

Why I don't pray

Matthew 7:7-11

I don't pray because . . .

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|---|---|---|
| 1. I don't have time to pray. | T | F |
| 2. I don't know how to pray. | T | F |
| 3. Nothing happens when I pray. | T | F |
| 4. I get along fine without prayer. | T | F |
| 5. I am an active sort, not a contemplative. | T | F |
| 6. I know what is best for my life. | T | F |
| 7. My issues aren't big enough to bother God with. | T | F |
| 8. I don't have anything to pray about. | T | F |
| 9. That's the pastor's job. | T | F |
| 10. Since God already knows, why do I have to tell him? | T | F |

Where this passage fits in the flow of Matthew 7

- 7:1-5 Don't be critical
7:6 Don't be gullible
7:7-11 Ask God how to treat people
7:12 Treat others as you want to be treated

General principles of prayer

- Have I neglected to pray? (James 4:2) Ask, and be specific.
- Am I in sin? (Psalm 66:18; Proverbs 28:9) Confess your sins.
- Am I being selfish? (James 4:3) Make sure your motives are pure.
- Am I doubting? (Mark 11:24) Ask in faith, believing.
- Is it God's will? (1 John 5:14-15) Make sure it fits God's purpose.

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⁷“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. ⁹Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? ¹¹If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!¹

When you pray . . .

Principle	Problem	Application
Be specific (7)	We make vague or general requests.	Tell God specifically what is on your mind.
Be persistent (7)	We wait passively. We give up too soon.	Don't stop praying until you receive an answer.
Be expectant (7-8)	We don't believe prayer works.	Expect God to answer.
Be personal (9-11)	We don't believe God knows and/or cares about our needs.	Believe that your Father loves to give good gifts to his children.
Be submissive (11)	We don't want to be a burden. We want to be in charge.	Bring your requests to God and wait for his response.

We can pray with confidence because we have a Father who loves to give good gifts to his children.

¹ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. Wheaton : Standard Bible Society, 2001