



MAYBE THIS YEAR

MCA
The Church on the Hill

Sermon Outline

Key verses

Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: "God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector." ¹³ But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner."

Luke 18:9-11,13

Common obstacles to prayer

1. Prayer doesn't seem to work
2. We feel guilty

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9

3. We don't know how to pray

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.

Romans 8:26

4. We are too busy to pray

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

1 Thessalonians 5:16–18

PRAY ANYWAY

JANUARY 29
DISCUSSION GUIDE

Opening Thought

As Christians, we know we should pray. Sometimes we pray in the mornings after waking up, before a big test, when we need extra strength, at the end of the day, or before meals.

For many of us, we struggle with prayer and often feel guilty for how little we pray. When we finally do make time to pray, we often don't know what to say.

Prayer is simply talking to God and also making time and space to let God talk to us. Prayer is a back-and-forth continual conversation with God. It comes out of a relationship of intimacy that happens in a secret place void of distractions. It also includes praying without ceasing throughout our day.

Ice breakers

- If God would grant you any wish, what would you ask?
- Can you quote the Lord's Prayer from memory?

Dig Deeper

- Do you find it hard to pray? Why?
- Which of the four obstacles impacts you the most? What other obstacles to prayer do you face?
- Do you ever feel like you're too busy to pray?
- Why is prayer so important?
- What part of the Lord's prayer is the Lord impressing on your heart in this season of life?
- Have you ever wondered if prayer works?
- What stood out to you from today's sermon?
- What should we do when we don't know what to say to God? How does the Holy Spirit help in these situations? (see Romans 8:26)

Closing

Sometimes we don't want to pray because we feel guilty about our sin, but God wants us to turn to him in prayer even when we mess up. Pray anyway.

Use the Lord's prayer as a template for your own prayers this week. Don't recite it, but put it into your own words.