

PAPA

Moving prayer into a relational model

1. P- Present yourself to the Lord without pretense

Be a real person in your relationship with God. Tell him what is going on inside of you—your fears, your joys, your anticipation, your dread.

“Here’s what I want you to do: Find a quiet, secluded place so you won’t be tempted to role-play before God. Just be there as simply and honestly as you can manage. The focus will shift from you to God, and you will begin to sense his grace. The world is full of so-called prayer warriors who are prayer-ignorant. They’re full of formulas and programs and advice, peddling techniques for getting what you want from God. Don’t fall for that nonsense. This is your Father you are dealing with, and he knows better than you what you need. With a God like this loving you, you can pray very simply.”

Matthew 6--The Message

- Hold nothing back
- Pretend about nothing
- Don’t trivialize anything
- Spin nothing that’s ugly into something pretty
- Be completely honest with God

2. A- Attend to how you are thinking about God

How are you experiencing God right now? Is he a vending machine you come to for answers? Is God distant, cold, or is he glorious and loving and someone you want to spend time with? Unchanging; Faithful; Just; Sovereign, Merciful; Jealous, Pure and Holy; Wise
Heb. 10:23; 2Tim2:13; 1 Peter 2:23; Rev. 16f:5-7; Deut. 4:31

- Identify your tendency to create God into someone who will always help you feel good
- Don’t assume your view of God is correct
- Always check out your impressions of God—and what you’ve been told against Scripture

3. P- Purge yourself of anything blocking your relationship with God.

Ask the Lord to search your heart and to reveal what he sees. What do you discover? How has your sin pulled you away from people? How has your sin demanded that others meet your needs in ways that only God should meet? What feelings are you harboring that place a shield between you and God? Are you relating to your spouse in a way that hinders your prayers?

Psalm 32; 51; Romans 8:27; 1 Cor. 2:9-16; Psalm 139; Hebrews 4:12-13

- Don’t simply try hard to be good; don’t merely promise to do better.
- Don’t criticize others’ faults without first seeing your own equally serious faults.
- Don’t redefine your self-obsession into understandable mistakes.
- Don’t assume that your strong passion for what you believe is right is necessarily holy.

4. A– Approach God as the first thing in your life.

What will it look like when God's will is done in this place? How will our family interact when God's glory is our highest concern? How will I respond to criticism or to disappointment when God is pleased with me and fills my heart?

Meditate on Matthew 6: 25-34; Romans 8; Matthew 11:25-30

- Don't retreat from God when He seems unresponsive.
- Don't negotiate with God. You have no leverage other than His relentless, tender love and your longing to get what He's giving.
- Don't demand anything from God; expect the gift of relationship.
- Don't let the desires that you feel dictate your expectations of what He'll give you.

Outline from *"The Papa Prayer"* by Larry Crabb