



TRANSFORMED

DEVOTIONS CONNECTING TEENS TO CHRIST

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7

Best. Prayer. Ever. – But how?

Jesus' disciples once asked him to teach them how to pray. But before he did that, he taught them how not to pray. This is what he said in Matthew 6:5-8, "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."

First of all, don't make a show of it. If you're praying in public just so people will say, "Wow! Now that's a real Christian," that's all you'll get: just some praise from sinful humans just like you. But instead, Jesus continues, "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."

Head to your room, close the door, take out your ear buds, turn off your cell-phone, and pray to your heavenly Father. Pray to the maker of heaven and earth. Pray to the one who set the stars in the sky and knows them by name. Pray to the one who is powerful enough to heal the sick and raise the dead. He's listening, and he can do something about your requests!

Jesus continues, "And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him."

Have you ever thought that in order for your prayers to be effective they need to be long and you need to use words you're not even sure how to spell? Jesus says, "Keep it simple!" Talk to him like you would to any of your friends. Be honest. Get straight to the point. Why? Because he already knows what you're going to ask him. He's just waiting for you to ask.

Now you might be thinking, "If God already knows what I'm going to ask for, why should I even pray?" Great question! Prayer isn't for God, it's for you. Check out what the apostle Paul says in Philippians 4:6-7, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Why pray to God if he already knows what you're going to ask for? So you can have peace instead of anxiety. So you can cast all your cares on him because he cares for you.

So what are you waiting for? Head to your room. Shut the door. Pray to your Heavenly Father. Keep it simple and be at peace.

Prayer: Dear Father in heaven, sometimes I make prayer so difficult. I feel like I need to say the right words. But now I know that I don't. I just need to head to my room and have a conversation with you. You just want me to talk to you about everything on my heart and mind. Teach me to pray in this simple way. And then, Lord, grant me peace as I call on you. Amen.