



WHY WE PRAY

Bikers bike. Swimmers swim. Christians pray.

We pray to build our relationship with God. It's also important to know that prayer is not just an important **part** of your relationship with God, it **IS** your relationship with God. And if we're not praying, not spending daily quiet time with God, we're not prioritizing the most important relationship we will EVER have.

If we're not spending daily quiet time with God, we're neglecting the one relationship that has the **POWER** to change our lives forever.

In Prayer, we take time to be filled with His love. We don't have to be perfect to receive His love in prayer. It's His love that perfects us.

But prayer is more than just a way to help you get more out of life, and more than just something you do to make you happy. Prayer is about **communion** and conversation with the God of the universe!!! Remember who God is. When you draw near to God in prayer, you're choosing to spend time with the sea-splitting, water-walking, star-breathing, Author-of-everything...maker of YOU... and He loves you so much that He would rather die than live without you. Prayer is a big deal and we **get** to do this ...everyday.

Here are two terms to help you identify what is happening in your prayer life:

Consolation: Moments of peace, unexplainable joy / great hope; an increase in Faith, Hope, and Love. God offers these moments of "Consolation" to us as a pure gift. How do we respond to a gift? With thanksgiving! In Consolation, God is affirming you and your relationship with Him. He is saying: "This is Good! See, I am good. You can trust me. Keep it up!"

Desolation: The opposite of consolation, but not necessarily a bad thing. It can also be a gift. Desolation is when we feel like God is far from us. Like we're lacking that "connection" with God. We feel "dry." (*clarification: There is a difference between desolation and just NOT PRAYING. Desolation is experienced only within the context of prayer – not the absence of it.*)

3 Reasons for Desolation:

- There has been a lack of prayer. This leads us to convert again.
- God trying our faith. He is testing our resolve to remain faithful.
- God humbling us. To make us aware of our dependency on Him.

Never stop your prayer life in times of desolation. If you're tempted to cut prayer short because of desolation, go harder and push through even longer than you normally do. No matter what happens, keep your eyes on Jesus. Eyes up, Rise up. ***In times of consolation be grateful. In times of Desolation be faithful.***

Guard your prayer time

If we're going to remain faithful to prayer, we need a game plan – and we need to be specific. Don't leave something as important as your relationship with God to mere chance. Plan it and commit. We need to name an actual place and a time to pray. And we need to guard that time. This is your time with God! ***This is the only thing in your life that remains when all else fades away. It is the most important relationship you will have – ever.*** This is where we receive our identity, our fuel for life, our strength, our hope, our direction. So, where and when will you pray every day when you go back home? It's not enough to leave here with the resolution: "I want to pray more." Great! Now where and when?

The only two things we can bring to prayer is our **honesty** and our **consistency**. We need to choose – every day – to come back to prayer.