



# WHAT IS PRAYER?

**T**o understand what prayer is, you need first to understand yourself. Did you know that you are made of three parts and they are all important? You are made of body, mind and spirit.

With your body you communicate more with other people. You talk to them, listen to them, touch them, see them. You play with them and work with them.

With your mind you communicate more with other things. You read books, watch TV, learn at school, listen to

music, enjoy entertainment. With your spirit you communicate with God.

In our world we hear little about that part of us called the spirit. That is strange because, being the only part of us that will last forever, it is really the most important. So why do we hear so little about it?

When you watch advertisements you will see hundreds for the body: food, clothes, medicines, sport, etc.



You will also see hundreds for the mind: concerts, plays, books, educational programmes, etc. But I have never seen an advertisement for the spirit. Why not?

Because the reason for an advertisement is to make money, and the things that



God gives to our spirits are all free. When we ask, he gives us forgiveness, peace, courage, the knowledge of his love and he also gives us eternal life. None of these things can be bought with money. So, prayer is your spirit communicating with God. It is asking him for what he longs to give. It is thanking him and telling him about our needs and the needs of those we love.

Perhaps you are not quite sure that there is a God who listens when you pray. If so, and if you really want to know him, you can pray like this: 'Oh God, I want to know you. If you are there, please make yourself real to me, or give me some sign.'



God does not always answer at once, but if you keep on patiently praying like that, he will answer you in his own time. If a child is lost and trying to find his way home, you may be quite sure that his father and mother are also searching for him, because they love him. So if you are searching for God, you may be sure that the God who loves you is also searching for you.

### *A Prayer of Praise and Thanks*

*O Lord, Our Lord, your greatness  
is seen in all the world!  
Your praise reaches to the heavens;  
it is sung by children and babies  
(Psalm 8:1-2 GNT).*



## SPARROWS IN THE PARK


A lady I know spent a long time in hospital and when she came out she was very tired and depressed. She wanted God to help her, but she couldn't feel sure that God loved her or cared for her, so she prayed something like this: 'Oh God, I need your help so much. If you are really there and if you love me, then give me some sign.'

Nothing happened at first, but one day her husband took her and their two children to the park. They were playing

and she was alone. Suddenly she saw something that reminded her of Jesus Christ and what he had done for her. What she saw was something that she described as a 'cross of sparrows' on the ground in front of her. The sparrows were there, on the ground, in the shape of a cross. She stood watching but they did not

move. The cross of Jesus Christ is a sign that God loves us so much that he was willing to die for us. My friend remembered the cross of Jesus and she started to pray, knowing that God was there and would certainly help her.

God may not answer your prayer like that because he does not often treat people alike. He made every thumbprint and every snowflake different, and you are special and unlike anyone else. He has a special way and a special answer just for you.



### A Prayer to Say Sorry

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,  
have mercy on me, a sinner  
(Luke 18:38).





# WHO AM I TALKING TO?

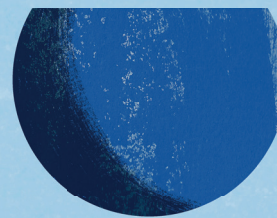
**W**hen we think about praying to God, it is good to remember how great he is.

We see signs of this in his creation: the beauty of sunrises and sunsets, the never failing miracle of spring (how does that tiny seed become a flower?), the strength of the winds and tides. When you look at wildlife or nature programme, or listen to a talk on the mystery of space and the stars in the universe, or consider the marvels of your own healthy body – don't you wonder? Don't you ask who designed it all? Who thought it all out? Who keeps it all going?

People nowadays will tell you that there is no Creator; that life came about from a chance fusion of atoms which

evolved into higher forms. But even if I didn't believe in God, I would find that theory very difficult to accept.

I have a beautiful watch made in Switzerland and it keeps perfect time. If you said to me, 'Your watch isn't all that remarkable. Someone just threw a lot of little bits of metal into the air, and by chance they turned into your watch,' I would laugh at you. I couldn't accept that theory. But if you said to me, 'It was a clever brain and skilful hand that designed that watch,' I would believe you at once. And when I look at the power, beauty and order of the universe around me I know that there was a



Master Creator who brought it all into being.

Listen to what the writers of the Bible wrote about this, thousands of years ago:

*David wrote, 'When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars which you have set in place, what is mankind that you are mindful of them?' (Psalm 8:3-4 NIV)*

*Isaiah wrote, 'Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens. Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls them each by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing' (Isaiah 40:26 NIV).*

