

THE FIRST 15

Friday, January 24, 2025

By: Jan Davis

Today is Friday, January 24. This week we continue our study on the Practice of Prayer and explore what it means to talk with God.

OPENING PRAYER

In the quiet stillness of a bright January morning, I settle into the special space I have set aside to talk with God. I pause my thoughts and silence my mind. I breathe deeply and slowly and focus my whole being on the God who loves me. Holy Lord, teach me what it means to talk with You, express my innermost thoughts and share my deepest feelings. Today I bring You my prayers of gratitude, lament, petition and intercession. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

So I say to you: 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; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him! Luke 11:9-13

REFLECTION

Talk with God. Have a good intimate conversation with the One who knows you and loves you. This week we have been breaking down the concept of "Talking with God" into four categories that provide an accessible model for prayer - gratitude, lament, petition and intercession. Today we will focus our time on prayers of petition and intercession.

When we pray a prayer of petition or intercession we are asking God to fulfill His promises to overcome evil with good and make right what is wrong. Petition is when we ask God to do something for us. Intercession is when we ask God to do something for someone else. We pray for ourselves and we pray for others.

Asking is an important part of prayer. When we talk with God, Jesus encourages us to ask. What an amazing promise is contained in His words to us, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." He compares God to an earthly parent whose child asks for a fish or an egg. What parent wouldn't try their best to provide a fish or an egg under those circumstances? What parent would substitute a snake or a scorpion? That is unimaginable. Jesus' point is that if a human parent can be trusted to provide good things in response to the requests of a child, how much more will our Father in heaven provide for us when we ask Him.

When we talk with God, we ask Him for what we need. We pray for ourselves. We ask, seek and knock and are confident God hears our prayers and will answer our prayers. When we talk with God, we ask Him to provide for the needs of others. We pray for the people around us. We

pray for the world. We ask, seek and knock on behalf of a broken world, confident that God hears our prayers and will answer our prayers

It is important and vital work when we commit ourselves to praying for others. It means more than merely saying, "I'm praying for you," or inserting the praying hands emoji at the end of a text message. It is committing to intercede for someone, to get down on our knees for them, to actively pray for divine intervention and change in their lives. Intercession is actively loving someone, it is bearing their grief, carrying their pain, longing for their healing and hoping for restoration.

Prayer Prompts:

- Start your talk with God with prayers of gratitude and lament.
- Ask God for whatever you need today - petition Him.
- Ask God for what someone else needs today - intercede for them.
- Pray for good to overcome evil in this world.

Pause and Pray

CLOSING PRAYER

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.

Resources utilized: John Mark Comer, Practicing the Way - The Prayer Practice, Session 02, Talking with God, practicingtheway.org.