

PRAYING THE OT

Over the summer, we followed the Lectionary's Psalm readings to guide weekly prayers. This fall, we're taking on a new challenge: letting the Lectionary readings from the Hebrew Scriptures guide our prayers and investigating what they have to tell us about prayer.

While we don't usually consider much of the Old Testament to be the stuff of prayers, if we believe the whole Scripture is the Word of God, if we believe the whole Scriptures tell of God's love for and rescue of God's people, then we believe the Scriptures start conversations—with one another and with God. And what is prayer if not a conversation with God?

With a belief that all Scripture tells us something about our relationship with and ability to converse with God, this fall, we invite you to open your minds to these stories. Each week, we have the opportunity to Prepare, Read, Ponder, and Pray. Whether you break this up over the week or navigate it all in one day, please open your spirits to what God might be saying. And then open your mouth and hands (or whatever else you use to pray!) to talk to God.

This guide can be used in a variety of ways:

-Individual devotional times: Read the Scriptures and prompts here or listen to them on the daily devotions and allow the words to guide a conversation with God

-Friend or family prayer time: Gather your family, friends, or neighbors for a time of Scripture reading, prayer, and conversation

-Weekly community prayer time: Join Church Staff for prayer. Each Wednesday, church staff gathers at 11:30 in the Java Stop. While this time isn't convenient for everyone, if you're around, we invite you to join us for prayer. Everyone is welcome.

-Monthly evening prayer time: On certain Wednesday evenings, we'll gather to pray through these Scriptures. Stay tuned for dates and times.

Week 1: Sept 11—Exodus 32:7-14

Prepare: Ask God to open your heart and mind as you read these words. Stay attuned to any words or phrases, images or themes that may stand out. If nothing pops out, focus on the bolded text. Allow yourself to linger on those ideas and wonder. Then, go to God with your thoughts, questions, or words of praise.

Read: Then the Lord said to Moses, “Go down, because your people, whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt. They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, ‘These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.’

“I have seen these people,” the Lord said to Moses, “and they are a stiff-necked people. Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation.”

But Moses sought the favor of the Lord his God. “Lord,” he said, “why should your anger burn against your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians say, ‘It was with evil intent that he brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth’? Turn from your fierce anger; relent and do not bring disaster on your people. Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, to whom you swore by your own self: ‘I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give your descendants all this land I promised them, and it will be their inheritance forever.’”

Then the Lord relented and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened.

Reflect: Something remarkable—and rare—happens in this passage: We see God change God’s mind! After being so angry that God wanted to destroy his people, Moses intervened. Moses reminds God of the great deeds God has done for his people and the promises God has made. Moses asks why God would want to destroy those he had just saved, but perhaps more amazing, Moses *commands* God to *turn* from anger and *remember* their covenant. And

God does! “The Lord relented,” we read. Amazing! And yet, we wonder if there isn’t also something at work here—something that speaks to the power and purpose of prayer.

Ponder: Did Moses actually change God’s mind? If so, what was Moses’ secret to getting God to relent? If not, what might else be happening here? Do we know? Does it matter? Why or why not? How does this change your view of God and perhaps of the power of prayer?

Pray: Think of something mighty God you have seen God do. Remind God of this action as you present a new request.

Week 2: Sept 18—Amos 8:4-7

Prepare: Ask God to open your heart and mind as you read these words. Stay attuned to any words or phrases, images or themes that may stand out. If nothing pops out, focus on the bolded text. Allow yourself to linger on those ideas and wonder. Then, go to God with your thoughts, questions, or words of praise.

Read:

Hear this, you who trample the needy
and do away with the poor of the land, saying,
“When will the New Moon be over
that we may sell grain,
and the Sabbath be ended
that we may market wheat?”—
skimping on the measure,
boosting the price
and cheating with dishonest scales,
buying the poor with silver
and the needy for a pair of sandals,
selling even the sweepings with the wheat.

The Lord has sworn by himself, the Pride of Jacob:

“I will never forget anything they have done.”

Reflect: If we can read this passage without grimacing, we’re reading it wrong. These are rough words—full of condemnation for those who “trample” the needy and do away with the poor through sketchy economic practices that run counter to the Law of God. These laws were meant to provide for and liberate those in need—not cheat them or keep them trapped. While none of us like to think we are actively cheating others, we all know that many of the items or services we purchase—or perhaps provide—benefit us at the cost of someone else. A passage like this reminds us that the Lord, the Pride of Jacob, notices.

Ponder: What does it reveal about God’s heart that God notices how our economic practices affect the poor? What does this passage have to say about your business or purchasing practices? What might this convict you to become more aware of? How might a passage like this affect the way or the things we pray for?

Pray: Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any unjust economic practices that may be part of your daily life. Ask for forgiveness and then receive mercy for ways we contribute to economic injustice. Pray for the wisdom and conviction to spend or provide more conscientiously.

Week 3: Sept 25: Amos 6:1a, 4-7

Prepare: Ask God to open your heart and mind as you read these words. Stay attuned to any words or phrases, images or themes that may stand out. If nothing pops out, focus on the bolded text. Allow yourself to linger on those ideas and wonder. Then, go to God with your thoughts, questions, or words of praise.

Read:

Woe to you who are complacent in Zion,
and to you who feel secure on Mount Samaria,
you notable men of the foremost nation,
to whom the people of Israel come!

You lie on beds adorned with ivory
and lounge on your couches.

You dine on choice lambs
and fattened calves.

You strum away on your harps like David
and improvise on musical instruments.

**You drink wine by the bowlful
and use the finest lotions,
but you do not grieve over the ruin of Joseph.**

**Therefore you will be among the first to go into exile;
your feasting and lounging will end.**

Reflect: The prophet Amos's literary skills are on full display here. His images paint a perfect picture of the wealth, relaxation, and complacency the Lord laments among the Northern Tribe of Israel, the people to whom Amos writes. Without saying these things are bad in and of themselves, Amos warns how earthly comforts or pleasures can distract us from our calling to follow God and how overindulgence can leave us unaware of how far we've fallen off track.

Ponder: How can we know when good things lead us astray from God? In what ways have you found yourself seeking pleasure or comfort rather than God? What might it be like to seek God first? How does this passage change how and what we consider blessings or even what we ask God for?

Pray: Confess ways that you have sought comfort and pleasure over God's will. Pray for the courage to follow God even when it means leaving comforts behind.

Week 4: October 2: Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:1-4

Prepare: Ask God to open your heart and mind as you read these words. Stay attuned to any words or phrases, images or themes that may stand out. If nothing pops out, focus on the

bolded text. Allow yourself to linger on those ideas and wonder. Then, go to God with your thoughts, questions, or words of praise.

Read:

The prophecy that Habakkuk the prophet received.

Habakkuk's Complaint

**How long, Lord, must I call for help,
but you do not listen?**

Or cry out to you, "Violence!"

but you do not save?

Why do you make me look at injustice?

Why do you tolerate wrongdoing?

Destruction and violence are before me;

there is strife, and conflict abounds.

Therefore the law is paralyzed,

and justice never prevails.

The wicked hem in the righteous,

so that justice is perverted.

I will stand at my watch

and station myself on the ramparts;

I will look to see what he will say to me,

and what answer I am to give to this complaint.

The Lord's Answer

Then the Lord replied:

"Write down the revelation

and make it plain on tablets

so that a herald may run with it.

For the revelation awaits an appointed time;

it speaks of the end

and will not prove false.

Though it linger, wait for it;

it will certainly come
and will not delay.

“See, the enemy is puffed up;
his desires are not upright—
but the righteous person will live by his faithfulness...”

Reflect: The prophets, in general, and Habakkuk, specifically, show us we can be brutally honest in our conversations with God. Though the circumstances may differ, Habakkuk’s complaint—full of questions about time tables and and questions about God’s seeming tolerance of evil—and his confidence that he can take this to God gives us permission to do the same. It is, after all, only natural to question how a good and just God “stands by” and “does nothing” while evil and violence prevail. In the Lord’s reply, we see that God is not upset by these questions—even when they sound accusatory! Rather than being upset, God replies in a way that gives insight into God’s heart—and timetable.

Ponder: What does this passage tell you about how God hears and receives our words? Have you ever heard an “answer” from the Lord? What was the circumstance? Through which sense or experience did you “hear” the Lord? How did hearing from God change your view of prayer?

Pray: Think of something you have prayed for a long time. Go to God with this request again. This time ask God how long you will need to keep praying. Stay open for a response.

Week 5: October 9—2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15c

Prepare: Ask God to open your heart and mind as you read these words. Stay attuned to any words or phrases, images or themes that may stand out. If nothing pops out, focus on the bolded text. Allow yourself to linger on those ideas and wonder. Then, go to God with your thoughts, questions, or words of praise.

Read:

Now Naaman was commander of the army of the king of Aram. He was a great man in the sight of his master and highly regarded, because through him the Lord had given victory to Aram. He was a valiant soldier, but he had leprosy.

Now bands of raiders from Aram had gone out and had taken captive a young girl from Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. She said to her mistress, "If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy."

As soon as the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his robes and said, "Am I God? Can I kill and bring back to life? Why does this fellow send someone to me to be cured of his leprosy? See how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me!"

When Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his robes, he sent him this message: "Why have you torn your robes? Have the man come to me and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel." So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha's house. Elisha sent a messenger to say to him, "Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed."

But Naaman went away angry and said, "I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy. Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be cleansed?" So he turned and went off in a rage.

Naaman's servants went to him and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, 'Wash and be cleansed'!" So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy.

Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God. He stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. So please accept a gift from your servant."

Reflect: Though we're told of Naaman's rage, we also see that this man had strong faith. After all, he took the advice of a slave girl, wrote to a neighboring king, and then traveled some distance all on the *expectation* of being healed—immediately—by Elisha. All the

while, Naaman's skin itched or burned or flaked off. After all this, who wouldn't be angry if told they had to go do seven more things? And yet, isn't that the way of healing? We *know* God could offer instant relief or cures, and yet often God chooses to bring about healing via various steps and measures and people. This doesn't make it any less miraculous.

Ponder: What difference did it make that Naaman had to take extra steps to find healing? How might it have changed Naaman's view of God and God's power? Consider a time you've been in a situation like Naaman: willing to do anything, go anywhere for relief. What were you willing to do? How did that desperation shape your prayer life?

Pray: Think of an area you or a loved one needs healing in—be it physical, emotional, relational, or spiritual. Pray boldly for an immediate cure—the kind Naaman expected—but also ask for patience and wisdom to discern steps God may lead you toward. Thank God for being a God of healing and restoration.

Week 6: October 16— Genesis 32:22-31

Prepare: Ask God to open your heart and mind as you read these words. Stay attuned to any words or phrases, images or themes that may stand out. If nothing pops out, focus on the bolded text. Allow yourself to linger on those ideas and wonder. Then, go to God with your thoughts, questions, or words of praise.

Read:

That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two female servants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak."

But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."

The man asked him, "What is your name?"

“Jacob,” he answered.

Then the man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.”

Jacob said, “Please tell me your name.”

But he replied, “Why do you ask my name?” Then he blessed him there.

So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, “It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared.”

The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip.

Reflect: In this passage (one of the weirder in the Bible!) we read many remarkable things—among them that Jacob gets a name-change. He becomes Israel, which according to this verse seems to mean “struggles with God and humans and overcomes.” His new name, of course, becomes the name of God’s people. Fortuitous! The Nation of Israel would indeed go on to struggle with God and people. But it was also a perfect name for the man, Israel. After all, we read about him struggling with people. We know Jacob/Israel cheated his twin brother, Esau. Then he was tricked by his father-in-law. Jacob was not great to his two wives and the two female servants who bore him children. And this passage shows us Jacob was nervy enough to wrestle a holy stranger for a blessing. And yet, as we read so often in the Scriptures, God chooses highly imperfect people to use and to lead. It’s confusing, but it’s also encouraging. While Jacob’s marriages and lifestyle would prevent him from membership in our church (not to mention send him to jail in this country!), God chose this struggling man to be a father to and namesake of God’s people—the holy nation that would continue to wrestle.

Ponder: Think about your current struggles with God or in your life. What does it say about God that God is with us in the struggle—and at work in them? How do your struggles affect the way you talk to God?

Pray: Talk to God about past and current struggles—perhaps ones that have left you with a limp. Ask God to bless your struggles—and even your “limp”—so that you might be a light to those around you, as Israel was to be.

Week 7: October 23—Jeremiah 14: 7-10, 19-22

Prepare: Ask God to open your heart and mind as you read these words. Stay attuned to any words or phrases, images or themes that may stand out. If nothing pops out, focus on the bolded text. Allow yourself to linger on those ideas and wonder. Then, go to God with your thoughts, questions, or words of praise.

Read:

Although our sins testify against us,

do something, Lord, for the sake of your name.

For we have often rebelled;

we have sinned against you.

You who are the hope of Israel,

its Savior in times of distress,

why are you like a stranger in the land,

like a traveler who stays only a night?

Why are you like a man taken by surprise,

like a warrior powerless to save?

You are among us, Lord,

and we bear your name;

do not forsake us!

This is what the Lord says about this people:

“They greatly love to wander;

they do not restrain their feet.

So the Lord does not accept them;

he will now remember their wickedness

and punish them for their sins.”

Have you rejected Judah completely?

Do you despise Zion?

Why have you afflicted us

so that we cannot be healed?
We hoped for peace
but no good has come,
for a time of healing
but there is only terror.
We acknowledge our wickedness, Lord,
and the guilt of our ancestors;
we have indeed sinned against you.
For the sake of your name do not despise us;
do not dishonor your glorious throne.
Remember your covenant with us
and do not break it.
Do any of the worthless idols of the nations bring rain?
Do the skies themselves send down showers?
No, it is you, Lord our God.
Therefore our hope is in you,
for you are the one who does all this.

Reflect: The urgency and audacity in this passage are hard to ignore. It's hard to know whether to be impressed—or appalled—by the petitions, especially when it seems that the prophet Jeremiah takes to taunting God. *Why are you like a stranger? Like someone only passing through? Why do you seem to shrug off our despair—as if you aren't All Powerful?* Jeremiah asks. While this can sound disrespectful, those of us who have been in desperate situations and prayed similar prayers understand that when we hope in God, when we believe in God's power, and when we are assured of God's unwavering love, we *can* go to God with this urgency—and that our trust-worthy, powerful, and loving God welcomes it.

Ponder: When have you gone to God with this sort of urgent appeal? If you haven't ever prayed like this, what's stopping you? Do you find this tone with God "disrespectful"? Why or why not?

Pray: Think of deep needs in your life and in this world—or perhaps the deep needs of your loved ones. Take them to God. Follow the prophet Jeremiah’s pattern of bringing your honest requests to God and reminding God what God has done and can do.

Week 8: October 30—Jeremiah 31:31-34

Prepare: Ask God to open your heart and mind as you read these words. Stay attuned to any words or phrases, images or themes that may stand out. If nothing pops out, focus on the bolded text. Allow yourself to linger on those ideas and wonder. Then, go to God with your thoughts, questions, or words of praise.

“The days are coming,” declares the Lord,

“when I will make a new covenant
with the people of Israel
and with the people of Judah.

It will not be like the covenant

I made with their ancestors
when I took them by the hand
to lead them out of Egypt,

because they broke my covenant,
though I was a husband to them,”
declares the Lord.

“This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel
after that time,” declares the Lord.

“I will put my law in their minds
and write it on their hearts.

**I will be their God,
and they will be my people.**

No longer will they teach their neighbor,
or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’
because they will all know me,

from the least of them to the greatest,”
declares the Lord.
“For I will forgive their wickedness
and will remember their sins no more.”

Reflect: Those of us who have gone to church most of our lives, who study the Bible, who read books *about* God or the Bible, or who attend or have attended Christian schools might be tempted to say we “know the Lord.” And certainly any of those are great ways to get to know God. But in this passage, God indicates a covenantal relationship with his people that goes much deeper than the information about God that we learn. Indeed, part of being “God’s people” and part of God being our God is that we get to know God personally—so deeply, so intimately that God etches God’s laws on our minds and whispers them into our hearts.

Ponder: What does it mean to “know the Lord”? Do you feel you know the Lord? If no, what’s preventing you? If yes, how so? How does having God’s laws written in our hearts and minds shape the way you live? How does it shape the way you pray?

Pray: Consider what it means to be God’s people—and for God to be our God. Go to God with thankfulness for this relationship—and share what is on your heart and mind.

Week 9: November 6—Daniel 7:1-3, 5-13

Prepare: Ask God to open your heart and mind as you read these words. Stay attuned to any words or phrases, images or themes that may stand out. If nothing pops out, focus on the bolded text. Allow yourself to linger on those ideas and wonder. Then, go to God with your thoughts, questions, or words of praise.

Read:

“And there before me was a second beast, which looked like a bear. It was raised up on one of its sides, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, ‘Get up and eat your fill of flesh!’

“After that, I looked, and there before me was another beast, one that looked like a leopard. And on its back it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule.

“After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast—terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns.

“While I was thinking about the horns, there before me was another horn, a little one, which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a human being and a mouth that spoke boastfully.

“As I looked,

“thrones were set in place,

and the Ancient of Days took his seat.

His clothing was as white as snow;

the hair of his head was white like wool.

His throne was flaming with fire,

and its wheels were all ablaze.

A river of fire was flowing,

coming out from before him.

Thousands upon thousands attended him;

ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.

The court was seated,

and the books were opened.

“Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire. (The other beasts had been stripped of their authority, but were allowed to live for a period of time.)

“In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.”

Reflect: Our faith tradition doesn't spend much time on or give much credence to *visions*. While we understand they happened in Scripture and perhaps to other holy people in other places and times, many of us start to squirm when folks talk about having visions from God. While certainly some discernment is needed, the Scriptures tell us that God uses visions to communicate with God's people. Passages like this show us that God's visions are only prophetic, but specific! God communicates heavenly messages using earthly images (Bears! Iron teeth! Flaming rivers!) as symbols. God allows our minds to wonder and perhaps even wrestle with these symbolic visions—and opens the doors for thousands of years of study and contemplation.

Ponder: Do you believe God still speaks to people using visions or dreams? Why or why not? Have you ever experienced this? If so, what was it like? How did you know it was from God? What are some ways God may use our visual gifts, imaginations, or dreams to speak to us today?

Pray: Find a quiet space and still yourself. Close your eyes. Breathe in and out. Ask God to bring to mind someone or something that needs to be prayed for. Go to God with prayers for that person or thing.

Week 10: November 13—Malachi 4:1-2a

Prepare: Ask God to open your heart and mind as you read these words. Stay attuned to any words or phrases, images or themes that may stand out. If nothing pops out, focus on the bolded text. Allow yourself to linger on those ideas and wonder. Then, go to God with your thoughts, questions, or words of praise.

Read:

“Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and the day that is coming will set them on fire,” says the Lord Almighty. “Not a root or a branch will be left to them. **But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays.** And you will go out and frolic like well-fed calves.”

Reflect: Passages like this can be difficult to read and understand. Who wants to believe that our loving God is willing to burn everything—and everyone—committed to arrogance and evildoing? And yet, when the people and priests of Israel thought they knew more than God, when they disobeyed God’s calls to live justly and mercifully, this was God’s warning. God takes reverence and obedience and justice very seriously. And yet, though this passage speaks of destruction, we also see the God whose goal is always restoration and redemption. The God who can burn away evil also brings healing and goodness with the “sun of righteousness.” God hates sin, but loves God’s people so much, God is willing to go to great lengths to rescue and restore. We see it in the “burning” in this passage to the Incarnation and the Cross, which we see hundreds of years after this was written.

Ponder: How do passages about God’s wrath make you feel? Why? Where do you fit into this passage? Why do you feel this way?

Pray: Consider a time when you thought you knew better than God—perhaps it’s right now. Now consider times when you’ve failed to show justice and mercy—and thus, been an evildoer, according to Malachi. Confess these sins to God in prayer and ask that God shine the healing sun of righteousness on you. Thank God for being so good to keep calling us back.

Week 11: November 20—Jeremiah 23:1-6

Prepare: Ask God to open your heart and mind as you read these words. Stay attuned to any words or phrases, images or themes that may stand out. If nothing pops out, focus on the

bolded text. Allow yourself to linger on those ideas and wonder. Then, go to God with your thoughts, questions, or words of praise.

Read:

“Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture!” declares the Lord. Therefore this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says to the shepherds who tend my people: “Because you have scattered my flock and driven them away and have not bestowed care on them, I will bestow punishment on you for the evil you have done,” declares the Lord. **“I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and will bring them back to their pasture, where they will be fruitful and increase in number. I will place shepherds over them who will tend them, and they will no longer be afraid or terrified, nor will any be missing,”** declares the Lord.

“The days are coming,” declares the Lord,
“when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch,
a King who will reign wisely
and do what is just and right in the land.

In his days Judah will be saved
and Israel will live in safety.

This is the name by which he will be called:

The Lord Our Righteous Savior.

Reflect: If you haven’t read through “the Prophets” in the Hebrew Scriptures, you are missing out. Not only is the language some of the most beautiful in the Bible, but in their writings, the prophets often invite us into their conversations with God. We hear the prophets’ petitions—and God’s responses. Of course, often those words are dire warnings to a disobedient people. But through it all—even the warnings—God offers hope of rescue and redemption and the promise of reconciliation and restoration. That is the heart of God! Like any good and loving parent, God doesn’t want us alienated. God doesn’t want us to wander, alone and afraid. God wants to be in relationship with us. God wants our obedience, yes, but even moreso, God wants our hearts. God wants us to love him and trust him. Indeed

God wants us all to be saved and safe. This is why God yearns for us to come to him in prayer.

Ponder: What does it say about God that even in God's anger, God provides ways for us to reconnect? How might God be calling you to repentance and reconnection today? How does this truth about God affect your willingness to go to God even when you are feeling discontent or disillusioned with God?

Pray: Simply talk to God. Whatever is on your heart, on your mind, or in your spirit: bring those words to God. Tell God about the weather. Tell God about your worries. Tell God why you have a hard time talking to him. Then be still and listen. Anticipate "hearing" from God.