor:)

By the way...we did say Thank You!



If my people, who are called by my name,
will humble themselves and pray and
seek my face and turn from their wicked ways,
then will I hear from heaven and will forgive
their sin and will heal their land.

- 2 Chronicles 7:14 -

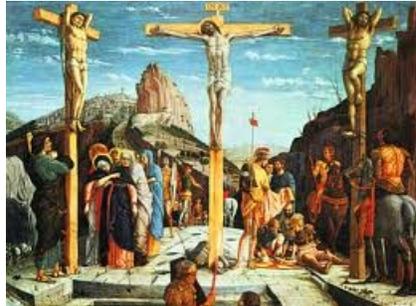
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<http://www.heartlight.org>

Ask All Things In Jesus Name

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16 (NIV)

The only way to God, is through our Savior, Jesus. It is Jesus who took the sins of the world with him when he was mercilessly crucified on the cross. Salvation became ours on that day, through the blood of Christ. How anyone can think of that horrific day, and not be brought to tears is beyond me.



So, when you talk with God, and ask for what you want, remember the One who gave the ultimate sacrifice for you.

If you have not accepted Jesus as your personal Savior, it is time...right now.
"No one comes to the Father, but through me." John 14:6

We never know when we will be called by God to come be with him, so why wait? It IS imperative for your eternal salvation.

Nothing we can do is good enough to get us into Heaven, and yet nothing we do is bad enough to keep us out...it's all about believing in the sacrifice made for us by Jesus. This is not to say that we should be bad people...but being Christ-like will make you WANT to be better.

Even people who consider themselves the most lost, are certainly not beyond His grace and saving.

At the crucifixion, after the soldiers spat on him, nailed him to a cross, and poked his body with spears, Jesus STILL wanted God to forgive them.

[Luke 23:34](#)

Then Jesus said, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do".

If Jesus can forgive them, he can, and will forgive anyone. It doesn't matter what you have done, Jesus is waiting for you...all you need do is ask.



In Conclusion

I have rambled off in sequence, (or I think I did anyway) about the steps of prayer, but I'd like to give you an outline if I may. It's honestly no different than talking to your parents on the phone.

1. Greeting (Our Father, Dear God, Our Heavenly Father...etc.)
2. Reverence (Our God is an awesome God, so tell him how you feel about him)
3. Thanks (Thank him for the blessings bestowed upon you)
4. Ask (Ask God's forgiveness for your sins, and then ask that he fulfill your life)
 - a. Pray for your friends and family with a positive image
 - b. Pray for our leaders, (even if you don't like them)
 - c. Pray to be an example of Gods love
5. Reverence repeated, Thine is the kingdom...and all glory is His
6. Always ask your prayer in Jesus' name
7. Sign off (Amen)

I truly pray that this guide has been a blessing to you. Take things to God in prayer, and remember to listen to his answer. If it is right...you will feel it!
God Bless You & Yours. Paul