



KIAMA ANGLICAN CHURCHES

Conversing with the Master

Walking With Jesus – The Road of Discipleship

Sermon – Steve Stanis

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Psalm 4:1-8, Matthew 6:9-13, James 5:13-20

Conversing With the Master

Introduction to prayer

Let's take a brief moment to converse with the master, praying that the Holy Spirit will fill you with a greater understanding of prayer.

Pray, seeking for our God to open you up and refresh you in your prayer life.

Pray with the purpose, place, presence, people and the practices of our abounding faith...living out prayer as the practise of our faith.

Let us be still and pray in the quietness of our own hearts...

The purpose of prayer

This sermon on The Road of Discipleship focuses on prayer. Prayer is both conversation and encounter with God. God uses prayer to accomplish his purposes through his people. Our desire must be to pray.

We are not called only to a Christian life based on truth and doctrine or a life filled with spiritual power and experience. They must go together always!

Timothy Keller says, "Prayer is awe, intimacy, struggle – yet the way to reality. There is nothing more important, or harder, or richer, or more life altering".

Prayer must be a disciple's way of life. Are you disciplined about prayer as a disciple of Christ?

Our character impacts our approach to prayer. Accept who you are and seek God's guidance in how to best converse with your master!

Don't fight with your prayer. Flow with your prayer, trusting the Spirit of God to guide you as who you are in God.

Each person's prayer life will differ. God wants you to talk to him, share with him, ask him, understand him, and grow in him...all by prayer as a disciple of Jesus!

Let's turn to the Bible passages that were read to us with fresh eyes, ears and hearts; they are examples in the Bible that instruct the life of our prayer.

God gives us his Spirit. The Spirit intercedes on our behalf:

Romans 8:26-27: In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

The Spirit prompts us and carries us and enables our prayers when our groanings are too deep to be uttered.

The place of prayer

The Word of God guides us in prayer.

Why did Jesus give us the Lord's Prayer and how and why are we to pray it?

The place of the Lord's Prayer is not so much for worship but for discipleship, as a model to teach us how to pray. This feeds our personal prayer life, which strengthens our corporate prayer life.

The prayer begins calling us to the adoration of our Father in heaven. God sets us in the right direction. We are busy people with many interests and passions but as we think about discipleship, our number one passion should be to speak with God, who is our Father in heaven.

Look at the very first two words, "Our Father". The Israelite people had been well schooled with the commandment, "Do not take the Lord's name in vain". This intimate approach to God is transformational. These two words are full of Gospel truth. Jesus is exhorting his disciples to talk to the God of glory in this close and personal way. We can do this because: Firstly, **we are born again**. God has given us new life. We are new creations in Jesus Christ.

John 1:12: Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

By the grace of God, I am his child; he gives me the right to call him Father.

Secondly, **we are adopted into the family of God.**

Galatians 4:6 Because you are his children, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.”

We are part of God's family.

Romans 8:14-17 For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.”

Thirdly, **I am an heir with Christ.**

Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

So Jesus tells us who we pray to - **Our Father** - then he tells us where God is. He is not giving God's location because God is omni present (he is everywhere); Jesus is giving **God's position of exaltation**. God is over all, the heavens and the earth. He created it all. In him, everything moves and has its being. So “Our Father”, the God we are intimately in relationship with, is the God Almighty of heaven and earth. God is enthroned in the heavens yet he is working in my heart.

This is how we pray, **not just speaking words but coming into the presence of God**. This is a prayer of relationship. I can bring everything to my Father. This is focused prayer with anticipation of what God will do.

The presence of prayer as disciples takes us further into the Lord's prayer. Let's go there now together. I have engaged with some helpful thoughts of Timothy Keller insights as I considered the Lord's Prayer.

The presence of prayer

Father, I want your name to be held high.

- All Christians bear God's name and are called to represent his good and holy character.
- Pray that God will keep us from dishonouring his name, that we'll display Christlikeness and holiness, and that more and more would honour God and call on his name.

- To “hallow” God’s name includes having a heart of grateful joy toward God.

Father, I want your kingdom to come.

- God’s kingdom comes on earth through the Spirit and the Word of God, transforming our love, desire, thinking and behaviour.
- This is a ‘Lordship’ petition, asking God to extend his royal power over every area of our lives, asking God to rule us so that we want to joyfully obey him.
- The reign of God on earth is only partial now, but promises the fullness of the future king.

Father, I want your will to be done.

- While we mightn’t always understand God’s will, we can trust him because he is a loving and gracious Father.
- Ask for grace to bear sickness, disgrace, suffering or any other trouble with patience and trust.
- We know God is trustworthy and can pray “thy will be done”, because the Lord Jesus himself prayed this prayer under circumstances far more crushing than any of us will ever face. He submitted to his Father’s will rather than following his own desires...and it saved us. That’s why we can trust him.
- Saying “thy will be done” from the bottom of our hearts helps us receive his peace. An answer to our prayer.

Father, I can’t live without your sustenance.

- Knowing that God is our true food, wealth and happiness. Jesus charges us to bring our “prayer list” of needs before him.
- We come with our needs, expectant of a positive response. But we do so knowing we are being changed by our satisfaction in him and our trust within him.

Father, I need your forgiveness.

I’m your child but I fail you. Thank you that you forgive me.

- Jesus tightly links our relationship with God to our relationship with others.
If we have not seen our sin and sought radical forgiveness from God, we will be unable to forgive and to seek the good of those who have wronged us.

- This petition is not only a challenge to our pride but a test of spiritual reality.
- Ask God for help and grace so that you can forgive others based on God's forgiveness in Christ.
- Confess your own sins before God and give thanks for salvation by grace.

Father, I need your protection, to keep away from temptations.

Father, my life is with you.

- To 'enter into temptation', as Jesus termed it (*Matt. 26:41*), is to entertain and consider the prospect of giving in to sin.
- Pray that you will never be enticed away from trusting God and that your current challenges will serve to centre your life on God.

For yours is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever, Amen.

- After descending into our needs, troubles, and limitations, we return to the truth of God's complete sufficiency.
- Here our hearts can end with 'tranquil repose' in the remembrance that nothing can snatch away the kingdom, power and glory from our heavenly, loving Father.

The Lord's prayer as Jesus taught us in Matthew 6:9-13!

Approach the words of Jesus prayer afresh every time we come to say it!

What is God showing you and saying to you at this time?

Would you in a moment pray with me Matthew's record of the Lord's prayer?

The people of prayer

The 150 Psalms lead the people of God through places of prayerful endurance.

Psalms 4:1 Directs his people...

Answer me when I call to you, my righteous God.

Give me relief from my distress; have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

God desires us to call out to him. His mercy abounds through lament and joy, back and forth, according to God's plans for us.

Psalm 4:3 Hears our prayers....

*Know that the LORD has set apart his faithful servant for himself;
the LORD hears when I call to him.*

God will answer our requests. God seeks our relationship to be pure and steadfast with him. Prayer requires his people to confess and continually turn back to him.

Psalm 4:6b-7 Turns your faces to God in your prayers...

Let the light of your face shine on us.

⁷ Fill my heart with joy when their grain and new wine abound.

This means listening to how God will answer your prayers. Be joyful in your prayerful response regardless as to how and what the answers God brings to his people.

We must be a people of prayer.

The practice of prayer

Postponement has become a theme in ministry and some services around KAC through COVID changes. Do we stop and postpone prayer? What would Jesus advise the Church? Look at the first century church as James recorded in 5:13-20:

God's people are urged to pray into all matters:

Troubles & happiness,

Sicknesses & healing,

Sinfulness & forgiveness,

Righteousness & power (in prayer),

Weather & provision,

Faithlessness & repentance.

Look at the constant contrasts where God answers our prayerful needs according to his plans! In James and 2000 years later - precisely the same impact in prayers.

Can you ever practice praying too much?

Come together this week Wednesday at 1pm at CPC.

If night is better for you then let me know and we can set an extra time to gather in faithful prayer.

These gatherings are intentional to grow our faith through prayer.

The people of God who are the people of prayer! May we always be
“Conversing with the Master”. Amen!



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