

5 Reasons to Pray

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[0:00] If you were here last week, we started a new series on J.C.Ryle's book, Practical Religion. We started the chapter on self-examination, and we saw that all practical religion begins with yourself, and looking to see where you are.

So today we're moving on to a chapter on prayer. And J.C.Ryle has a proposition for us. He's saying that prayer is the most important subject in practical religion.

And I want to ask at the beginning, do you agree with that? Is that a true statement, that prayer is the most important thing in practical religion? Or would you say, maybe something else is?

How many of you say true? We got two. Three. Wow. How many of you say false? It's something else, maybe. And what would that be?

It's okay to disagree. It really is. Because at the beginning, when I started, I was like, I'm not sure. I'm not sure if I buy that. Prayer is the absolutely most important thing.

[1:11] And the further I got into the chapter, and the longer I spent with it, I realized he probably is on to something. And so if you maybe don't agree with that totally, bear with us and keep listening, and maybe you'll change your mind by the end.

As I said, J.C. Ryle is out to prove to us that it's the most important subject in practical religion. And this is what he says. All other subjects are second to it.

Reading the Bible, keeping the Sabbath, hearing sermons, attending public worship, going to the Lord's table. All these are very weighty matters.

But none of them are so important as private prayer. None of those are as important as private prayer. And he's going to give us five reasons why he says that prayer is the most important subject in practical religion.

And the first is this. Prayer is absolutely necessary to a person's salvation. Prayer is absolutely necessary to a man's salvation.

[2:17] Prayer is absolutely necessary to a person's salvation.

If you're here in this room and you're listening and you're understanding, then prayer is absolutely essential to your salvation. That none of you were saved without prayer.

Now that kind of might sound weird because we're Calvinists and we believe in faith alone and grace alone, that it's Christ that saves us, that it's God that saves us.

So how can we say that if you don't pray, you will not be saved? Doesn't that mean that I have to do something in order to be saved?

What do you guys think? How else are we to ask? Does anyone else have any other comments? I mean, how do those two relate to each other? There. Right.

[3:39] Ed. I like to compare this with a marriage relationship. How can a husband relate to his wife if he never talks to his wife?

And that's not only asking, but praising, giving thanks. All of these aspects is a give and take. Right. J.C. Ryle does say, how are we supposed to call on the God, on a God that we know, unless we talk to him?

And that's not something that I brought out in this lesson, but it's true that if we don't know God in any meaningful way, if we never talk to God in any meaningful way, then it's very questionable whether we have any sort of relationship with him.

Jim? Well, the Bible also tells us that we have not because we asked not. Right. You and I, we could go right now to the state penitentiary in Michigan City, and we can go into death row.

And we'll say that a man there is going to be executed in two hours. And we could go up to that man and say, if you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you will be saved.

[4:54] If you trust in him, you will be saved. We have that authority. And Jesus says, preach this gospel. But there's nowhere in the Bible where it says that someone could be saved without asking for it.

That all salvation, we must ask for it. And the bottom line is that there's no such thing as a dumb faith, a faith that does not speak.

We saw last week from James that faith is always, it always brings forth action, always brings forth works. The first thing that saving faith brings forth is to open the mouth of a sinner and make them call on the Lord.

It's the first thing that saving faith does. And it's the first sign that we have a vital relationship with the Lord Jesus. And the person must do it.

The person must do it. We can't be so set on thinking that God saves sinners that we don't include that man is responsible.

[6:06] And parents, sometimes we wish that we could believe or we could pray for our children and see them saved. But in the end, they have to pray.

They have to believe for themselves. They must repent. They must repent. And it's only when they begin to talk to God will they be saved. And all of you can confirm this.

Every one of you, if you have been saved, you know that you prayed. And so you were saved. And so what does it mean for the lost?

What does it mean for the people that don't know the Lord? Well, the responsibility is all theirs. The responsibility is all theirs. God's salvation stands at hand.

And they have not because they ask not. And if you will not pray, you will perish. That's what the Bible says. And it's God's design that if you don't ask, you don't have.

[7:08] And if you won't knock, the door won't be opened to you. You can stand all day right beside the gate. And you can stand around the gate. And if you never knock, the Lord will not open the door for you.

God gives graciously to all those who ask. But he doesn't give to those who won't ask. So that's the first reason. Ryle says prayer is the most important subject in all of practical religion.

Because there's no salvation without prayer. The second reason is that prayer is the surest mark of the Christian.

Of a true Christian. The habit of prayer is the surest mark of a true Christian. In Luke 18, the Lord tells a parable of a persistent widow.

Remember, there's an unjust judge who will not give that widow justice. And she keeps coming back over and over again. And the judge says, I don't fear God.

[8:13] And I don't fear man. But because this, if I don't give her justice, she will wear me out. I'm going to do something for her. And Jesus says, in the same way, will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones who cry out to him day and night?

This is a mark of all of God's chosen ones. All of his people. That they are persistent prayers. They are persistent prayers.

They're like that widow. They never give up. They call day and night. And we said this last week. But God has no children that don't talk.

That don't cry. The first act that every Christian does is to cry out. Is to start talking to God their Father. And they keep right on talking.

All of God's children are very talkative with their Father. And it's true no matter where we go. It's not just true in the United States. It's not just true for Reformed Baptist Christians.

[9:15] If we go to Spain, we're going to find out that God's children pray. And they enter into prayer. And we can enter in with their prayers. If we were to go to China.

And we were going into a little small house church. As different as we are. As different as our culture. And the way we practice our Christianity.

We would find out that they pray. All of God's children pray. And it's true no matter what denomination a Christian is found in. They could be Presbyterian.

Or Methodist. Or Baptist. Or Lutheran. Whatever. All of God's children. Everywhere. Pray. God puts his spirit in them.

And that spirit makes them cry out. Abba Father. And so they cry out. So if we were going to look for a true Christian.

[10:11] We were going to try to find one. What would we look for? Would we look for someone who goes to church? I think yeah. We would. But there's lots of people that go to church.

And so that's not exactly the best way to find out. Will we find someone who reads their Bible? And we'd say yes. They need to read their Bible.

But there's lots of people that read their Bibles. What about someone who preaches the gospel? Well, they're definitely a Christian, right?

And we would say no. Because we've known too many pastors. And even pastors fall away and prove unfaithful. But let's follow this man.

He wakes up in the morning. And he goes into the secret place. And he prays to his father who's in secret. And he begs God for help. And he asks God for mercy and grace.

[11:10] And as he's praying, he thinks of his family and their needs. And so he brings his children before the Heavenly Father. And as he's praying, he remembers a sin that he committed yesterday.

And he asks God to forgive him. And he pours out his heart to the Lord Jesus. He throws all of his cares on him. And then he leaves that place.

And he starts going through his day. And all day long, he's shooting up prayers to heaven. All day long, it's going on, this conversation. He's like Nehemiah, who the king asked him a question.

And Nehemiah prayed to the Lord and spoke to the king all in the same breath. And that goes on all throughout this man's day. And then he goes home at night. And he puts his head on his pillow.

And he prays. And he thanks God for the help that he gave him. He pleads for forgiveness. And he goes to sleep thinking about the Lord and talking to him.

[12:14] Whatever else might be true, that man is definitely a Christian, wouldn't you say? That all the other things, prayer, our Bible reading and church going and things like that, can and will be manufactured by a sinful man.

They will. Those things will be counterfeited in the sinful man's life. But there's no room for the flesh in prayer.

There's no room for the flesh in prayer. The flesh can handle Bible reading. And the flesh can handle going to church up to a certain point. But the flesh cannot stand actually praying to God.

And so we know that that man's a Christian if he draws close to the Lord. And so that's why prayer is so important. It identifies the true Christian.

And so let's pause and let me ask you, is that a description of you? That if someone could see you, would they find that you go into the secret place and you pray?

[13:28] And if they could see your thoughts, would they see all these winged messengers going up to heaven and asking God for help and grace? If someone could see how you thought and how you prayed, would they say that you're a Christian?

And so if you want to make your calling and election sure, which the Bible commands us to do, then the best way to do that is to develop a vigorous prayer life.

And if you have a vigorous, lively prayer life, then you know, you can know that you are a Christian. And so that's the second reason that prayer is so important.

It is the surest mark of who's saved and who isn't. Who has the real thing and who's a mere formalist? The third reason, the third reason, and in some ways it's the most uncomfortable for me to talk about, the third reason is that private prayer is the most neglected of all spiritual duties.

If any duty is neglected by Christianity on the whole, it's private prayer. I don't want to spend a lot of time on this, but I think it's safe.

[14:48] It's not good to say, but it's safe and it's probably right that each one of us is probably overestimating how much our brother and sister is praying. And that's a good thing in a lot of ways, that we should think best, the best that we can of our brother and sister.

But the truth is, is that most of us and a lot of us have very poor prayer lives. And it's not something that we like to talk about or think about, but it is probably true.

Listen to our friend, Stuart Elliott. He's speaking to pastors. And he says, We have grossly overestimated the prayer lives of our people.

Countless numbers of our brothers and sisters hardly pray at all. And then J.C. Ryle says this, I know this sounds very shocking and will startle many, but I am satisfied that prayer is just one of those things which is thought a matter of course, and like many matters of course, is shamefully neglected.

It's everybody's business, and as it happens in such cases, it's a business carried on by very few. It's one of those private transactions between God and our souls, which no eye sees, and therefore one, which there is every temptation to pass over and to leave undone.

[16 : 19] Have you found that to be true? That prayer is one of the first things that you just kind of leave off. that no one sees it, and so it's just easier left undone.

Prayer is hard. It's very hard. And so, there's every temptation to just not pray. And so that's why Ryle says, prayer is one of the most important things that we do in all practical religion, because it's one of the most neglected.

It's one of the most neglected ones. And so we need to focus more attention on it because we have so many temptations just to not pray, and it's so hard to pray, and so many of us end up not praying that we have to pay attention, and we have to emphasize it all the more.

So let's move on to the fourth reason. The fourth reason. God gives us great encouragement to pray. God gives us great encouragement to pray.

So let me ask you, how does God encourage us to pray? What are some of the things that He does for us that encourages us, that motivates us, and moves us to do the hard thing and to pray, to not neglect prayer?

[17 : 43] Roger? Throughout the gospel, we see Christ going off to His quiet places to pray. And if He had to pray, and if it was necessary for Him, how much more necessary for us?

Right. One of my favorite verses is Luke 5.16. And it's sort of just stuck in there. It doesn't seem to have much of a context, except this is Christ's ministry, and it says, He often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

What was the power that Jesus had? Why was He so effective? Why was He so holy and useful? It was because He often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

And so, to pray. So we have Jesus' example to pray. What else? Jim? John Fletcher made that point, Jason, in his book, and there was a part of the book.

I don't remember, it was the second chapter, but he made a point in his writing that Jesus started every day with prayer. Right. How many times did the disciples, I mean, there's several recorded times, but how many times probably did it happen in the ministry?

[18 : 54] They're looking for Jesus, and they can't find Him because He's gone off to some lonely place and He was praying before everyone woke up. And even though He had stayed up late into the night, He was up the first thing in the morning before it was light and He was praying.

What else? There's not a lack of encouragement. Mom? We have great promises to pray. We're going to talk about those in a few minutes.

What else? How does the Gospel motivate us to pray? How does the Gospel make prayer possible? Exactly.

What has God the Father done so that we could pray? Something very basic.

Dale? Right. And even before that, we're going to get to that in a second. Do we have the right to pray in and of ourselves?

[20 : 19] We don't. We're sinners. So why can we pray at all? What's that? Our union with Christ.

We've been justified in Christ. We've been set apart in Christ. We've been adopted because of Christ. The Gospel is the biggest motivation to pray.

We're by nature objects of wrath. We don't deserve to be heard. We don't deserve, when faced with a problem, to be able to ask God for help.

But God the Father sent His Son in the likeness of sinful men, and He sent Him to die so that we could pray.

Remember, at the hour of Jesus' death, the curtain that stood between men and God in the temple was just torn in two. And imagine what that would have been like.

[21 : 22] It was Passover time, and so the temple was full of people. And so imagine if you were an Israelite, and you're standing in the temple, and all of a sudden, you see this big, tall, thick curtain torn in two, and there's nothing between you and God.

There's nothing between you and the mercy seat anymore because of Jesus' death. And so Jesus Christ died so that we could pray.

And shouldn't that motivate us to pray? It's not a cheap gift that He's given us. It cost Him His Son. Dale says we have an intercessor.

We have an advocate to pray on our behalf. Jim? I want to share that passage. I have time with him in Hebrews 40. He starts off in verse 14 of chapter 40.

He says, Therefore, since we have a great, great priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are, yet without sin.

[22:38] And He can most only tell us, Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us. Right. We have every reason to pray with great confidence.

Not only because Jesus is there for us, but Jesus is making our prayers acceptable in the sight of God the Father. Father, how many of you, when you look at your prayer life, you look at it and it seems so weak and so full of sinful desires that we pray so that we can get things so we can spend on ourselves and we pray for our own desires.

And I have to say that there's a lot of sin in my prayer life. My best prayers are full of unbelief. And so I need someone to stand at God's right hand and make these things acceptable to Him.

And Jesus is our great high priest. And He makes our prayers not only acceptable to God the Father, but pleasing.

Revelation shows us the scene, and this angel is carrying this censer, this bowl, and it's full of this good-smelling aroma.

[24:08] And He says, These are the prayers of the saints. So when God smells our prayers, He's pleased with them. He's happy with them. And that's because we have Jesus Christ as our advocate.

And so we have every encouragement to pray, to pray confidently, to pray hard, to pray boldly, because we have a great high priest whose name is love, and our names are written on His hands and on His heart.

He knows us, and He's able to pray for us. But, brothers and sisters, God gives us more than just those two reasons. He gives us a trinity of reasons.

We have God the Father for us, we have God the Son for us, and we have God the Spirit, who's actually within us, praying for us. Turn in your Bibles to Romans 8.26.

Romans 8.26. And when someone's there, can you read 8.26 and 8.27? In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness.

[25:16] We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

So, this is the Holy Spirit's praying ministry. Two times in these verses, it says the Spirit intercedes for us.

So, here we are. We're confused. We're faced with a problem, and we don't even know how to pray. Have you ever been in a situation like that?

Where you're faced with this problem, and it seems like it's a knot that cannot be untied. And we don't know what to pray. We don't even know how to feel about how to pray.

And so, here comes our heavenly advocate, the Holy Spirit, and He gets down on His knees, as it were, and He gets beside us, and He picks up the shambles of our prayers, and He picks up the desires that we have, and the groans that we don't even know.

[26:31] And He prays on our behalf. He helps us in our weakness. And this verse isn't saying that we don't have to pray. He's not saying that the Holy Spirit is praying without us.

Rather, the Spirit is praying with us. Our groans and His groans are put together, and they're presented to God, and God answers these prayers, because they're in accordance with His will.

So, brothers, pray. Pray. You have God the Father on your side. He wants you to pray. And so, He sends His Son to die for you, so you can. And you have God the Son at God's right hand, making your prayers acceptable.

And you have the Holy Spirit within you, helping you to pray. So, if the Trinity is not enough to make us pray, what does that say about our hearts?

That's the first thing I have to conclude, is if those things don't make us and spur us on to pray, we really need a lot of help to pray.

[27:40] And so, God gives us promises. And, as my mom says, He gives us every promise to pray. That when we pray, we know that our prayers are going to be answered.

Let me just read some of these verses to you. And just listen, and let them sink in, because we have a way of, you know, cutting things and making things so they don't say what they really say. And Jesus is letting these naked promises stand, and He's asking us to believe in them. So, just listen to them. Matthew 7, verse 7, Ask, and it will be given to you.

Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives. He who seeks finds. And to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

Matthew 21, 22, I tell you the truth. If you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, remember Jesus cursed the fig tree and it died, but you can also say to this mountain, go throw yourself into the sea, and it will be done.

[28:55] If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer. John 14, 13-14, And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father.

You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. James 5, 16, The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

Elijah was a man just like us, and he prayed that it would not rain, and it did not rain for three and a half years. And this is one I didn't know, and I was encouraged to read it.

This is a good one. Isaiah 58, 9, Then you will call, and the Lord will answer. You will cry for help, and He will say, Here I am.

Now, does God sound very exalted in that situation? We're calling for help, and it's, as it were, a servant comes in and says, Here I am.

[30:05] I'll do whatever you want, whatever you need. And it's to God's glory to meet us in our weakness with all of His strength. And so we can say, God, I need help.

And He enters in the picture and says, Here I am. What would you have me to do? That's the fourth reason that Ryle says prayer is the most important subject in all of practical religion, because God gives us so many encouragements to pray.

He's done so much so that we can pray. The fifth reason prayer is the most important subject in practical religion is this. Diligence in prayer is the secret to eminent holiness.

Eminent means great. It means high, wonderful, awesome holiness. Prayer is the secret to eminent holiness.

And Ryle points out a fact that we all know, but we don't really ever talk about. It's sort of the elephant in the room that it's known, but we don't talk about it. And that is, there's a great distance between those who are on the front of God's army and those who are on the back.

[31:22] There's a great degree of difference in holiness between God's children. Some Christians don't seem to ever get along.

They're not moving ahead very fast. They still want the milk when the meat's in front of them. They never stop sinning in the same exact ways over and over again.

They never seem to make any progress in holiness. They're never ever stepping on the throats of their enemies. They're in the school of Christ. They're Christians, but they don't ever seem to move up a grade.

They just don't move along. And then there's others who are always moving along. They're always going from glory to glory, from strength to strength.

And every year, it's more. It's more love. They love Christ more. They're more thankful. They're worshiping more. They're doing more. They're not growing weary in well-doing.

[32:25] And, brothers and sisters, those Christians are rare, but they're real, and they're out there. They're the Apostle Pauls who's saying, I'm forgetting everything what's behind, and I'm pressing on.

And that's what the kind of Christians these are. They're the Augustans and the Athanasians who, they're moving on. They're going from strength to strength. They're suffering more.

They're doing more. They're the David Brainerds and the Jonathan Edwards, and they're the Sarah Edwards, and they're even the Shirley Hawkins who, they're moving on ahead from glory to glory.

And so, what makes the difference? What makes the difference between this set of people that are moving on and this set that is having such a difficult time going ahead?

They're in the same place. Ryle says, it's prayer. Prayer makes all the difference. Many Christians want to say, or they think, that somehow this imminent holiness, this greatness in the faith, it's

unreachable.

[33 : 34] It's just a gift from God, and some people have it, and some people just don't have it. But they would say it's beautiful in books. They know it's out there, but it's not for me.

It's unattainable. It's unreachable. But Ryle says, the difference is prayer. The difference is prayer. It's not something mysterious.

It's not something magical. It's not something that God gives to some and others not. The difference is, some will pray more, and some pray less.

Now, how many of you have ever, well, how many of you have ever heard of Ben Hogan, the golfer? He's kind of old. Some of, yeah. Maybe if you have, you're a golf nut like I am, or maybe you're older.

Ben Hogan was one of the greatest golfers ever. He was one of the greatest golfers ever. Jack Nicklaus one time was asked, so is Tiger Woods the best ball striker, the best ball striker in history?

[34 : 44] And Nicklaus said, no, no, no. Ben Hogan was easily the best. So what was the secret to Ben Hogan's success? Why was he so good?

It wasn't because he was a physical specimen. He wasn't like Tiger Woods, 6'2 and ripped and all that sort of thing. He was 5'6. He weighed 140 pounds.

He wasn't naturally great. I'm sure he had some talent. But he invented practice. He invented practice. And this is not an exaggeration.

Ben Hogan would get up at dawn, and when dawn rolled around, we'll say, at dawn, he was on the golf course. And he practiced until it was dark outside.

So however long that is, 12 hours, 13 hours, he would practice. He said that you practice until you have callus all the way to your bones.

[35 : 40] and then you keep practicing. And when your hands start to bleed, you keep practicing. So he was a golfer. He wasn't a boxer or something, but he would actually practice with bloody hands.

So it wasn't something magical. It wasn't something that he had some great talent. Ben Hogan did a few simple things, and he did them over and over and over again until he became very good at it.

Prayer is the simple thing in the Christian life that makes some Christians great and eminently holy and others not. Because an eminently holy Christian will pray.

And they'll pray over and over and over again. And so if you want to be holy, if you want to be very holy, then pray often and keep praying.

And after you're done praying, you pray more. So does prayer make you holy? Does prayer make you holy? We want to say no.

[36 : 48] Prayer doesn't make you holy. Because in that case, then some monk out there or some Pharisee out there would be holy just for saying his prayers. It's not that.

It's prayer calls God into action. Prayer calls fire down from heaven and into my heart. Prayer calls the Spirit to work. And so when we pray, the Spirit pours out Himself on our life and we have the Spirit working in us.

And so we have the affections of the Spirit. We love the things that the Holy Spirit loves. And we start hating the things that the Spirit hates. And so we become more and more holy.

And when our desires die down and our fire is burning low, the Holy Spirit's pouring more oil and we burn higher and higher. And He puts Christ before our eyes.

And He puts Him there and we see Him and we run after Him. The Spirit moves us. But the Spirit wants to be asked. And if we don't ask, we don't have.

[37 : 57] And so we run into what Jim reminded us of earlier. We have not because we ask not. Those who are eminently holy ask for the Holy Spirit to work in their lives more.

So prayer. It makes all the difference. There's no amount of Bible reading. There's no amount of church going and sermon listening that will make up for prayer.

Prayer is the only thing that puts God to work in our hearts. And so we have to pray. And so that's why Ryle says, this is the most important thing in all of practical religion.

After this chapter, we're going to be talking about other things. But if we don't stay on this chapter, if we don't pray through all the other chapters, then we can just forget it right now because it's not going to happen.

Our Bible reading isn't going to do us any good. The communion isn't going to do us any good.

Hearing sermons is not going to do us any good. Prayer is the secret to being made holy.

[39 : 06] So that's five reasons that prayer is the most important subject in practical religion. So I want to ask you, as we conclude, if prayer is so important, why don't we pray more?

Why don't we pray more? What are some of the excuses that we use? And how can we defeat those excuses? I'd say Satan would be, would help us in that way, discouraging us, saying that he won't answer, making us feel unworthy to go ask him.

And that's when we start looking down, and looking out. Satan is a liar, and he's going to lie to you about the power of prayer. And so we have to confront the lie with the truth.

Why else don't we pray? Death? We don't have time. So what do you say to people who say, I don't have time to pray? Or what do you say to yourself when you say, no, I don't have time to pray?

Find time? Okay. What do you have time for? You always have time for what's most important to you, don't you? If basketball is more important than prayer to you, then you'll go and do basketball, but you won't pray.

[40 : 17] If watching TV is more important than prayer, then you'll watch TV. So you have to ask, you have to say to yourself, is this more important to me?

Am I making an idol out of something else? What are some other reasons that we find it so hard to pray or we don't pray? Dare? Lazy.

That's on my list. The flesh hates to pray, and prayer is hard work. It is hard. And there's no one who can say otherwise. It's hard to pray. So we have to encourage ourselves.

There's lots of promises for us to pray. And so we have to get over our laziness and see how it's so important. What do you say to a person that says, I don't have anywhere to pray?

I don't have anywhere to pray. Jim, you're like, what does that mean? No, that's basically it. Yeah. I think what he's saying is, there's lots of people who say, I can't, I don't have any place.

[41 : 17] I don't have any alone time to pray. Well, Jesus went out onto a mountain. Peter was up on top of the house. You find places. You find places.

I know one person, every time they're in the bathroom, they pray. Because no one's going to interrupt them there. And that's embarrassing, or you might not like to think about that. But if you're there, and it's quiet, it's a good place to pray.

I think we're going to conclude there. Next week, we're going to talk about prayer again. And these are all the reasons why we should pray. J.C. Ryle next week's going to tell us how to pray better. Because I think we need that too. We need only, not only encouragements to pray, but we need help and say, how do I do this? Let's conclude in prayer.

Our Heavenly Father, we ask that you would bless us and help us to pray. Will you draw close to us and help us to draw close to you.

[42 : 21] Will you forgive us for our prayerlessness and our backwardness to prayer, for our believing the lies that Satan tells us and that our flesh tells us.

Father, will you help us now as we come to worship you? Will you help us to have undistracted thoughts? And will you give us pure hearts that we could draw close to you and worship you in spirit and in truth.

Will you help us by the power of the Holy Spirit? And it's in Jesus' name I pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.