

# pray always

## introduction

Have four volunteers pray, each choosing one of the following topics: the hurting people on campus; national leaders; friends and family; teachers and school leaders.

## message

Whenever a pastor or youth leader talks about prayer, some of us say, “I know I should pray more, but somehow I just can’t.” Or maybe this sounds more familiar, “I want to pray more, but something else always comes up.” Then to make things worse, we feel guilty about not praying. How can we actually pray more? The apostle Paul wrote a lot about prayer. His intention wasn’t to make us feel guilty, but rather to encourage us.

1. Paul says we should rejoice in the Lord always (Philippians 4:4). Rejoicing is a way to pray. It is also an attitude and a life-style. If you rejoice a lot already, maybe you are praying more than you realize.
2. On Philippians 4:6, Paul lists two types of prayer. Before he even mentions prayer, though he encourages us to stop and realize that God has everything under control. With our confidence in God, we can then proceed to the two types of prayer.
  - Prayer— This is normal, everyday prayer—just you talking to God, telling Him about your day, thanking Him for His love and of course, listening for His guidance and direction.
  - Petition— This type of prayer asks for specific needs. You explain the problem to God and spend time asking Him to solve the problem.
3. God responds to our prayer and petition by sending His peace to guard our hearts and minds (Philippians 4:7).
4. How do we put this passage into practice?
  - Spend at least five minutes a day alone with God. Read a passage or chapter from the Bible. Then, take time to invite God into your day. You create a habit by doing the same thing at least 20 days in row.
  - Don’t feel guilty if you miss a day or even several days. God is a God of love. Start over again. Keep going.
  - Enjoy your time with God. Talk to Him like a friend. Tell Him your ups and downs. Ask Him to help you with your deepest struggles. Rejoice with Him over your successes.
  - Pray for family, friends, yourself and the world. Each day you may have a different emphasis. As the Holy Spirit leads, you may focus on certain needs with more intensity.

## salvation appeal

The most important prayer you can ever pray is the prayer of faith. It is by faith that you accept Christ as your personal Savior. Don’t hesitate to make this most important decision. Come to Christ today, and your life will never be the same.

## challenge

Prayer is the powerful source for Christian living. It is vital. You can’t have a powerful, dynamic Christian life that affects friends and neighbors without it.