

Why People Don't Pray More

1. Not sure you know how to pray.
2. Get bored or distracted while trying to pray.
3. Think your requests are too small for God.
4. Not sure your prayers will make a difference.

Prayer is communicating with God. Psalm 5:1-3

1. With gut level honesty. Exodus 5:22-23
2. About everything that matters to you. Philippians 4:6
3. Continually. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
4. Listen for His response. 1 Kings 19:12-13; John 10:27

Barriers to talking (intimacy) with God

- Maybe you are simply distracted? Luke 10:38-40
- Maybe your heart has hardened? Matthew 13:14-15
- Maybe you have built a wall of sin? Isaiah 59:1-2
- Maybe you are harboring bitterness and refusing to forgive? Mark 11:25; Matthew 7:2; Matthew 6:12-15
- Maybe you don't know God? John 7:28-29

Promises of God's Presence

- **You will find God when you seek God.** Jeremiah 29:13-14
- **You can do life with God's presence.** John 14:16-17
- **You can experience God now.** Acts 17:27

LIFE GROUP HOMEWORK

Take some time to focus on the questions below and be prepared to share your answers with the group. Have a great meeting as you come together to connect and encourage one another to grow and to see God work!

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

What brought you to Real Life Church?

If you could ask God one question, what would it be and why?

What is your prayer for Real Life Church? What would you see God do?

DIGGING DEEPER

Read Psalms 5:1-3: What is something you are currently praying for that God has apparently not yet answered? How have you handled this prayer not being answered?

On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the highest, how would you rate your time spent talking with God this past week? Explain.

Read Matthew 6:5,7. How honest are you with God when you pray? What are some reasons that keep you from being totally honest with God?

Read Philippians 4:6 Describe how you communicate with God. What ways are most effective and meaningful to you?

Read Luke 10:38-40, Matthew 13:14-15, Isaiah 59:1-2.

These verses give reasons as to why we don't always feel God in our lives.

- In what ways do you feel God's presence in your life?
- What's keeping you from always feeling God's presence in your life?
- Describe a time when you experienced God's presence in your life. How did that experience affect you?
- What are some of the subtle ways God reveals Himself to you?

Read Mark 11:24-25, James 4:3, and Proverbs 16:2.

These verses tell us that broken relationships and having the wrong motives can cause unanswered prayers.

- Describe a time when God didn't answer a prayer of yours. What did you learn from your unanswered prayer?
- What broken relationships may be hindering your prayers? What steps will you take to restore them?

Read 1 John 5:14-15 **Final thought:** With your group pray for any requests that may have left you feeling confused, uncertain or even unheard. Be open and honest with God. He can handle it. Ask Him to help you examine your heart, your motives and your faith. Ask Him for a willingness to hear His answer, whatever it may be, and to trust in His goodness and His wisdom.

Take it Home

Here are some suggestions you may want to use for your time with God this week:

Day 1—Spend time thanking God for all he has done in your life. Tell Him some specific things in which you are thankful for.

Day 2—Have an honest conversation with God by telling Him your true feelings about Him. Ask for a deeper relationship with Him.

Day 3—Pray for some specific needs in your own life. Pray for both large and small requests.

Day 4—Pray for others. Pray specifically for the needs that were voiced by your group. Pray for each member of your group by name.

Day 5—Listen to God. Present your requests from the four previous days and then simply pray. Quietly listening for God's gentle whisper

Three of the best ways to start seeking God more is to spend time reading the Bible, worshipping Him, and talking to Him daily through prayer. If you are not engaging with God in any of these three ways, then begin to do so this week. If you are unsure how to talk to God through prayer, spend time in God's Word reading about how you can feel His presence on a regular basis.

This week read the following passages of Scripture: Psalm 88:1-18, Psalm 27:1-14, Acts 17:16-34, Psalm 145:1-21, Psalm 140:1-13, John 14:15-31, and Jeremiah 29:10-14.

5-Day Devotional thoughts:

- Ask God to help you remove the things that are keeping you from feeling His presence.
- Confess to God any sin in your life that may be keeping you from feeling His presence. Ask for His forgiveness.
- Tell God where your heart has become hardened. Ask Him to heal whatever has hardened your heart.
- Ask God to show you His presence daily and in all situations you may face both good and bad.
- Pray for those you know who struggle to feel God's presence. Ask God to reveal Himself to them.

Don't let the conversation stop here. Keep talking it over online.

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