



PRAY FIRST

PERSONAL PRAYER GUIDE



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"And so I urge you: carry on an ongoing conversation with God about the daily stuff of life, a little like Tevye in Fiddler on the Roof. For now, do not worry about 'proper' praying, just talk to God" Richard J. Foster

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PRAY FIRST

"All I know is that when I pray, coincidences happen; and when I don't pray, they don't happen." Dan Hayes

Dear Church,

Prayer is the bedrock of my life and ministry efforts. Everything of value that I have ever experienced is the result of God's grace and answered prayers. Every spiritual stronghold that I have ever witnessed being destroyed was a direct outcome of God's mercy in not only hearing us when we pray, but most importantly, answering our prayers in accordance to His good and perfect will.

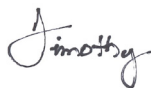
We are asking you to follow in the example of Jesus' first disciples. After observing Jesus pray at various times, His disciples asked Him to "teach us to pray." It was one of the few requests they made of Him. While observing or listening to another pray is beneficial, it's not enough. Understanding the necessity of prayer, while important, is not enough. Whether you are a beginner with prayer or very comfortable with prayer, this booklet seeks to help you make prayer a more significant part of your life.

This prayer guide will explore and model several ways to pray. Practice each of them for a week or two. Get comfortable with each model, and I hope they will bring joy into your time with God. When you discover the beauty of daily conversation with Him, you'll experience the life-changing presence of God. You'll embrace prayer as a necessary, meaningful and powerful rhythm of spiritual life.

You can use these models individually or in groups. Whatever the model, whatever your rhythm and practice, we hope ...

Before the day begins —
 Before you go to bed —
 Before you go to work or school —
 Before you send that text —
 Before you react —
 Before bad things happen —
 Before you eat, drive, or travel —
 In every situation — PRAY FIRST!

Prayer changes everything! I can't wait to watch God work during this season of prayer!



TIMOTHY BROCK, SENIOR PASTOR

LIFESTYLE PRAYER

"Pray as though everything depended on God. Work as though everything depended on you." St. Augustine

How do we make prayer a part of our everyday life? We can learn from three things that Jesus did ...

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where He prayed. MARK 1:35

HAVE A CERTAIN TIME

Jesus got up very early in the morning to spend time with His Heavenly Father. Whatever time of day you choose, make a daily appointment with God and keep it.

When? _____

HAVE A CERTAIN PLACE

Jesus had a prayer place. Your prayer place needs to be an undistracted environment where you can pray out loud and perhaps have some worship music playing in the background. Many benefit from the same space and place. The familiarity of the surroundings sets a consistent environment for prayer. It can be anywhere. Some need variety.

Where? _____

HAVE A CERTAIN PLAN

Go into your prayer time with a plan. If it changes, that's fine. When Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, He gave His disciples a prayer outline or plan. We call it the Lord's Prayer. This outline, along with several other tools, are available in this booklet.

Which Plan? _____

THE LORD'S PRAYER

"Prayer is nothing else than being on terms of friendship with God." Teresa of Avila

The Lord's Prayer is often recited in churches or at religious events, but there's so much more to this prayer. Jesus used this prayer as a model to answer the disciples' request that He teach them how to pray. The Lord's Prayer calls us to connect with God as Father, align our priorities with the Father's and to depend on Him daily.

*One day Jesus was praying in a certain place.
When He finished, one of His disciples said to Him,
"Lord, teach us to pray..."* **LUKE 11:1**

*"Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be Your Name.
Your Kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it
is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver
us from the evil one. For Yours is the Kingdom and the
power and the glory forever. Amen."* **MATTHEW 6:9-13 NKJV**

1. CONNECT WITH GOD RELATIONALLY

Our Father in Heaven

You have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when He adopted you as His own children. Now we call Him, "Abba, Father." ROMANS 8:15 NLT

God loves for us to call Him Father – even Dad or Papa – He wants our relationship to be respectful, familiar, personal and cherished.

2. WORSHIP HIS NAME

Hallowed be Your Name

God's name is a place of protection – the righteous can run there and be safe. PROVERBS 18:10 MSG

What are His names?

Righteousness – He makes me clean

Sanctifier – He has called me and set me apart

Healer – He heals all my diseases

Banner of Victory – He defeated my enemy

Shepherd – He speaks to me and leads me

Peace – He is my peace in every storm

Provider – He supplies all of my needs

3. PRAY HIS AGENDA FIRST

Your Kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven

He will always give you all you need from day to day if you will make the Kingdom of God your primary concern.

LUKE 12:31 TLB

God's priorities:

Saving the lost

Guiding those in authority (parental, spiritual, governmental, workplace)

Doing His will

4. DEPEND ON HIM FOR EVERYTHING

Give us this day our daily bread

*I look up to the mountains—does my help come from there? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth! **PSALM 121:1-2 NLT***

Ask God for what you want and need, and then trust Him for the answer.

5. FORGIVE AND BE FORGIVEN

Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 JOHN 1:9

Ask God to check your heart and motives. Receive His forgiveness for any area that He brings to mind.

Forgive anyone who has offended you in any way. You can even forgive people in advance.

6. ENGAGE IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE

And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

*For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. **EPHESIANS 6:12***

Take your stand against the enemy and fight the good fight of faith. Every lie the enemy has told you should be replaced with the truth of God's Word.

7. EXPRESS FAITH IN GOD'S ABILITY

For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

*Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens
and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm.
Nothing is too hard for You. JEREMIAH 32:17*

End your prayer time by reminding yourself of God's ability.
Return to praise and make your faith declarations:

"Yours is the Kingdom" – all authority belongs to You

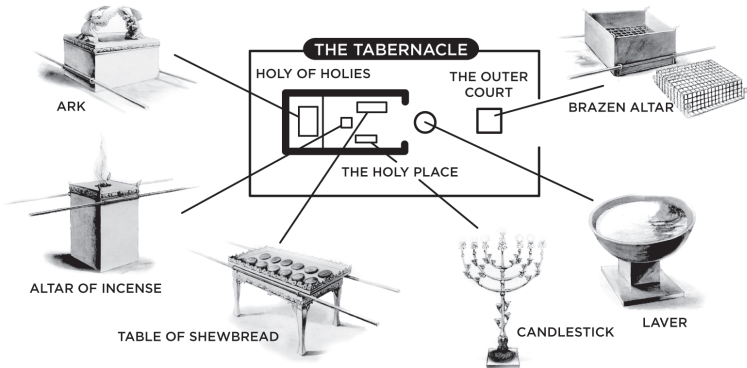
"Yours is the Power" – all mightiness flows from You

"Yours is the Glory" – Your victory will be complete

TABERNACLE PRAYER

"The value of persistent prayer is not that God will hear us, but that we finally hear God." William McGill

The Tabernacle was the dwelling place of God where He met His people. As they entered the Tabernacle, they passed through seven stations as a protocol to God's presence. Today, these same steps can help us connect with God and lead us through important elements of prayer.



1. THE OUTER COURT

THANKSGIVING AND PRAISE

Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name. PS. 100:4

As the people of God entered the Tabernacle, they came in with thanksgiving on their lips. Thanking God for all the blessings in your life is a great way to begin. Every day, think of a fresh reason why you love and appreciate God.

2. THE BRAZEN ALTAR

THE CROSS OF JESUS

Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all His benefits— who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

PSALM 103:2-5

In the Old Testament, everyone who had committed sin had to bring animal sacrifices. In the New Testament, Jesus paid for all your sins once and for all. You simply need to receive the benefits of what Jesus did for you.

Salvation – God forgives all my sins

Healing – God heals all my diseases

Redemption – God rescues me and restores me

Transformation – God changes me into His likeness

Blessing – God provides everything I need

3. THE LAVER

CLEANSING AND PREPARING

*Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. **ROMANS 12:1 NIV***

The next step in the Tabernacle was a bowl of water where people could wash. Checking your hearts and motives and then surrendering your life to God is an important part of daily prayer. Here are some ways to keep your heart right with God.

Repent from any known sin

Offer your mind and body to God

Ask God to give you the fruit of the Spirit

4. THE CANDLESTICK

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD. ISAIAH 11:2

The next piece of furniture in the Tabernacle was a seven-branched golden candlestick. The fire represents the Holy Spirit. Every day invite the presence of the Holy Spirit into your life.

The Spirit of the Lord

The Spirit of Wisdom

The Spirit of Understanding

The Spirit of Counsel

The Spirit of Might

The Spirit of Knowledge

The Spirit of Peace

Every day ask God to give you spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:8-10).

5. THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD

THE WORD OF GOD

Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. JOSHUA 1:8

A table with 12 loaves of bread represents the importance of reading God's Word for daily sustenance. With this in mind, here are ways to nourish your soul:

Read God's Word

Claim His many great promises

Ask for fresh understanding of the Word

Take time to read and meditate on the Word

Identify a thought or word to carry with you each day

6. THE ALTAR OF INCENSE

WORSHIP

The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe. PROVERBS 18:10 NKJV

A small altar of burning incense stood at the entrance to the Holy of Holies, where God's presence dwelled. This altar represents worship. The people of God literally entered God's presence worshipping the names of God, including:

God is my Righteousness – Jeremiah 23:6

God is my Sanctifier – Leviticus 20:7-8

God is my Healer – Exodus 15:26

God is my Provider – Genesis 22:14

God is my Banner of Victory – Exodus 17:15

God is my Peace – Judges 6:24

God is my Shepherd – Psalm 23:1

God is always there – Ezekiel 48:35

7. THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

INTERCESSION

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-4

The final place in the Tabernacle was the place where God's presence dwelled. It was there that the priest interceded on behalf of the people. In the New Testament, you and I are called priests and instructed to intercede for others:

Those in authority – spiritual, civil, family and workplace

My family and my needs

My church – pastor, small group, members and vision/mission

My city, nation and world

PRAYING SCRIPTURE

"If the only prayer you ever say in your whole life is 'thank you' that would suffice." Meister Eckhart

Praying scripture involves selecting a short passage or verse and writing or speaking it back to God. Here's an illustration:

SCRIPTURE:

Come near to God and He will come near to you. JAMES 4:8

PRAYER:

"Heavenly Father, You have promised that if I draw near to You, You will draw near to me. I need more of Your presence today, and I am drawing near to You through prayer, worship, and reading Your Word. I open my heart to You and ask You to be near to me and change me to be more like You."

SCRIPTURE:

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. PSALM 139:23-24

PRAYER:

"Father God, I ask You to search my heart. If you find anything in me that is offensive, please show me and help me remove it from my life. Teach me to love others well and live a life that points people to You. Help me live my life on earth in a way that impacts eternity."

Select other passages and create your own prayers.

WARFARE PRAYERS

"God shapes the world by prayer. The more praying there is in the world, the better the world will be, the mightier the forces against evil." E.M. Bounds

Prayer is not only communion with God; it is confrontation with the enemy. These prayers are very helpful in spiritual warfare. Praying these with a group can be powerful.

*Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the Gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. **EPHESIANS 6:11-18***

THE ARMOR OF GOD

Based on Ephesians 6:13-17

“Thank You, Lord, for my salvation. I receive it in a new and fresh way from You, and I declare that nothing can separate me from the love of Christ and the place I have in Your Kingdom. I wear Your righteousness today against all condemnation and corruption. Cover me with Your holiness and purity—defend me from all attacks against my heart. Lord, I put on the belt of truth. I choose a lifestyle of honesty and integrity. Expose the lies I have believed, and show me Your truth today. I choose to live for the Gospel in every moment. Show me where You are working and lead me to it. Give me strength to walk daily with You. I believe that You are powerful against every lie and attack of the enemy. You have good in store for me. Nothing is coming today that can overcome me because You are with me. Holy Spirit, show me the truths of the Word of God that I will need to counter the traps of the enemy. Bring those Scriptures to mind today. Finally, Holy Spirit, I agree to walk in step with You in everything as my spirit communes with You in prayer throughout the day.”

THE WEAPONS OF WARFARE

Based on 2 Corinthians 10:4-5

“Father, Your Word says that no weapon formed against me will prosper (Isaiah 54:17), so I declare in the Name of Jesus that no weapon formed against me prospers this day or any day to come. Your Word says that trouble will not arise a second time (Nahum 1:9). I declare in Jesus’ Name that Satan cannot make trouble

for me again, like he has in the past. I declare in the Name of Jesus that all of these prayers are answered and taken care of by trusting You.

I stand on Your Word. The enemy is driven out from me; from my home, workplace, church family, children, and loved ones. I declare that he is not able to stand against me. No weapon formed against me will prosper, because the Spirit of the Lord is with me, protecting me. I declare these truths in the Name of Jesus. Anything that comes against me or my family that is not in line with the truth and will of God, I command to bow to the powerful Name of Jesus. Father God, I give You all of my thanksgiving, praise, glory, honor, and worship. Thank You for loving me, making me clean, and giving me purpose.”

PROTECTION PRAYER

2 Thessalonians 3:3; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1, 10:3-5; Romans 12:1-2

“God, I bow in worship to praise You. Thank You for making a way for me through Your Son, Jesus. I surrender myself completely in every area of my life to You. I submit myself to the true and living God and refuse any involvement of the enemy in my life. I choose to be transformed by the renewing of my mind. I reject every thought that tries to compete against the knowledge of Christ. I pray and thank You for a sound mind, the mind of Christ.

Today and every day I ask for protection over my family and loved ones; all immediate family members, relatives, friends, acquaintances, and myself. I ask for protection during all of our

travels; for our provision, finances, possessions, health, safety and welfare. All that I have is Yours God, and I declare that satan cannot touch me or anything You have given me, on this day or any day to come."

CONFESSION PRAYER

Based on Romans 10:10; James 5:16; 1 John 1:7-9, 3:8

"Lord Jesus, I believe that You are the Son of God. You died on the cross for my sins and rose to life again on the third day. I confess all my sins and repent. I receive Your forgiveness and ask You to cleanse me from all sin. Thank You for redeeming me, setting me free, making me holy, and giving my life purpose."

FORGIVENESS PRAYER

Based on Matthew 6:14-15; Leviticus 19:18

"Lord, I have a confession to make. I have not loved, but have resented certain people and have unforgiveness in my heart. I call upon you, Lord, to help me forgive them. I do now forgive (name them). I also forgive and accept myself in the Name of Jesus."

PRIDE PRAYER

Based on Proverbs 11:2, 16:18, 26:12; 1 Timothy 3:6

“Father, I come to You in the Name of Jesus. I know pride keeps me from You. I put down anything that would cause me to have pride in my heart in dealing with other people. Help me recognize where I lack knowledge and understanding. Help me to prioritize others over myself. I ask You, God, to remind me daily that true humility is not thinking less of myself, it’s thinking of myself less. I humble myself before You and come to You like a child.”

Note: One of the best ways to humble ourselves is to combine prayer with fasting.

GENERATIONAL BONDAGE PRAYER

**Based on Exodus 20:4-6, 34:7; Numbers 14:18;
2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 8:1, 12:1**

“In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I proclaim Your power to break any hold of mental or physical illness, pride, addiction, other ungodly perspectives, and anything else on me and my family that are a result of sin being passed down through parents or any other ancestors. I thank you, Lord, for setting me free.”

PERSONAL PRAYER FOCUS

"Do not make prayer a monologue ... make it a conversation."

Author Unknown

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-4

Pray for those in authority and those under your authority. Write down the names of specific people and pray for them.

MY GOVERNMENT

PRESIDENT _____

NATIONAL LEADERS _____

STATE LEADERS _____

CITY LEADERS _____

MY FAMILY

SPOUSE _____

CHILDREN _____

PARENTS _____

SIBLINGS _____

EXTENDED FAMILY _____

MY CHURCH

PASTOR _____

SMALL GROUP LEADER _____

SMALL GROUP MEMBERS _____

MY LIFE

EMPLOYER _____

CO-WORKERS _____

EMPLOYEES _____

TEACHERS/PROFESSORS _____

CLOSE FRIENDS _____

1. PRAY THAT THE FATHER WOULD DRAW THEM TO JESUS.

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. (John 6:44)

2. BIND THE SPIRIT THAT BLINDS THEIR MINDS.

The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (2 Corinthians 4:4)

3. GIVE THEM THE SPIRIT OF ADOPTION (SONSHIP)

For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by Him we cry, "Abba, Father." (Romans 8:15)

4. PRAY THAT OTHER BELIEVERS WILL CROSS THEIR PATHS AND ENTER INTO POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEM.

Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field. (Matthew 9:38)

5. GIVE THEM THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM AND REVELATION SO THEY MAY KNOW GOD BETTER

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better. (Ephesians 1:17)

MY PRAYER JOURNAL

"Any concern too small to be turned into prayer is too small to be made into a burden." Corrie Ten Boom

GROUP PRAYER

"The whole reason why we pray is to be united into the vision and contemplation of God to whom we pray." Julian of Norwich

PRAYER CARE BOWL

Write prayer needs on slips of paper. Put them in a bowl. Pull out each need and one or more people pray for each need. Only remove prayer when answered. Each time a request is lifted up, put a date and check mark on each slip.

POPCORN PRAYER

Encourage short, to-the-point praises or prayer needs – a word or phrase. "Popcorn" around the group.

PRAY THE MAP

Get a map of the world and pray for mission partners and for kingdom work to be accomplished.

PRAYER WALK

Walk around the neighborhood or area around where you are meeting. Let observations of people, places and things prompt your prayers.

PRAYER THROUGH SONG

Sing a song or hymn together and then wait in silence and let people pray as they feel led.

PRAYER CIRCLE

Have everyone gather around a person who has shared a request and place a hand on their shoulder or back while someone prays for them. The next person who shares moves to the middle of the circle and is prayed for and so on.

For more ideas for group prayer, visit wrcc.org/21daysofprayer.

WRCC.ORG