



Conversations with the Creator

Author: Jennifer Smith

P_{review}

Skype and FaceTime are great, but neither can compare to having direct access to the Creator of the universe. *Hand out index cards. Have everyone write their name and a prayer request on their card. Scramble the cards and have everyone pick one. Each person is to commit to praying for the request on the card they've chosen as often as possible until the group meets again.*

P_{raise}

With heads bowed and eyes closed, listen to and think about the lyrics of Kari Jobe's song "Find You on My Knees." As an alternative, sing the old hymn "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

P_{arable}

Imagine this: Adrian asks Katie to be his girlfriend, and she says yes. He's overjoyed—until he notices something strange. When Adrian calls Katie, she never answers—or calls back. At school she ignores him, and when he runs into her at the park, she just smiles and waves. One day, Adrian overhears someone in the lunchroom ask Katie if she's dating Adrian. "Oh, yeah!" she gushes. "I'm totally in love with him." **How do you think Adrian feels? How might God feel when we're eager to say we're Christians, yet we never pray or read His Word?**

P_{resent}

I Thessalonians 5:17 says, "Pray without ceasing." (See also **I Chronicles 16:11**.) This doesn't mean you should wake up every morning, kneel by your bed, and pray until it's time to go to sleep again. Instead, it means you set aside time to pray every day. It means you live in an attitude and mindset of prayer. You start the day thinking of how you can honor God and love others. You see a homeless man on the street and find yourself praying for him. You find yourself praying for kids you see at school or at the mall. You pray over hard tests, tough situations with your friends, and important choices you make. You pray for things you need, and yes, sometimes even things you want (**Psalms 37:4-5; 145:18**).

There is an endless list of things to pray about. Your problems don't have to be huge in order for you to pray. God will listen to your thoughts, dreams, frustrations, needs, and praises no matter how insignificant they may seem (**Philippians 4:6; I Peter 5:7**). There are a few things to



remember, however. God is not a genie who pops out of some spiritual bottle to grant your wishes every time you pray. You are not Cinderella, and He is not your fairy godfather. The purpose of prayer is to commune with God—to develop a strong, growing relationship with Him. It is not to manipulate Him into giving you everything you want any more than the purpose of spending time with your friends is to boss them around. Also, like any conversation, prayer isn't all about *you* talking, it's also about you listening to God. He will speak to you in your heart and through His Word.

Many people feel that praying first thing in the morning helps to start their day on the right foot. Some people prefer praying at bedtime. The important thing is that you do it. You may not know how to pray for thirty minutes or an hour every day, but that's okay—*just pray*. Start with five minutes a day and work your way up to ten or fifteen. The important thing is that you faithfully set aside time for God. *Without prayer, you cannot grow in your walk with God.*

Take some time to read the following verses: **I Chronicles 16:11, II Chronicles 7:14, James 5:16.**

Pactice

1. When is the easiest time for you to pray? Morning? Bedtime? Another time?
2. What steps can you take or what changes might you have to make in your life to be sure prayer is one of your top priorities?
3. Discuss ideas that might help you pray. A prayer journal? Soft worship music? A solitary walk in a quiet city park?

Pray

Pray that God will help you develop an awesome prayer life. Pray that He shows you how your relationship with Him can flourish and how to be a blessing to others through prayer. Thank Him for loving you so much that He, the Creator of the universe, actually hears your voice.

Plus

Need ideas on how to fill your prayer time? First, look up **Matthew 6:9-13** and read the Lord's Prayer. This famous prayer is not meant to be recited so much as it is to give us an idea of the kinds of things we should pray for. Here are some other ways you can spend your prayer time: praising and thanking God, forgiving others, confessing your faults and asking for forgiveness, asking God for things you or a loved one needs, praying for those who don't know Christ, reading and thinking about God's Word, and listening quietly to His voice in your heart.

