



A GUIDED PRAYER CONVERSATION

Created by Chris & Sheila Chesterton

Leader's Guide for a group introduction to Heart to Heart

What you will need

- A church or other space, preferably with enough room to use different areas; low lighting.
- A focal point, preferably a low table with an attractive cloth and a cross. Scripture cards* and reader(s)
- A CD player and appropriate music, plus someone to operate it; matches; pens or felt-tips.

For each participant: a horse/donkey picture*; a white stone (from a garden centre, etc); an ultrasound scan card*; smiley face or good work stickers (stationers or your local primary school); a piece of chocolate honeycomb (Woolworths) or Crunchie (and diabetic/non-chocolate alternative if needed); a stem of freesias (or other flowers in bud and opening); a candle or tea-light; printed guide to take away*.

- *There is also extra material to print out under the heading 'extra material' * Pdf files.
- For a group up to a couple of dozen, seat on comfortable chairs or on the floor (preferably with cushions or kneelers). For a larger group, split into groups of ten to twelve, each with an assistant leader supplied with cards, pens etc for the group.
- Have music playing when people arrive, and turn it down to a very soft background level for the rest of the session.
- Welcome people and give a brief overview of the course.
- Heart to Heart is a guide to a two-way conversation with God. The letters of the word HEART are used to lead us through the things we want - or need - to say to God. Then the same letters are used as a prompt for listening to what God might want to say to us.
- For each letter there is a card to be read. If at all possible ask different people to be ready to read a card. This is followed by some activity or a meditation. We shall also be praying, of course!

- Heart to Heart is a guide to a two-way conversation with God. The letters of the word HEART are used to lead us through the things we want - or need - to say to God. Then the same letters are used as a prompt for listening to what God might want to say to us. For each of the 10 letters there are some bible readings which we chose to take from the psalms.
- Lets take a few moments just to ready ourselves for this afternoon session.

Music :

We begin with the letter **H**. and it stands for the H of **Honour**.

I **HONOUR** God as the creator of all things the one who is all goodness and all love.

READER :: CARD 1 Psalm 29 : 1-2 ; Psalm 8 : 1 & Psalm 145:1

Honour the LORD for his glory and strength. Honour the LORD for the glory of his name Worship the LORD in the splendour of his holiness.

O LORD our LORD your majestic name fills the earth! Your Glory is higher than the heavens.

I will praise you my God and king, I will bless your name forever and ever. . . Great is the LORD! He is most worthy of praise.

- Most Sundays the words 'Honoured be your name.' are prayed in churches across the world.
- In the Old Testament a name was not only an identification, but an identity as well. The meanings behind God's names tell us so much about him.
- So at the very beginning I want us to think about God's Name. God knows us by our name, shouldn't we know Him by His?
- ◆ Give out list **no 1**

There is one further Name that God has and that is the name **Jesus / Yeshua**.

- AS we read our Bibles and live our Christian lives we find that Jesus fulfils all these OT characteristics and some more....

Reader *Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honour and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

- ◆ Circulate **No. 2** On this paper are N.T. References to Jesus fulfilling these different characteristics of God. Look at these while you listen to some music **Music :**

Maybe one of the reasons we honour God is that he puts such a high value on us.
God's **H** stands for **HIGH HOPES**

My **Heavenly** Father has big plans for me - in this world and the next!

Reader : **Card 2** Psalm 8: 3 ; Psalm 139: 14 & Psalm 138: 8

When I look at the night sky and see the work of your fingers - what are mere mortals that you should think about them? Yet you made them only a little lower than God and crowned them with glory and honour. You gave them charge of everything you made, putting all things under their authority —

Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvellous... You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.

*The LORD will work out **his plans** for my life.*

- ◆ Give out cards with ultrasound scan of a baby and a crown.
- God knew us before we were born. He created us with a purpose.
- His ultimate purpose will only be revealed with the creation of the new heavens and the new earth, but bit by bit as we walk with him we find out what his purpose is for us on earth.
- Take a moment or two of quiet reflection.

Music :

- Then form a circle going from the youngest to the eldest (in decades if necessary!). And pass a crown from one head to the next showing the fact that we are all members of the same royal family.
- ◆ While this is happening read the following.

And when the Great Shepherd appears, you will receive a crown of never-ending glory and honour (1 Peter 5: 4)

*Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last for ever.
(1 Cor. 9 :25)*

So if God knows the plans for our lives my **E** stands for **E**nquire

I **ENQUIRE** what God wants me to do - his will for me.

Reader : Card **3** Psalm 23: 1-3 & Psalm 32: 8-9

The LORD is my shepherd I have everything I need. He lets me rest in green meadows; He leads me beside peaceful streams. He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths bringing honour to his name.

The LORD says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life, I will advise you and watch over you. Do not be like a senseless horse or mule that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control."

- ◆ Place cards with cartoons of donkeys and horses on the floor.
- ◆ People then choose one and write their own enquiry on the back. It may be about a big life decision, or a more everyday choice.
- In the groups of 3 share with the others what you have enquired about and then pray for each other.

Music :

God's **R** stands for **R**equirements.

God **REMINDS** me of his **REQUIREMENTS** - his Commandments show us the right way to live.

- For some people including myself there is an instinctive dislike of rules and regulations except in as far as they apply to other people.
- It might be helpful to note that the word TORAH which stands for the law in the old testament means instructions.
- But God's rules his instructions are really good for us.

READER : Card 4 Psalm 19 :7-11

*The instructions of the LORD are perfect, reviving the soul,
The decrees of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple,
The commandments of the LORD are right, bringing joy to the heart,
The commands of the LORD are clear, giving insight for living.
Reverence for the LORD is pure, lasting forever.
The laws of the LORD are true; each one is fair,
They are more desirable than gold, even the finest gold,
They are sweeter than honey, even honey dripping from the comb.
They are a warning to your servant, a great reward for those who obey them.*

- ◆ Pass around a golden box in which you have some honeycomb, crunchie bar pieces or honey tasting sweets.
- ◆ Ask people to enjoy it slowly while asking God to remind them of any of his rules or requirements to which they might have been turning a blind eye.

Music :

- **Maybe God has reminded you of something so lets move to the next letter.**

My **A** is **A**pologise.

I **APOLOGISE**—I say sorry for things I have done wrong.

READER : card 5 Psalm 32 : 3 , 5 & 1,

*When I refused to confess my sin my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long. . . .
Finally I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself,
" I will confess my rebellion to the LORD," And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone . . .
Oh what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight!*

- A quote from Thomas Aquinas 'The theologian considers sin mainly as an offence against God. The moral philosopher as contrary to reasonableness.'
- ◆ Print off no. **3** fo each person.
- Look at the list of sins on the paper you have. They would seem to be more concerned with our attitudes to God than our actions to others.

What is sin?

" It is the Glory of God not honoured.

The Holiness of God not revered.

The Greatness of God not admired.

The Power of God not praised.

The Truth of God not sought.

The Wisdom of God not esteemed.

The Beauty of God not treasured.

The Goodness of God not savoured.

The Faithfulness of God not trusted

The Commandments of God not obeyed.

The Justice of God not respected

The Wrath of God not feared.

The grace of God not cherished

The Presence of God not prized.

The Person of God not loved

That is sin." — [John Piper](#)

- What do you think of this way of looking at sin or wrong doing.
- Maybe in looking at this list you find there are things you would like to bring out into the open. Not in any public way but to write them out on paper and offer them to God. Any actions or thoughts that you regret. Then fold it up and put it in one of the empty coca cola /pepsi tins on the table.

Music :

God's **A** is for **ACCEPTS**

God **ACCEPTS** me as I am. I don't have to be 'good enough' to have a heart to heart with God.

READER : Card 6 Psalm 139:1 Matt.19: 13-15

*O LORD you have examined my heart and know everything about me. You know when I sit down and stand up. You know my thoughts even when I' m far away.
You go before me and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me.*

One day some parents brought their children to Jesus so he could lay his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples scolded the parents for bothering him. But Jesus said, "Let the children come to me. . . . For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children." And he placed his hands on their heads and blessed them before he left.

A story

Charlotte Elliot had a happy childhood. As a young person she became quite notorious among society and then suddenly at the age of 32 she was struck down by an illness that left her disabled for the rest of her life.

Being confined to her room she suffered a severe depression. She had stopped being famous and her friends mostly disappeared too. The idea of God's mercy touched her, but she was convinced that she had committed too many sins for God to care about her.

But one day a doctor-evangelist named Caesar Malan from Switzerland visited her and said: "Charlotte, you must come, just as you are, to the Lamb of God." That day Charlotte said yes to the Lord Jesus Christ, and later composed this hymn "Just as I am, without one plea ...

- ◆ Form a circle and ask people to put their hands on the backs of the people on either side of them. Then ask them to pray silently for each of these two people.
- ◆ Then ask people to concentrate on the sensation of the hands touching them. In this circle everyone is included and accepted. 'Let that come as a sign that God accepts you just as you are.'

The hymn : Just as I am without one plea no. 4

- Invite people to remove their papers from the tins. They can't!! Useless anyway because. " if we confess our sins to him. He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness." (1 John 1 : 9)
- Put the tins on the floor and **SMASH** them with a foot!!! Very effective.

My R is Request :

I **REQUEST** things I know other people need - and the things I need for myself.

Reader : card 7 Psalm 5:3 ; Psalm 34:4 & Psalm.17:6

Listen to my voice in the morning, LORD.

Each morning I bring my requests to you and wait expectantly

I prayed to the Lord and he answered me.

He freed me from all my fears. Those who look to him for help will be radiant with joy.

I am praying to you because I know you will answer, O God. Bend down and listen as I pray

- ◆ Divide people roughly into threes.
- ◆ One person shares a need, then the other two pray for this need. Repeat with the other two. It can be as short as a one sentence prayer. Those who are not used to praying aloud can usually be encouraged to pray a one -sentence prayer .

- ◆ If you think it would be helpful read this passage to encourage people in their prayers. Matthew 7 : 7-10

'Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? ¹¹ If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

God's **E** is for **E**ncourage.

God **ENCOURAGES** me. He's always ready to say "Well done!"

Reader : Card **8** Psalm 69: 32 – 33 ; Psalm 10 : 17 & Matthew 9 : 2 & 22

Only really two ref. in psalms so this time I also needed to go to the new testament to find some examples.

*The humble will see their God at work and be glad .Let all who seek God's help be **encouraged**. For the LORD hears the cries of the needy;*

*You, Lord, hear the desire of the afflicted; you **encourage** them, and you listen to their cry,*

*Some people brought to him a paralyzed man on a mat. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "Be **encouraged**, my child! Your sins are forgiven."*

- How does God encourage you? Sometimes directly – even Jesus twice was given public affirmations of God's acceptance love and his place in God's plan. Also God's Word is full of encouragement.
- God mostly uses other Christians to encourage us. The Bible tells us to encourage one another, to remind each other of the truth that God loves us, that God equips us, that we are treasured, that our struggles are worth it. This is why we need to be with other Christians in fellowship.
- Share with someone how God has encouraged you. Then collect a Well done! or smiley-face sticker. You can stick it on yourself or on your baby-scan card. Or give it to someone else.

My last letter is **T** for **T**hank and **T**rust

I THANK God for being close to me and for all the ways he has guided me.

I TRUST him that he knows best.

Reader : card **9** Psalm 52 : 8-9 & Psalm 28 : 7

I am like an olive tree growing in God's temple.

I trust god's love for ever and ever.

God, I will thank you for ever for what you have done.

With those who worship you, I will trust you because you are good.

The LORD is my strength and my shield.

I trust him with all my heart.

He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy.

I burst out in songs of thanksgiving.

- A time to meditate and give thanks.
- Light a candle if you have brought one.
- If you have space and a carpeted floor, people who want to may lie down, otherwise sit back and relax.
- Close eyes, breathe deeply,

Play some music **Allow time**

God's final letter **T** stands for **T**ransforms:

God **TRANSFORMS** me. He enables me to change and become more like Jesus!

Reader : Card 10 2 Corinthians 3 : 18 & Philippians 1:6

I found no references in the book of Psalms, maybe it is only in relationship with Jesus that real transformation can take place.

And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

And we all, with unveiled faces reflecting the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another, which is from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

- Look at the ultrasound scan card again.
- All the gifts and character God needed to accomplish his purposes were put in us before we were born. Bit by bit - if we let him - he will bring these to fulfilment. Note that it is God who does the transformation.
- Tell this story:

'One little boy was trying to open a flower bud. Under his persistent efforts the blossom fell apart in his hands. In exasperation he looked up at his mother and asked, "Why does the bud fall apart when I try to open it, but when God opens it the flower is beautiful?"

Shocked at his profundity, his mother was speechless. Soon, however, the child exclaimed eagerly, "Oh, I know! When God opens the flower, he opens it from the inside."

Quoted in *Undersong* by Peter B. Price (Darton, Longman & Todd, p.13)

- And he was correct. Think of a caterpillar. God has put in the DNA of this creature all the possibility of a great transformation.-into a beautiful butterfly.
- We also have a promise of a new life A life that is eternal. It is for us to choose to follow Jesus Then it is the work of the Holy spirit to transform us. He does this with the utmost respect and gentleness.

This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! (2 Corinthians 5 :17)

Ask someone to read the last verse of the hymn 'Love Divine' by Charles Wesley.

Finish then Thy new creation,
Pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see Thy great salvation,
Perfectly restored in Thee.
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before Thee
Lost in wonder, love, and praise

Charles Wesley.

Wondering : Give out the paper on which is listed the 10 words with simple explanations.

- Before we finish this afternoon? I want you to take some time reflecting on the 10 words.
 - I wonder if any of these words gave you a new perspective.
 - I wonder if you struggled with any of these words.
 - I wonder if there is anything else you would have liked to say to God or to hear him say to you. Never forget as we said at the beginning God knows us by name. We are unique to him and he deals with each and everyone of us as individuals.
- You have a little time now in the quiet to reflect on all you have seen and heard today.

Give each person a Heart to Heart guide leaflet to take away.

Names of God (OT)	Meaning	Ist. Ref.	Information
Elohim (2000 +)	God the Creator	Gen. 1:1	From the Bible's first sentence the superlative nature of God's power is evident as Elohim speaks the world into existence.
El Shaddai (7)	Lord God Almighty	Gen 17: 1	Speaks to God's ultimate power over all. Idea of a God who freely gives nourishment and blessing.
Yahweh / Jehovah (6519)	LORD I AM	Gen 2 : 4	Most precious, most used name for God Yahweh is near to those who call for deliverance <i>Psalm 107:13</i> ; for forgiveness <i>Psalm 25:11</i> ; and for guidance <i>Psalm 31:3</i> .
Jehovah Sabaoth (285+)	The Lord of Hosts.	I Sam. 1 : 3	God is Lord over the heavens and of all the inhabitants of the earth; of Jews and Gentiles; of rich and poor, master and slave. This name is expressive of the majesty, power and authority of God.
Jehovah Tsidkenu (2)	The Lord our righteousness.	Jer. 23 : 6	Only God could restore the relationship between himself and his creation He did it perfectly in the person of his son Jesus Christ.
Yahweh-Rohi (4)	The lord My Shepherd.	Psalm 23:1	This psalm written king David
El Roi (1)	The God who sees.	Genesis 16.: 1-14	This name is used by Hagar when she meets God in the desert.
Jehovah Rapha (1)	The Lord that Heals	Exd. 15: 26	Jehovah is the Great Physician who heals the physical and emotional needs of His people.
Jehovah Jireh (1)	The Lord will Provide	Gen 22 : 14	This name used by Abraham on Mt Moriah .
Jehovah shalom (1)	The Lord is Peace	Judges 6:24	Shalom is a very rich Hebrew word with many different meanings including harmony.

God's qualities	Bible Ref.	New Testament Yeshua (Jesus) In this name all the names find fulfilment.
God the Creator	John 2:11	“This miraculous sign at Cana in Galilee was the first time Jesus revealed his glory.” Water became wine. Also multiplication of bread and fish.
Lord God Almighty	Revelations 22:12-13	“Look I am coming soon. ... I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.
LORD I AM that I AM	John 8:58	Jesus answered, “ I tell you the truth before Abraham was even born, I AM.”
The Lord of Hosts.	Philippians 2 :10	Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honour and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.....
The Lord our Righteousness.	2 Corinthians 5 : 21	For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.
The lord My Shepherd.	John 10 :11	“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep.”
The God who sees.	John 1 47-48	As they approached, Jesus said, “Now here is a genuine son of Israel.” How do you know about me?” Nathaniel asked. Jesus replied, “ I could see you under the fig tree before Philip found you.”
The Lord that Heals	John 9:1-7	The healing of the man born blind
The Lord will Provide	Philippians 4 : 19	And the same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus.
The Lord is Peace	John 14:27	“I am leaving you with a gift -peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid.”

What is sin?

“ It is the Glory of God not honoured.
The Holiness of God not revered.
The Greatness of God not admired.
The Power of God not praised.
The Truth of God not sought.
The Wisdom of God not esteemed.
The Beauty of God not treasured.
The Goodness of God not savoured.
The Faithfulness of God not trusted
The Commandments of God not obeyed.
The Justice of God not respected
The Wrath of God not feared.
The grace of God not cherished
The Presence of God not prized.
The Person of God not loved That is sin.” — [John Piper](#)

1. Just as I am, without one plea,
but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that thou bidst me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

2. Just as I am, and waiting not
to rid my soul of one dark blot,
to thee whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

3. Just as I am, though tossed about
with many a conflict, many a doubt,
fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

4. Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
sight, riches, healing of the mind,
yea, all I need in thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

5. Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

6. Just as I am, thy love unknown
hath broken every barrier down;
now, to be thine, yea thine alone,
Oh lamb of God I come

By charlotte Elliot