

P.R.A.Y.

Connecting With God

A way to connect with God during your private sessions of prayer is journaling while praying. It might help you slow down and avoid getting off track. There are different acrostics people have used through the years to help walk them through their prayers. Here is one that might be helpful: P - R - A - Y.

PRAISE

God is praised over 350 times in the bible. To praise Him is to acknowledge how great He is to thank Him for the great things He has done. King David in the Old Testament was a master at praising God. Here is just one of his psalms that contain praise: "I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds. I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praises of Your name, O Most High". (Psalm 9:1-2).

Notice that he first gave thanks for all the wonderful deeds God has done. Every time we talk to God, we should easily be able to find something to thank Him for. We thank Him for His goodness, His power, His mercy, His wisdom and the many other aspects of who He is.

REPENT

To repent is to confess specific sins we have committed and to turn away from doing them again ("repent" literally means to turn around). It is important to agree with God's assessment of us that we have sinned and fallen short of His standard. If we don't own this reality and humble ourselves, we will never fully be able to engage with Him. "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:8-9). Coming clean before God is an important part of genuine prayer and reaffirms the truth that God forgives us and we don't need to carry guilt. Then do your best to live like

Jesus did, making use of the strength and power that God has provided you by His Holy Spirit..

ASK

God encourages us to ask for the things that are on our mind. Here's what Jesus tells us in the Sermon on the Mount, "Ask and it will be given to you ... for everyone who asks receives ... Which of you, if your son asks for bread will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask Him" (Matthew 7:7-11).

YIELD

To yield means to be quiet after you have spoken to God and to listen to what He might want to say to you. If you regularly take time to listen, you will begin to hear God's voice. Use a journal to write down the thoughts and promptings that come to mind. Keeping a record of what God says to you is a great way to build your faith. When you are able to look back and see what God said, how you obeyed, and how God answered, your trust and faith grow.