

The Watford Word

www.watfordchurchofchrist.org

What's on

Sunday 19 April: Malcolm speaking on Phil 4.8-9.

Sunday 26 April: Danny speaking

Sunday 03 May: David speaking

Sunday 10 May: Church service

Sunday 17 May: Malcolm speaking - Phil 4.10-23

Thursday 21 May, 8 PM: Third Thursday Prayer: 08:00 PM. Meeting ID: 988 3430 9524. Passcode: 332426

<https://zoom.us/j/98834309524?pwd=wONcU85ShjGHPjWkjA24icfW3j1gLU.1>

Sunday 24 May: Church service

Sunday 31 May: Malcolm speaking on the Trinity

Sunday 07 June: Church service

Sunday 14 June: International Service

Thursday 18 June, 8 PM: Third Thursday Prayer.

Events further ahead

Friday 22nd to Sunday 24th May: UK & Ireland mature singles retreat – “Trust In The Lord”. Please pray for Penny & I as we are the guest speakers for this event.

Friday 24th to 27th July: ICCM Preteen Camp

Saturday 25th to 31st July: ICCM Teen Camp

Friday 11th - 13 September: UK & Ireland Young Professionals Retreat in Chesham.

Sept 30th - Oct 04th: Spirituality Retreat. <https://shop.thewayministry.global/2026-csr/home>

Friday 30th October to Sunday 01st November: Autumn Student Retreat for the UK & Ireland.

Thursday 12-15th November: UK, Ireland and Nordics leadership retreat.



What is the point of praying?

Last week's lesson included this verse:

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” Philippians 4.6

It reminded me of the time someone asked me what the purpose of praying is. Why do we pray? What is it for? It's a good question. Not only is prayer inherently confusing, but it's also uniquely mysterious.

We pray and are not answered. We pray and find an answer. We pray and don't like the answer. We pray and like the answer.

Abram, Moses, David, Job, Daniel, Nehemiah, Jesus, and Paul all prayed. Their prayers overlap in intent but vary wildly in content and focus. What are we to make of all this?

Common Question

“What's the point?” questions are common. What's the point of voting if governments break their promises once elected? What's the point of taking the time to cook a delicious meal for your family when all they do is wolf it down in 10 seconds flat? What's the point of supporting your team when they never win anything? And, what's the point of having a sat-nav if it keeps taking you the wrong way?

I'd suggest our purpose in prayer is one of the more relevant “What's the point?” questions.

Prayer is Personal

No one definition of prayer can satisfy all that it means. That's because it is, fundamentally, an expression of our relationship with God.

Relationships defy simplistic definition. At least, they do if they are meaningful. I like the title of chapter 1 in the Bible Speaks Today, "The Message of Prayer". It is "The Conversation of Friends."

Meaningful Relationships

My 'relationship' with my dentist is narrow. The 'relationship' I have with my accountant, less so. That's because he is also my brother in Christ and friend. Then, my 'relationship' with my wife is on another level entirely. I'd find it hard to sum up my relationship with Penny in a few words.

How much more so with God. Because our relationship is different, so also is our conversation.

Honest Talk

If there is one thing we know about good relationships, it is that honesty is foundational. Among many examples, the Psalmist cries out, "Why, Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you hide in times of trouble?" (Psalms 10:1 NIV11)

Jesus asks the question,

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"
(Matthew 27:46)

I'd suggest this is the place to begin. Honest expression of facts, feelings, hopes, failings, sins, needs, and desires will build a meaningful relationship with God. Are you being 'real' with God? If not, start there. Rather than ponder the purpose of prayer, trust that God wants to know you. He wants to hear what's on your mind and in your heart. It's a place to start, anyway.

Conclusion

As Chester says in the book mentioned above,

Prayer is not ultimate but penultimate, a pointer to the days when we shall see God face to face. It directs our attention forward to our participation in the

trinitarian community. Prayer is an anticipation of the day when we shall truly know even as we are truly known (1 Cor 13:12).

Well said. When prayer confuses, continue to pray, knowing it is preparation for the face-to-face conversation we will enjoy in the coming life.

I've said we cannot sum up prayer in a few words, but I can't resist having a go. Here is the best I could today.

"My purpose in prayer is to begin the relationship with God I will enjoy in its perfection in the next life."

Question

What do you think of my definition? Do you have your own? Have you heard one that makes sense to you? Could you share your best ideas?

Your brother, Malcolm

If anyone would like to contribute to the Watford Word please let me know. Articles about scripture, poetry, personal devotional reflections, good news, prayer requests, testimonials and more are all welcome.

Watford Contribution Details

Church bank account: Three Counties churches of Christ HSBC

Sort Code: 401915

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Watford Media

