

KEVIN DEYOUNG

# The Lord's Prayer

*Learning from Jesus on  
What, Why, and How to Pray*



---

FOUNDATIONAL  
TOOLS FOR  
OUR FAITH

“The Lord’s Prayer is the most important teaching ever about talking with God. That’s why it’s a subject of universal and perennial interest to followers of Jesus. It’s easy to learn yet infinitely profound. So many have thought so much and so deeply about it, yet no one writer can expound all its riches. Kevin DeYoung has added another helpful volume to the church’s library on the prayer. His book is fresh without trying to be clever, contemporary without forgetting church history, and concise without being simplistic. It’s exactly the kind of work we’ve come to expect from the pen of DeYoung and demonstrates why people find his preaching and writing so edifying.”

**Donald S. Whitton**, Professor of Biblical Spirituality and Associate Dean, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; author, *Family Worship*; *Praying the Bible*; and *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*

“The Lord’s Prayer is familiar to many of us, but how well do we really understand each phrase? Scholarly works on the Lord’s Prayer can turn out to be surprisingly complex. Here is a clear, grace-filled, practical exposition that will benefit readers of all levels. DeYoung helps readers see the place of the Lord’s Prayer in the context of all of Scripture and how it relates to Christ himself.”

**Brandon D. Crowe**, Professor of New Testament, Westminster Theological Seminary

“As part of listening to a daily liturgy podcast, I pray the Lord’s Prayer. I look forward to it as a highlight of each day, and it never feels like a ritual. Kevin DeYoung’s book encourages me in my daily routine, ignites my passion for praying the Lord’s Prayer, and solidifies my understanding of the petitions I gladly voice. The Lord’s Prayer is clear and direct, concise and profound—so too is DeYoung’s highly recommended book!

**Gregg R. Allison**, Professor of Christian Theology, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; author, *Sojourners and Strangers*; *Roman Catholic Theology and Practice*; and *Historical Theology*

“Kevin DeYoung has given us a brief, encouraging, insightful look at the Lord’s Prayer. He combines for us his own meditations and learning and adds some ideas about this prayer from the collective wisdom of the past. The result is what we would expect from this author: a pastoral, clear, simple (not simplistic), inspiring, and biblical teaching on the best-known prayer that ever came from the lips of our Lord.”

**Miguel Núñez**, Teaching Pastor, International Baptist Church of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic; Founding President, Wisdom & Integrity Ministries

“In his exposition of the Lord’s Prayer, DeYoung reminds us that a glorious vision of our God moves us to pray, and he explains the words of our Lord Jesus that we may know what to pray. Without limiting us to just one form, Kevin shows us that Jesus’s model prayer provides the very foundation we need to sustain a vibrant life of communion with the living God in prayer. If you want to grow in prayer, take up and read. Then put it into practice.”

**Juan R. Sanchez**, Senior Pastor, High Pointe Baptist Church, Austin, Texas; author, *The Leadership Formula*

“Even though one of the greatest privileges we have as Christians is to come to our heavenly Father in prayer, we often struggle to pray. *The Lord’s Prayer* begins with how we should pray, expounds on what Jesus taught us to pray, and ends in a crescendo of God-exalting prayer. It will give you a sense of the greatness of the God who listens to our prayers, which will spur you on to pray. Read this book, then read it again with someone in your church.”

**Keri Folmar**, Director of Women’s Ministries, United Christian Church of Dubai; author, *The Good Portion: Scripture*

“Is it true that familiarity breeds contempt? I sure hope not, especially as it relates to the Lord’s Prayer. Many Christians can recite this prayer of Jesus by heart, but they may not realize how helpful it can be to both jump-start and sustain their often inert prayer life. With his usual clarity and profundity, Kevin DeYoung walks us through the Lord’s Prayer, revealing how it can be a foundation for all of our communion with God. So take up and read, because this book will help propel deeper faith in and stronger commitment to the gift that is prayer.”

**Julius J. Kim**, President, The Gospel Coalition; Professor of Practical Theology, Westminster Seminary California

*The Lord's Prayer*

**Other books in the Foundational Tools for Our Faith series:**

*The Ten Commandments: What They Mean, Why They Matter, and  
Why We Should Obey Them* (2018)

# The Lord's Prayer

*Learning from Jesus on What, Why, and How to Pray*

Kevin DeYoung

FOUNDATIONAL TOOLS FOR OUR FAITH SERIES

 **CROSSWAY**<sup>®</sup>  
WHEATON, ILLINOIS

*The Lord's Prayer: Learning from Jesus on What, Why, and How to Pray*

Copyright © 2022 by Kevin DeYoung

Published by Crossway

1300 Crescent Street  
Wheaton, Illinois 60187

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher, except as provided for by USA copyright law. Crossway® is a registered trademark in the United States of America.

Published in association with the literary agency of Wolgemuth & Associates, Inc.

Cover design: Jordan Singer

First printing 2022

Printed in the United States of America

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked NIV are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. [www.zondervan.com](http://www.zondervan.com). The “NIV” and “New International Version” are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™

Trade paperback ISBN: 978-1-4335-5971-6

ePub ISBN: 978-1-4335-5974-7

PDF ISBN: 978-1-4335-5972-3

Mobipocket ISBN: 978-1-4335-5973-0

---

### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: DeYoung, Kevin, author.

Title: The Lord's prayer : learning from Jesus on what, why, and how to pray / Kevin DeYoung.

Description: Wheaton, Illinois : Crossway, 2022. | Series: Foundational tools for our faith | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2021028858 (print) | LCCN 2021028859 (ebook) | ISBN 9781433559716 (trade paperback) | ISBN 9781433559723 (pdf) | ISBN 9781433559747 (epub) | ISBN 9781433559730 (mobipocket)

Subjects: LCSH: Lord's prayer. | Prayer—Christianity. | Jesus Christ—Teachings.

Classification: LCC BV230 .D49 2022 (print) | LCC BV230 (ebook) | DDC 226.9/6—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021028858>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021028859>

---

Crossway is a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.

BP 31 30 29 28 27 26 25 24 23 22  
15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

*To the faithful saints at Christ Covenant who  
pray for their pastor without ceasing*





# Contents

1	When You Pray	<i>11</i>
2	Our Father	<i>25</i>
3	Our Desire	<i>37</i>
4	Our Daily Bread	<i>55</i>
5	Our Debts	<i>71</i>
6	Our Plea	<i>83</i>
7	His Glory	<i>97</i>
	Study Guide	<i>107</i>
	Notes	<i>113</i>
	General Index	<i>117</i>
	Scripture Index	<i>121</i>



## When You Pray

IS THERE ANY ACTIVITY more essential to the Christian life, and yet more discouraging *in* the Christian's life, than prayer?

We know we should pray. We want to pray (or at least we want to want to pray). We admire those who do pray. And yet when it comes to actually praying, most of us feel like failures.

If someone asked us right now, "How is your prayer life going?" very few of us would be happy for the question and confident in our response. We wish we prayed more often. We wish we prayed longer. We wish we prayed better. I bet none of us anticipates getting to the end of our lives and thinking to ourselves, "You know what? I feel really good about what my prayer life has been all these years." We are much more apt to resonate with the question I read from a pastor several years ago as he reflected on his own life and prayer: "How can something I'm so bad at be God's will for my life?"

I've read a lot of books on prayer over the years. The best ones make me hopeful and grateful that God invites my prayers. Too

many of the books, however, make even the most earnest Christian feel like a failure for doing anything else besides prayer. I remember reading a classic book on prayer early in my ministry. It was inspirational at first but deflating by the end. The problem may very well have been in my heart, but as I recall the book, it was a relentless exhortation to more committed prayer. In my experience, nonstop focus on the *ought* of prayer stirs up the Christian at first but quickly wears off, leaving in its wake more guilt than prayer. While there may be a short season where you say, “Yes, I’m going to pray more,” over the long haul you just feel this low- to medium-grade guilt for not praying enough.

But the Lord’s Prayer is different. It doesn’t focus on the will to pray, at least not explicitly. The Lord’s Prayer teaches us how to pray.

### A Prayer for the Ages

It is hard to overstate the importance of the Lord’s Prayer. Throughout church history, new converts and children have been disciplined chiefly in three areas: the Apostles’ Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord’s Prayer. For most of the last two millennia, it was assumed that if you were a Christian, you knew, memorized, and frequently prayed the Lord’s Prayer.

In one sense, John 17 is more precisely the Lord’s Prayer. It is the longest recorded prayer in Scripture from the Lord Jesus. What we know as the Lord’s Prayer is not the prayer Jesus prayed (at least not exactly—how could he say, “Forgive us our debts”?), but the prayer he taught his disciples to pray.

There are two versions of the Lord’s Prayer, one in Luke and the more familiar one in Matthew. I don’t think one prayer is

dependent upon the other. A simpler explanation is that Jesus, like any itinerant preacher, taught on the same things over and over, with different words and in slightly different ways.

In Luke 11:1–2 Jesus’s teaching is prompted by the disciples’ request, “Lord, teach us to pray” (v. 1). They must have heard something in the way Jesus was praying that made them think, “We have a lot to learn.” Notice what Jesus did *not* talk about in response to their request. He didn’t teach them how long their prayers should be, or at what time of day they should pray, or how many times each day they should pray, or what they should feel as they pray, or whether they should be standing or sitting or kneeling, or if they should close their eyes and fold their hands, or whether they should lift their hands and eyes to heaven.

It’s not that concern about those things is wrong. But surely it’s instructive that Jesus was most concerned with *what* they prayed, more than with when or where or for how long. This may be the most obvious and most important lesson to learn from Jesus about prayer. We can pray in the morning or in the evening, for a long time or a short time, with eyes open or eyes shut. There is freedom in a great many elements of prayer. But (1) we must not neglect praying, and (2) we must pray for the sort of things Jesus tells us to pray for.

The passage in Matthew 6:5–9 is part of Jesus’s famous Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5–7). You’ve probably realized that before. What you may not have noticed is that this section in the Sermon on the Mount covers the three foundational acts of Jewish piety: almsgiving (6:1–4), prayer (6:5–15), and fasting (6:16–18). These were the “spiritual disciplines” for first-century Jews (they would have memorized much of the Bible, but most couldn’t

read it daily because much of the population was illiterate, and individual families did not have Scripture scrolls in their homes). If they made New Year's resolutions back then, they would have thought of giving to the poor, praying, and fasting.

Unlike Jesus's teaching in Luke, here in Matthew Jesus is concerned not just with the *what* of prayer but with the *how* of prayer. Specifically, Jesus wants to make sure we are praying for the right reasons from the right heart. In fact, that is his central concern in discussing all three acts of piety. When you give to the needy, don't make a big deal out of it. When you pray, don't do it to look good. And when you fast, don't draw attention to yourself. Jesus understands the pride and vanity that dwell in every human heart. Being religious doesn't mean you no longer seek vainglory. In fact, being religious is one of the chief ways in almost every culture that men and women find ways to nurture their pride and their vanity. What better way to look impressive before others than to be *spiritually* impressive?

So don't think for a moment, "Well, I'm a Christian, I go to church, and I'm spiritual and religious. I'm not in danger of these things." Actually those realities may mean we are in particular danger.

### Of Course We Pray

Before we get into those specifics, however, look at the first four words of Matthew 6:5: "And when you pray . . ." Jesus doesn't have to teach his disciples that they should pray. That was already a given. He assumed they would pray, and they would have understood that prayer was not something for super-spiritual people but something that every Jew did. Don't think, "Prayer is what pastors

and missionaries do,” or, “Prayer is something I will do when I’m older.” Prayer is for everyone who is a true follower of God.

While it can be hard to know exactly when certain Jewish traditions developed, it seems clear that by the time of Jesus, prayer was offered in the synagogue three times a day.<sup>1</sup> This may have grown up out of Daniel’s practice of praying three times a day (Dan. 6:10), or perhaps it goes back to Psalm 55:17: “Evening and morning and at noon I utter my complaint and moan, and he hears my voice.” Typically, the time of synagogue prayer began with a recitation of the Shema (Deut. 6:4) followed by the Eighteen Benedictions. These benedictions are not in your Bible, but they deal with biblical themes. In fact, you can hear echoes in the Lord’s Prayer of some of the language in them. These were a series of prayers asking God to bless Israel. We don’t know exactly when they were codified, but the main development of the prayer almost certainly took place before the destruction of the temple in AD 70.<sup>2</sup>

If that’s the case, Jesus and his disciples would have been familiar with these prayers. Jesus could assume not only that his disciples would have times of private prayer (like Jesus did), but more obviously that they would regularly attend times of corporate prayer (think of the words “our” and “us” in the Lord’s Prayer). When someone asks, “How is your prayer life?” we probably think, “How am I doing with my daily devotionals first thing in the morning?” That’s not bad. But Jesus’s disciples probably thought of corporate gatherings where they came together and prayed. Think about the Lord’s Prayer itself. There is not one example of a singular pronoun in the model prayer Jesus gave to his disciples.



No one—not Jesus, not his followers—questioned that God’s people would pray. The same is no less true today. If you are a part of the family of God, you will talk to your Father. If you never talk to your earthly father (if he is alive), especially if you live in the same house, something is very dysfunctional. Of course we talk to God in prayer. He is our heavenly Father. You can’t be a Christian and not pray. There is no such thing as a nonpraying Christian.

### How Should We Pray?

We will get to the Lord’s Prayer itself in the next chapter. That is the *what* of prayer. For this chapter, we need to focus on the *how*.

According to Jesus, there are two big no-no’s when it comes to how we pray: don’t be like the hypocrites, and don’t be like the pagans. First, then, Jesus does not want us to be like hypocrites when we pray:

When you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (Matt. 6:5–6)

Let’s make sure we understand the word *hypocrite*. The Greek word *hypokrites* means “play actor.” As a negative label, it means someone who puts on a mask and plays a part, someone who pretends to be something he is not. And that’s very much the meaning of our English word *hypocrite*. Hypocrites profess to believe one thing but actually live a completely different way.

A well-known vegetarian who eats bacon every night, a loud opponent of the tobacco industry who smokes a pack of cigarettes a day, a champion of family values who sleeps with prostitutes—these are hypocrites. They pretend to be what they are not. And specifically, their pretense is for the applause and esteem of others.

Too often, Christians think of hypocrites as people who do one thing but feel another. But that's not hypocrisy. Hypocrites publicize one set of beliefs but live by a different set of beliefs. When you come to church but don't feel like it, that's more like faithfulness. When you do the right thing in your marriage even when you don't feel much in love, that's fidelity. I've heard too many times, "Pastor, I would be a hypocrite to stay in this marriage because I'm not in love anymore." Or, "I would be a hypocrite to come to worship when I don't feel like worshipping." Or, "I would be a hypocrite to pray since I'm not sure what I believe and feel distant." Doing what is right when you don't feel like doing what is right is maturity. Professing one thing in public but living a different way in private is hypocrisy.

We can clearly see what Jesus has in mind from Matthew 6:1: "Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them." That's what hypocrites do. They don't really love God. They don't really love the kingdom. They don't really love the hallowing of God's name. They love to pray in the synagogues and at the street corners. They love to be seen by others. Obviously, it's not wrong to pray in public. Jesus isn't trying to overthrow corporate worship or corporate prayer (cf. Matt. 18:19–20; Acts 4:24–30). When Jesus comes to 6:9 he assumes a corporate context for praying. He's warning against what is all too common in all of our hearts, perhaps in the pastor's heart more

than in anyone else's: being religious in public more than being religious in private. Our prayer life should be like the iceberg in the ocean, with a great mass of spirituality under the surface that no one can see, rather than iceberg lettuce floating in the water, with all the vegetable on top and nothing under the surface. Our prayer life should be more than meets the eye.

Jesus gives a warning for all of us, but especially for pastors, elders, deacons, women's Bible study leaders, small-group leaders, and anyone engaged in public ministry. Beware of religious professionalism. Beware of saying all the right things when out of your house and doing all the wrong things inside your house. You may be able to fool people for an hour or two once a week on Sunday, but you're not fooling God, and you're not fooling the people who live closest to you. Beware of this kind of religious professionalism. Don't pray in order to be seen by people.

Instead, Jesus says, close the door and pray to be seen by God. Do you see how prayer is a matter of faith? Do we really believe God hears us when we pray? Do we believe that God sees us? Do we believe that he will reward us? But when we pray in secret, do we believe that there is a God who sees in secret and is listening? That takes faith. If you live for the praise of men, that's all you'll get. Jesus says, "Don't be a fool. Don't live your life for earthly applause when you can get heavenly applause." Who cares if people out there think you're impressive when you can have God smile upon you? Do you believe that the God in secret sees you and will reward you?

A few months ago my wife and I got one of those baby monitors with a video camera. Now we know why our two-year-old sleeps so late in the morning. He plays in his crib for two hours after we

put him to bed. It's amazing to see what's he's really doing when he doesn't know we are watching. Now imagine you're a little seven-year-old boy, and you love your father. You look up to your father. You know your father takes care of you. And your father has a camera on every wall to see what you are doing. Wouldn't that make a difference in how you live your life—not just in not doing the wrong things, but in how you do the right things? The boy doesn't need to feel pressure to measure up to his friends. He doesn't have to put on a show. He doesn't have to pretend to be what he's not. He just needs to be the same person wherever he goes, because wherever he goes, his Father is watching—not, in this instance, to punish, but to reward! Live for the one you can't see, not for the ones you can see. Do not be a hypocrite.

Second, Jesus does not want us to be like the pagans when we pray:

And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. (Matt. 6:7–8)

Jesus uses the word “Gentiles” in verse 7, but he isn't thinking of ethnicity. He's thinking of people who pray when they don't know the true God. Years ago I was in New York City with a group of Christians meeting with and listening to different religious leaders in the city. Among other things, we watched, with permission, from the sidelines, Hindu and Sikh rituals. I'm sure many people there were sincere in their beliefs, and we respect their right to worship as they see fit. We believe in religious liberty for all people.

And yet from a Christian perspective, I could see exactly what Jesus was talking about. I saw young men performing religious rituals for the onlookers, and the young men seemed barely interested in what they were doing. They were lighting candles or spreading incense or praying prayers on behalf of others. The point was simply that the ritual got done. The words were spoken and the phrases were repeated.

You can see the same thing all over the world. In most Muslim countries, what matters is simply that the rituals are performed. Just say the right words, facing the right way at the right time. Some Buddhist countries make use of prayer wheels. People put their prayers in a box and then spin it around again and again so that the prayers are multiplied. It's a ritual; it's mechanistic. According to Jesus, that's not at all what prayer is about. Prayer is not like voting online for your favorite player to make the Pro Bowl or the All-Star game, when fans press the button over and over to give their choice as many votes as possible.

To be sure, elsewhere Jesus urges us to pray and never give up (Luke 18:1–8), but persistent prayer is very different from babbling prayer. The word in Matthew 6:7 is *battaloeo*, which means to heap up empty phrases or to keep on babbling (NIV). The King James Version translates it as “vain repetitions.” The Greek word is a kind of onomatopoeia, a word that sounds like what it is (e.g., oink, quack, splash, buzz). Stop the *bat-ta-lo-ge-o*, Jesus says. Don't be like the pagans who think that the mere act of uttering words is by itself pleasing to God. The goal in prayer is not the completion of some mechanical ritual.

Praying with empty phrases and meaningless words happens more often than we might think. It can happen in liturgical

churches. Pastors can read their liturgical formulas, this very precise language that has been shaped over centuries and is so rich, with all the passion of an exhausted customer service representative reading the same script for the millionth time (“This call may be recorded for quality and training purposes. How are you doing today, Mr. DeYoung?”). We can say the Apostles Creed or the Lord’s Prayer or a responsive reading like it’s an out-of-body experience. It’s all too common for these precious words to become rote, lifeless, and dull.

On the other hand, you can also pray with empty phrases and meaningless words in very casual churches that don’t make use of liturgies. Worship leaders can offer up their prayers without any forethought and pile up phrases that don’t make a lot of sense, or may even be heretical. “Oh, dear Lord, Father God, we praise for you dying on the cross for our sins, and we just ask, Holy Spirit, that you’d be with us today and snuggle us up under the blanket of your love.” We can think that the more emotional our prayers, the more we pile on divine titles, the more God will hear us. John Stott calls this kind of prayer all lips, no mind, no heart.<sup>3</sup>

We don’t have to impress God with our formulas or our spontaneity. He knows what we need before we ask (Matt. 6:8). We don’t pray because God needs help running the universe. We don’t pray to change God’s mind. We pray because God has ordained means to accomplish his ends. He has arranged things so that he will give more grace to those who petition him for it. God doesn’t need prayer, but he uses prayer just like he uses other means. He uses rain to grow the crops, sun to warm the earth, and food to strengthen the body. In the same way, God uses prayer to do his sovereign work. In prayer, we are not instructing God as much as we are instructing ourselves.

Notice again the motivation in 6:9, for the instruction in verse 8 is based on the one who sees in secret. Jesus hasn't yet taught his disciples what to pray for, but already we see how important it is that we know to whom we are praying. We aren't praying to a hotheaded coach or to a distant king or to an austere supervisor. We are praying to our heavenly Father. If you believe that he's a good Father, then you don't have to try to impress other people. You know God will take care of you. And if you believe he's a great Father, then you don't have to heap up empty words. You know that God already knows what you need. You don't get extra credit for adding extra words.

When I give seminary students an assignment, I have to give some kind of approximate word count or they won't know what sort of paper they are supposed to write. But I always tell them, "Don't go over! I don't want to read any more than I have to! And don't pad out the paper with fluff. Say what you need to say and then don't say anything else. I am grading you on what you are saying, not on the fact that you found a very long-winded way of saying it."

### **Be the One, Not the 450**

Don't be a hypocrite when you pray, and don't be a pagan. Those are no-no's when it comes to prayer. This leads to one summarizing thought. You've heard this before, but you need to hear it again because it's true: prayer is not a formula. Prayer is not an incantation. Prayer is not a recipe. Prayer is a relationship.

Think of the difference between Elijah and the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:20–40). The 450 prophets of Baal called upon their god from morning until noon. Then after Elijah mocked them, they doubled their efforts. They cried out and cut themselves

until they were covered in blood. The Bible tells us, “As midday passed, they raved on until the time of the offering of the oblation, but there was no voice. No one answered; no one paid attention” (18:29). When it was Elijah’s turn, he spoke the covenant name of God and claimed a covenant relationship with God. “O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word” (18:36). In other words, he prayed to the God who was actually there, he prayed to the God he knew personally, and he prayed to the God he trusted. And then he prayed in a short, straightforward prayer for God to hear his servant and for God to glorify himself. “Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back” (18:37).

I started this chapter by saying that some books on prayer re-inforce that we ought to pray, but the most helpful books make us want to pray. I hope this chapter and this book are like that. Yes, we must pray. That is a command in the Bible, and more than that, it is an assumption in the Bible. But if we are going to move from “I should pray more” to “I can pray,” we have to think of prayer in the right way. And at the heart of that right way is understanding that our God is not hard of hearing, and he is not hard of heart. Speak to him. Shoot straight with him. Be plain with him. You don’t need to impress him. As your heavenly Father, he already loves you. You just need to show up and talk to him. That’s the good news.

And the even better news is that when we do show up for prayer, our heavenly Father will be gladly waiting there, ready to hear us and eager to listen.