



Want to know more?

Come join us for worship on Sundays at 10:30 AM and learn how to get the most out of life.

Here at Lakeside Presbyterian Church, we want to help you live the life you were created for. Every Sunday, we have church services where you can experience uplifting worship music, encouraging messages from our pastor, special programming for your family, and opportunities for you to find people to do life with all throughout the week—and it all starts here!

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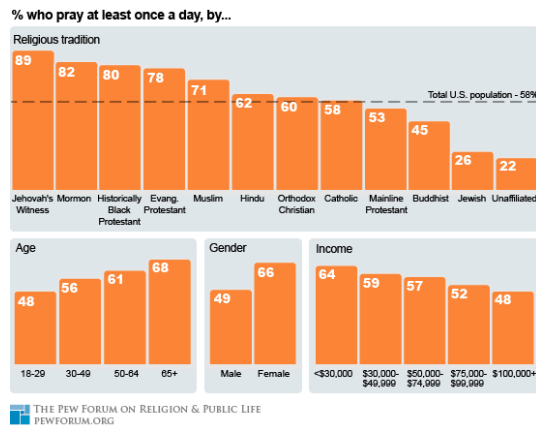


**PRAYER
WORKS!**

"And it can work for YOU!"

So, you don't pray, or you don't pray often.

You are not alone. Statistics say about one-half of all Christian Americans say they rarely, if ever, pray .

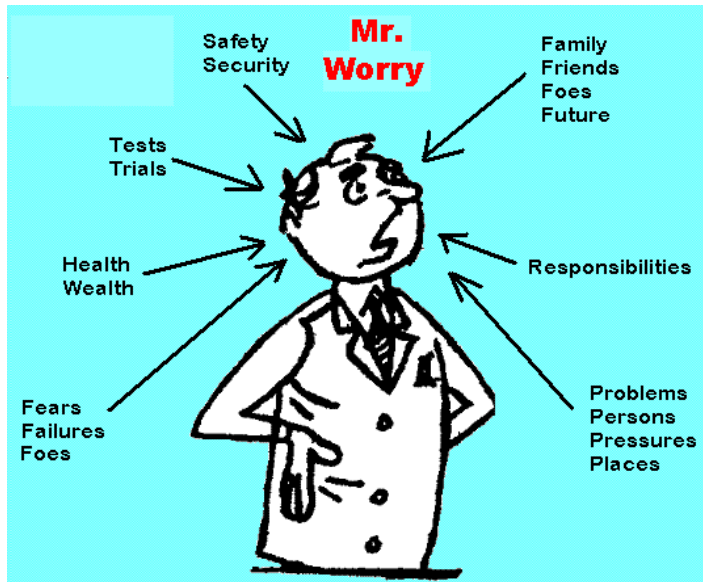


This, despite the fact that prayer is one of the most important aspects of religious/spiritual life. In fact, prayer has been described as 'the very soul and essence of a person's spiritual life and religion. Religion connects us with a superhuman controlling power, we call God.

Want to learn a bit more?

Even though many say they do not pray regularly or at all. Most Americans want a better, healthier, or satisfying spiritual life. So, if for each person there is body, mind, and spirit, we know that it is easy to focus on the first two and neglect the third. BUT what if it is the spirit that makes the body and mind healthier and stronger, better connecting the parts of the inner being with each other and then connecting to a God whose power designed life itself. **Sounds like a winner!!!** This is why the other 50% of Americans are praying.





So, what are your issues? What keeps you up at night—your future, security in an insecure world? What about your health? Remember how we felt before CoVID-19 when we did not have to worry about what might hit us next. Is a relationship your challenge? (They always are!)

Maybe you just need to know that you matter in the big scheme of things. Or if you can make a difference for good somehow, some way, but have not found how to do it yet.

There is a book titled: "Talking with God: What to Say When You Don't Know How to Pray". I like that except I want to add that you are not the one starting the conversation. Yes! Prayer needs to be a conversation if it is to have meaning.

Here is the first news flash:

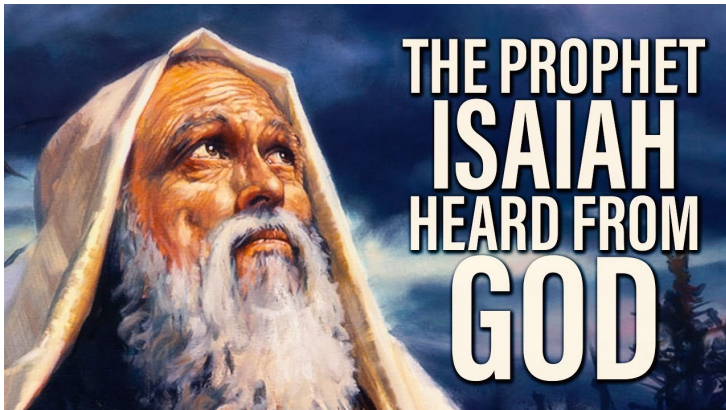
"GOD IS ALWAYS TALKING TO YOU!"

and since your first breath God has never stopped talking to you. The important question - ***the most important question*** - is, "**Are you listening and ready to respond?**" The air you breathe, the sun as it rises and sets, parents with loving touches and words, and on and on, are some of the many ways that God is talking to YOU. Here are a few common things we all need through prayer.

We talk at God when we are frightened, or ill, or in trouble. But do we feel that God is listening - and answering? The best sense of that comes when we learn and practice talking with God.

Why don't we give it a try for just *seven days* (only one week!) That just might change your life for the better, the very much better.

An old snarled grim-faced prophet named Isaiah who lived with a lot of bad news in the middle of people who had turned bad as a bone, said, quoting God, "*Come now, and let us reason together,' Says the Lord.*"



Ok! So, let's do this!

You do not need to get formal. You do not need to deepen your voice. You do not even need to pray out loud. You are coming to your loving God who has been patiently waiting day after day for you to turn to Him.

First, remember, God has been talking to you since you were born. He has been trying and hoping to get your attention. You were created to have a relationship with Him.

If it helps, use this outline as a possible idea, BUT ONLY YOU really understands how YOU make your relationships and share your latest personal news.

DAY 1

(Coming to God with a bucket full of you - your hurts and hopes, your pain and promise.)

First, you must get focused:

1. Take a deep breath of God's gift of air and let it out slowly. That was God gently speaking care, health, and love. His voice was in the Air.
2. Calm yourself and relax in the presence of your loving heavenly parent.
3. Go into a sense of gratitude. Be thankful. For that air, for your sensing God's presence and then for whatever else He has brought into your life for which you want to praise God.
4. Do you have a "big issue?" It is fine—even good—if you start sharing it today. Then tomorrow share it again and see if God begins to lead you to something that will help. Let God know when you see "His" hand at work on this and where you are being led. Share it day after day with both patience and hope and you may see how it begins to change under God's care.

The rest of the bucket full of you can come now or as you choose over time. Remember God already knows but wants you to come to Him in a prayer relationship.

(Praying for STRENGTH)

Weak as a kitten, limp as a wet noodle and needing sleep like a bear in winter. A pastor named Paul, in the middle of church with troubles up to his eye teeth and bone tired, quoted God: ***"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness," that same pastor declared, "For when I am weak, then I am strong."***

So, get focused:

1. Take that deep breath of God's gift of air and let it out slowly. Listen for your heartbeat also, a miracle gift for you.
2. Calm yourself. Lay back in the arms of this loving heavenly parent. Feel His presence??
3. Get thankful! I mean really thankful. Remember that breath and that heartbeat, Him being with you now? So much more to praise Him for.
4. How is your "big issue" today? God really wants to know. Do you feel inner spiritual strength in His presence? Today is a day of fierce challenges but also awesome hope. It is a day that the Lord has made and we shall rejoice and be glad in it, for we have Amazing Grace with its sweet sound that saved you and continues to save YOU.

DAY 2

(Give me Peace)

It is a pressure cooker out there! Non-stop life in a non-stop world. Road rage, snapped personality, blowing one's stack, and just losing it from frustration, stress, and pressure. The most prescribed and purchased medication is to help people sleep.

Long ago a Jewish rabbi Jesus said to his dear friends and followers, "***Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.***"

First you must get focused:

1. Take a deep breath of God's gift of air and let it out slowly. Feel the air moving on your skin and how it gives you a sense of calm.
2. Be still and calm relax in the presence of your Father in heaven who fashioned you cell by cell and spiritually in His Image.
3. Hit your "Happy place of Thanksgiving and praise."
4. Let's talk about your "Big Issue." Is there any change? What is needed? How is your attitude toward it? Can you find a sense of peace knowing that as you face the "Big Issue" your God is in control? What else is on your mind? Can you hear God in all of this? What is He saying? Remember that kid song with the verse: "***I've got peace like a river in my soul!***" May that be God's pre-

(I'm lost so Start up the GPS)

WOW, that sense of panic when we are lost. I mean really lost without a clue. A Poet King named David knew what it felt like and wrote, "***I have gone astray like a lost sheep;***"

When you are physically lost it is bad, but when you are spiritually lost it can be a disaster. People who feel lost with no way out become desperate. They want to find relief at almost any cost. Prayer can be of great help in times such as these.

A person on life's journey wrote, "***Just when darkness descends, and confusion tries to steer me in the wrong direction I learn how powerful God's GPS really is. (Even evil will not re-route my journey). He has mapped my success to the final destination.***"

The GPS about which she speaks is, "**God's Positioning System.**"

Again .. get focused:

1. Take a deep breath again and let it out slowly. Close your eyes and remember when you felt great peace (at the beach, in a field, sitting alone in a sanctuary.)
2. Calm your spirit and relax your soul deeply. Your God has been waiting for this special time.
3. Dial up your Gratitude. You have so much to be grateful for.
4. Ok, how is the "Big Issue" going today? Any change? Maybe more important, is there any change in you? Do you have any new direction in your life? New plans, new hopes, new dreams? Do you have anything else that you want to share with your loving God. Please, please do not despair though the road is hard but remember what Jesus said: "***For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it.***"

(Decisions - who's to know)

Remember how easy things were when you were a child and decisions were made simply by "guess the number of fingers I have held up behind my back" or "eeny meeny miny moe" or tic tac toe. Easy peasy. But when there are careers to choose, places to live, or relationships with other people, decisions are much more difficult and can be overwhelming. There once was long, long ago a man no one liked or wanted to listen to, but he spoke God's words as a prophet. His name was Jeremiah and he said, *"For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope."* Tune into those plans and decisions will come easier.

Focus:

1. Again, take a breath and let it out slowly. Listen and sense what you can hear. Even the slightest murmur or rumble is God asking for your attention.
2. Close your eyes and imagine that you are sitting on your parents' lap. Sense the security and comfort as you rest yourself in that love. His presence is here!
3. Open the door of your grateful heart. Think of all the people who have been important to you and helped you to this point and remember that each was a gift from God. Be happy.
4. Is the "Big Issue" still with you? Has it changed? Have you sensed God working with you on it? Maybe this is a day to focus on decisions. Maybe there is some decision about your "Big Issue" you need to consider. If not, ok, just keep praying. When confronted with a choice that would guide all future decisions, Joshua said, *"Choose this day whom you will serve, but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."* Out of that decision, you, too, can make all other decisions. Prayer will guide.

(Healing in His hands)

Healing and faith seem to go together. Spiritual healing stories like that of Moses and the bronze serpent on the pole for healing; or God's prophet Elisha healing the King are ancient. Look at Jesus healing the blind, the crippled, mental illness and even raising the dead.

When we are hurt or ill, we too, want some of that healing. But all the stories start with Spiritual healing that radiate from the inner spirit of a person to the mind and body. Jesus did not heal everyone he passed. Healing was to show the power of God with the knowledge that our physical bodily health will finally fail. Spiritual health is eternal, physical health is always temporary. One day we will give up our physical body to take on a spiritual body and our present mind will be made completely new. Healing will take place that is spiritual and may even become mental and physical. The spiritual body and the new mind is God's gift of the "perfect you." Then there will be "no more pain" (physical pain will end) and "no more tears" mental loss will give way to clear crisp thinking.

DAY 6

Praying for healing will always produce results for conquering all your ills but as God designs.

1. Three shallow breaths and then one big one. Hold it and then let it out slowly. Sense the inner work of your body. The breath, the pulse, the tingling of your nerves.
2. Look out around you and let your surroundings minister to you and give you a positive sense of serenity. God is here. God is nearby. Feel Him as he takes your hand and touches your face.
3. What do you have to be grateful for today. Count your blessings and give God the glory. Feel His anointing on your heart.
4. Where do we stand on your "big issue"? God is a God of creation and change. What has changed in and around that issue this past week? Consider healing. Disease is all around us. It invades our wellbeing and the wellbeing of those we love.
Pray for healing love and the faith that can reach out even just to touch the hem of His garment. There is healing in His touch. When your spirit is healed, full healing will follow, restoration is near, resurrection power is flowing in your life. Believe it! Take it and hold on to it with all of your strength.

(Finally Some Rest!)

DAY 7

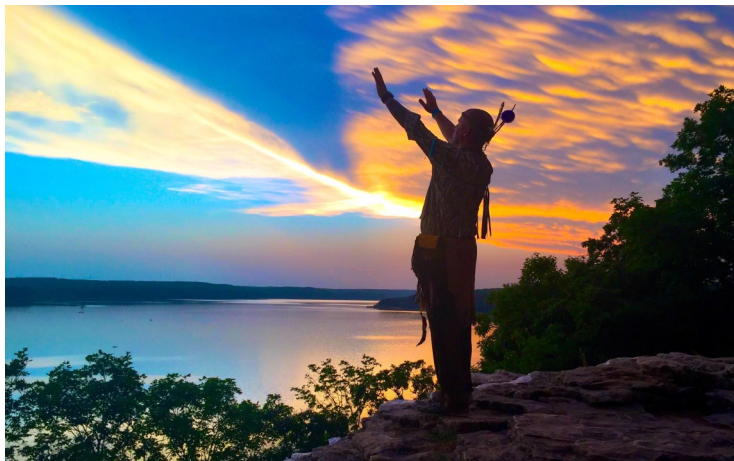
Chill! Kick back! Zone out! Feet up! You need a break. Yes, that's right! No workaholics today. Just catch your breath. The master designer made you to need rest one day in seven. That is the design laid out in the very beginning of the Bible. Work six days and rest on the seventh!

This day is a day to really worship, to go to your happy place, listen to the background music of your life and enjoy. If you do, you will really see God's hidden and guiding hand at work as you journeyed on your life's path. WOW! What a God who has kept you on your way to this day, to this time and place. When you think about it, God is your God and YOU are His child. The Bible says, "*You are the sheep of His pasture.*" This is His day, so rejoice and find His joy for you.

1. Three deep, deep breaths and then let them each out slowly. Allow the pace of your heart and the relaxing of each part of your body to take place.
2. Recall the music of your life and let faith cross through your mind and sense God's smile as He comes to you now.
3. What a life you have lived! How do you even begin to thank your heavenly Father for all that He has done. Praise Him now.
4. The "big issue"? Well, have you carried it long enough? How about giving it lock stock and barrel to God. God's got this if you trust IT to His keeping and just LET IT GO!

Wait you said only seven but this is a reminder that we are not at an end but a new beginning (it is day eight and all the rest of the days to follow)

REMEMBER THAT: *Prayer Works, Prayer Changes things and Prayer Changes YOU!*



Let me tell you about Barbara Lamb. Barbara was a happily married woman with two children, ages 7 and 2. She worked as a general manager for a small chain of restaurants.

Barbara was really good at what she did. She was efficient, organized, and effective.

It all came crashing down with CoVID. She lost her job as the restaurants closed down and the profit margin was so small they just could not keep her. After the job loss her youngest became ill with CoVID. Thinking that young children were resilient to the virus, she did not worry until the child became terribly ill, hospitalized and then it hit. Death. Reeling and needing support, her husband of 9 years could not take the pressure in their home (at least that was his excuse) and walked out and into the arms of one of his coworkers. She was home, shut-in, with a 7-year-old who was doing online learning. She was filled with grief, loss, and abandonment .

A member of her church asked her to join an online Bible study that was a new program just beginning. With little to do and needing adult relationships she reluctantly joined. She knew that the others would never understand the life trauma that was her most recent story.

The study was on Prayer. This was something she understood but was not regular in applying, especially as her life was turned upside down.

She began to pray. And then pray a lot with her "Big Issue" which was her whole life. Day by day she prayed and asked others to pray with her and for her.

One of her study prayer partners told her that her husband needed an office manager to keep correspondence order supplies, and manage the calendar for the partners. She hesitated but maybe this was God's answer.

She got the job. She was able to work from her home and she was just perfect for the

position. After only a few months, the partners in the firm were so impressed with her that she was asked to consider studying for a para-legal position. The firm would pay her tuition and fees. Though she had a seven-year-old to raise, she jumped at the chance.

Barbara is now beyond the para-legal studies and has enrolled in a prestigious Law School with only one and a half years left to graduate. Her life is on a new, challenging and exciting track.

She testifies that it is PRAYER and God's blessing her in their relationship that has been the source putting her life back together. She is still working on the grief and bitterness, but they are being overcome through prayer day to day. Her spiritual life is growing stronger in faith, hope and love with a new perspective on life, on God, and on her life under God's magnificent direction.

PRAYER WORKS!!!