



Pray First

Prayer Guide

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If you're reading this, then you're probably at least intrigued by the idea of being able to talk to and hear from God. Isn't that what prayer is? There are several components that are important for knowing about God - like reading the Bible and being a part of church. But nothing can substitute for the conversation with God. Filling your soul will not come just through knowledge, but through relationship, and relationship is connection through conversation.

If you already know a bit about God, then it would seem that talking to Him and hearing from Him on a regular basis would be essential to having the fullest life possible with Jesus.

And yet, most people don't pray.

Even though people suspect or know it's important, many of them aren't doing it, and I think there are a few common reasons:

1. They don't know how to pray.
2. They don't know why to pray.
3. They don't have an adequate model for prayer.

Our church has not always done this well. Of course we pray, but we've often prayed for you instead of showing you how to do it for yourself. And we've not provided you a safe place to practice prayer. I don't mean that so much as an indictment on our past, but as a vision for our future.

Through that, our experience with 21 Days of Prayer began, and continues again this year. Thank you for joining us for this amazing adventure where we'll be teaching about prayer—how to do it, who you're talking to, and why it matters. Monday through Friday, we will gather at every physical campus and online at 7 a.m. to pray together. (On Saturdays, we'll meet at 9 a.m.) For those six days every week, we'll worship through music, hear a short devotional, and then we'll have some time for all of us to practice praying.

You are part of something revolutionary for yourself and for our church. Yes, it's going to cost you time, energy, and effort. But it will be worth it!

I can't wait to see what God's going to do in me, in our church, and in you!



Brian C. Hughes

What To Expect During 21 Days of Prayer

This is our first year of doing this experiment. We can tell you what we THINK it will be like, knowing that we will be learning a lot as we go.

Before you join us for a morning of prayer online or at a physical campus, you may want to have an idea of what to expect.

1 You will NOT be asked to pray out loud in front of others. You are welcome to pray silently or quietly, either at one spot or as you move about the room. You will not be expected to pray out loud or on behalf of someone else.

2 This will not be a somber event. We will communicate with God through energetic music like we often experience on Sundays. Church leaders will share some thoughts about prayer. Then there will be about 20 minutes of individual time when you can pray as you choose, but it will not be silent. Others in the room may be praying quietly at their seat, at a station, or as they move around the room. We will conclude with more music and with a church leader praying for us.

3 This is a great time for a family to learn how to pray together! The prayer guides can be used at home for family prayer times. Families can also choose to join us online. Our in-person prayer experiences are also available to families. Childcare is not offered. Parents are welcome to pray with their children; what a wonderful way for kids to learn how to pray! Children don't have to be silent; the rooms will not be silent and somber. And at the same time, we expect parents to make sure that their kids do not interrupt the prayer experiences of others.

How To Use This Guide

We don't have to follow a specific formula to talk with God, but practicing different ways to pray can help us find deeper purpose and connection to Him through our prayer time.

This book is designed to give you several prayer models. You don't have to master all of them at once; you can select a different prayer model each day and spend time working through it at your own pace. You can go in any order you want, and you can even spend a few days on the same model as you become more comfortable with it.

To get started, choose which model you want to use today in prayer. As you pray, focus on the process the model reveals, giving yourself time to pray intentionally. If your mind wanders, then extend yourself some grace, and use the model to refocus. You may choose to play worship music, to write out your prayers, and/or to try different postures like sitting, kneeling, even lying down or walking around.

The goal of using this guide is NOT to pressure or overwhelm you but to help you. The goal is to get comfortable with different biblical models of prayer, so that your prayer life can become more natural, effective, and enjoyable. What's important is committing to regularly engaging with God through prayer. While it takes discipline to develop a daily rhythm of prayer, we also want to remember that it's a "get to" not a "got to." It's a privilege to be able to come to God in prayer.

Creating A Lifestyle of Prayer

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

Prayer is most effective when it isn't something we do every now and then, but when it's a lifestyle we cultivate. To understand how to have a lifestyle of prayer, we can look at the example Jesus gave during His life on earth.

Have A Certain Time

Jesus got up early in the morning to spend time with His Heavenly Father. Make a daily appointment with God — whether it's first thing in the morning, at lunch, or in the evening — and faithfully keep it.

Have A Certain Place

Jesus had a specific place He went to pray. Having a designated place to pray helps us remove distractions and frees us to worship and pray out loud.

Have A Certain Plan

When Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, He gave them a prayer outline. We call it "The Lord's Prayer." This outline, along with several other tools, is available in this guide. As we pray every day, our plans for our prayer time can vary, maybe including worship music, Bible reading, and quiet time to listen to God. It doesn't always have to look the same; it just helps when we have a plan for connecting regularly with God.

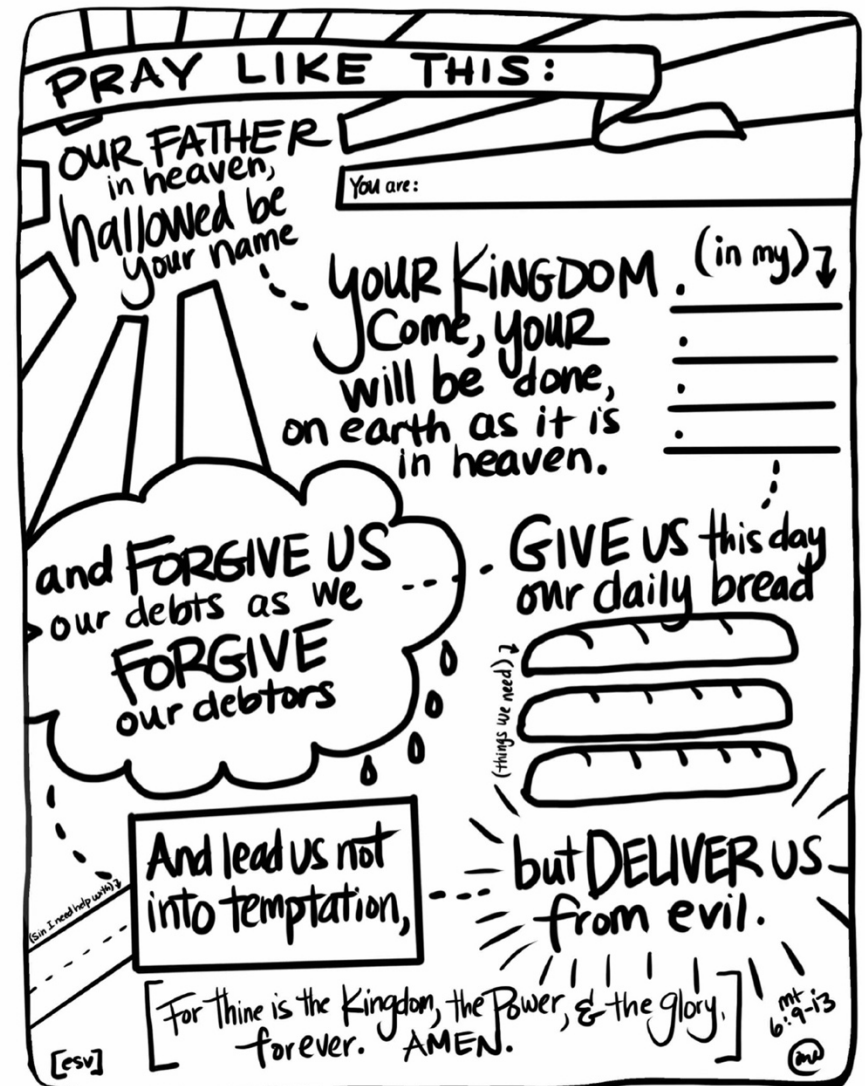
Prayer Models

The Lord's Prayer

The Lord's Prayer is often recited in churches or at religious events, and the familiar words are meaningful in those settings. It's also a model that Jesus gave us for how we can pray on our own in a way that honors God and facilitates conversation with him. As we learn the model, we can use our own words to connect with God about our lives and our world.

*"This, then, is how you should pray:
 'Our Father in heaven,
 hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come,
 your will be done,
 on earth as it is in heaven.
 Give us today our daily bread.
 And forgive us our debts,
 as we also have forgiven our debtors.
 And lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from the evil one.'"*

Matthew 6:9-13



Jesus' prayer gives us a roadmap in 5 movements: Adoration, Expectation, Petition, Pardon, and Protection.

Adoration

God isn't interested in us practicing religion; instead, He desires a relationship with us. God has adopted us as His children and loves for us to call Him our Father. Starting our prayer time acknowledging our relationship with God is powerful for us and delights Him as well.

Proclaim your intimate relationship with God, addressing Him lovingly as your Father and thanking Him that you are His child.

God loves when we worship Him, and there is power in His Name. When we proclaim who He is, we not only worship Him, but we also remind ourselves how powerful and great our God is.

Proclaim the power, greatness, and majesty of God.

Expectation

Our world is not as it should be. In our imperfect world, God's will is not always reality. But we want it to be. Part of being a child of God is caring about what He cares about. We know His will is perfect, and we acknowledge His wisdom and sovereignty when we pray His agenda first.

Spend time asking God to make our world more like he intends it to be and asking that His will, instead of our human wills, be realized.

Petition

God promises to supply all our needs, and He wants us to come to Him with our problems, needs, and desires and to trust Him to provide.

Ask God for what you need today. It may help to write down the concerns weighing on your mind or the desires of your heart. It may help to open your hands before God to physically show your surrender to Him.

Pardon

God has offered us complete forgiveness, and we can receive it at any time. When we turn away from our sins and receive His forgiveness, our hearts are more prepared to forgive others as well.

Ask God to check your heart and life and show you areas where you might need to ask for forgiveness from Him. Then, it is your turn to forgive those who have offended you. Ask God to forgive you and to help you forgive others.

Protection

We face danger from both within and without. We need to be protected from the damage and destruction that our own weaknesses, temptations, and mistakes can cause. We also need to be protected from the damage and destruction that evil can cause in our lives and in our world.

Name the temptations that threaten to cause harm, and ask God to protect you from them. Name the evil in the world, and ask God to protect others and yourself from it.

Situational Prayers

Thanksgiving Prayer

Psalm 106:1-2

We often think of prayer as asking God for something, but it's also important for prayer to be thanking God. James 1:17 says that "every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father;" so it is fitting to thank God for every good and perfect thing in our lives. When we're in a good season, then it's helpful to thank God for the good things to remind ourselves that we are not ultimately responsible for them. In difficult seasons, saying prayers of thanksgiving can open our eyes and widen our perspectives as we remember that there is always something to be thankful for.

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, NIV

As you talk to God, list things (Name specific people, events, things, situations, etc.) that you are thankful for. If you're having a hard time, then start with the basics, like the fact that you woke up today. We often take the basics for granted, and this kind of prayer refocuses us on what's really important.

PRAYER:

"Father, thank you. Thank you for being God and yet also being in my life. Thank you for loving me when I'm not very lovable, and for extending grace to me when I'm not very gracious. You are good, and you are good to me. I give you credit for these good things in my life, acknowledging that you get all of the credit, not me: (Name things that you're thankful for). Forgive me for the times that I spend all of my time wanting and asking for more and neglecting to thank you for all that I already have. Thank you. I am so grateful. Amen."

Lament Prayer

Psalm 5:1-3, Job 3:11, Matthew 27:46

Sometimes people feel uncomfortable or wrong for saying hard, painful things to God. But God is bigger than our highest positive experiences and emotions, and he's bigger than our most painful experiences and emotions. He can handle our raw heartache when we feel devastated and beyond repair.

***Listen to my words, Lord,
consider my lament.
Hear my cry for help,
my King and my God,
for to you I pray.***

Psalm 5:1-2, NIV

Give voice to your heartache and pain as you lay it out before God in prayer. Cry out to him for help while also acknowledging his goodness and holiness.

PRAYER:

"God, I am overwhelmed with pain. I cannot see how to move forward; I do not know what to do. I cannot do this on my own. I need you. I need help. I feel forgotten, forsaken, and abandoned. I know that you are still with me even when I don't sense it. Thank you for your faithfulness in all situations, even when I doubt you and don't understand what's happening. I love you. I trust you. Amen."

Repentance Prayer

Based on James 5:16; Acts 3:19, I John 1:7-9, Psalm 103:11-12

Our sin separates us from God, but Jesus made a way for us to be reunited with God by covering our sin with his death on the cross. When we accept the gift of salvation, we confess our sin, and we continue confessing our sins throughout our lives.

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

Assume a posture of humility, and without fear of condemnation or punishment, come sincerely to God confessing your sin on a regular basis. Whether your sin feels big or small, it still affects your relationship with God. After you confess, remind yourself that God separates our sin from us as far as east is separated from west.

Confession alone is good but not enough. Repentance includes confession and then moving in the opposite direction to avoid repeating the same behavior or falling into the same thoughts and feelings.

PRAYER:

"Lord Jesus, I confess all of my sins to You. I'm sorry for the wrong I have done. I confess the times I should have stepped up to do right and did nothing instead. I lay it all down at Your feet. I submit my thoughts, words, actions, and inactions to You. Thank You, God, for forgiving and making a way for me through Your Son, Jesus. I receive Your forgiveness and ask You to cleanse me from all sin. I commit to moving forward in a different direction."

Forgiveness Prayer

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

Forgiveness can feel challenging, but God makes it clear in the Bible that He freely forgives us and we are expected to do the same for others.

For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

MATTHEW 6:14-15

Come before the Lord with humility, honesty, and sincerity. Share the areas in your life where you need to forgive others. Even if you aren't able to settle a situation with that person, you can settle it with the Lord by forgiving them. As you choose to forgive those who have hurt or offended you, you can also praise and thank God for forgiving you when you didn't deserve it.

PRAYER:

"Lord, I confess that I haven't loved others well. I have resented certain people and have not forgiven them in my heart. God, I know that You have forgiven me for so much, and I need Your help to follow Your example and forgive others. I now forgive (name them). I also forgive myself, because You have made me new in the Name of Jesus."

Pride Prayer

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

The Bible tells us that pride comes before the fall. Pride can be a very real issue in our lives, but we have the power to overcome it through Jesus.

When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.

PROVERBS 11:2

Practicing humility requires overcoming pride in our lives. Just as you confess other sins, regularly confess your pride to God. Submit it to Him, asking Him to help you walk in humility, free of pride and self-absorption. If you feel like pride is an issue that continues to surface in your life, confess it daily and bring it before God.

PRAYER:

"Father God, 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 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 mix prayer with fasting.

Generational Brokenness Prayer

Based on Exodus 20:4-6; Romans 12:1-2

Generational brokenness is sin, temptations, or habits that can be passed down from generation to generation. Whether it's pride, addiction, divorce, abandonment, sexual sin, or something else, you can pray and ask Jesus to stop the sin with your generation, not passing it on to anyone else in your family.

You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

EXODUS 20:4-6

Recognize the generational bondage that might be in your life and bring it before God. Ask for His power to defeat the sin that has affected generations of your family. Ask for it to stop right now, with you. Pray for protection, healing, and a new path for you and your family.

PRAYER:

"Father God, I understand that I have inherited certain consequences from my family. Thank you for the good things I've learned and received from my family. Free me from the things that are destructive for me and others. Give me the strength and humility to leave behind pride, addiction, and anything else that is a result of sin being passed down through parents, grandparents, or other family members (If specifics come to mind, talk to God about it). I pray that it ends here and now, and that I will not pass these on to anyone in my family. Thank You, Lord, for setting me free and making a new way for me and my family."

Healing Prayer

Based on 1 Peter 2:24; Psalm 103:2-5

Our God is a God who can bring healing and wholeness where there is pain and brokenness. We can confidently approach Him asking for healing for ourselves or someone we know.

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 faith, ask God for healing. Proclaim His power and goodness, believing and trusting Him to take care of you or those you're praying to be healed.

PRAYER:

"Father, in the Name of Jesus, I come before You asking for healing (Name yourself or someone you are praying for to experience healing.). My hope is in You as our healer. I believe You are able to do this. Thank You that the Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead lives in us. I stand in faith believing in healing for (yourself or someone you're praying for). Nothing is impossible for You, God! Give us peace and direction as You work in our lives, even if it's not in the way that we desire. In Jesus's Name, Amen."

Marriage Prayer

Based on Ephesians 5:25-31

God created marriage, and His design for it is good. In marriage, just as in any human relationship, we have to work to love well. We need God, who is love Himself, to give us His Holy Spirit and to guide us in our marriage. Marriage is a picture of Jesus Christ and His bride, the Church. As Christian husbands and wives, we have the high honor to represent the love and commitment Christ has for the Church through our love and commitment to each other.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church—for we are members of his body. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."

EPHESIANS 5:25-31 NIV

Thank God for your marriage. Start by asking Him to help you be the best spouse you can be. Ask Him to help you love well and to see your spouse as He sees them. Then, pray for your marriage, asking God to use your marriage to impact the world for Him. Ask Him for protection physically, spiritually, and emotionally. Pray for unity in your marriage and wisdom from Him about how to live your lives as one. Bring to Him anything in your marriage that concerns you, and trust Him to work on your behalf.

PRAYER:

"Thank You, God, for loving us, and for creating marriage to be an illustration of Your love for us here on earth. Help me, God, to love my spouse (call them by name) the way You love me. Help me to listen to my spouse, give honor, and put my spouse before myself. Protect us physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. We ask You to build greater unity between us, make us stronger as a couple, more devoted to one another and to You. Use us together to do more than we could ever do apart. We choose as a couple to love You first, God. We put our relationship with You before anything and everything else. We confess our need for You. Thank You for bringing us together. We choose to love one another today and every day. Thank You for our marriage. We ask You to bless it, build it, and be present in it always."

Praying for Requests

Praying for “prayer requests” may be the most common form of prayer in our culture, other than saying the blessing before a meal. This is called intercessory prayer, meaning that you pray to God on behalf of someone else; you intercede for them. It’s a powerful way to care for and love someone.

You may find it helpful to write down prayer requests in a journal or keep a list on your phone. That way you can remember to actually pray for the concerns that you tell people you’ll pray for. Another benefit to having them written down is going back over the list later to see how God responded to those prayers.

When Jesus was on earth as a human, he prayed for his closest followers and friends:

I pray for them.... Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name.

John 17:9, 11 excerpts, NIV

We can follow Jesus’ simple example by naming who we are praying for and what we want God to do. His prayer gives us this model:

I pray for them...Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name.

**I pray for _____...
Holy Father, _____ them in Jesus’ name.**

PRAYER:

“God, my heart is heavy for so many people who are carrying so many burdens. I pray on behalf of them now. I pray for (Name the person.); Father please (Name what you want God to do.). [REPEAT AS NEEDED FOR MULTIPLE PRAYER REQUESTS.] I ask all of this in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

The Prayer of Jabez

Jabez cried out to the God of Israel, “Oh, that You would bless me and enlarge my territory! Let Your hand be with me, and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain.” And God granted his request.

1 CHRONICLES 4:10

The Prayer of Jabez is a helpful model of a prayer we can pray every day.

01. BLESSING

Jabez begins his prayer by asking God for His blessing. When we receive God’s blessing, we are more fully equipped to make a difference for His Kingdom. God may bless us with more provision, spiritual gifting, or wisdom, so that we can bless others with what God has given us. James 4:2-3 tells us, “You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.” God wants to bless us, but He is often waiting for us to ask with the right heart. We have a big God, and we can be bold in asking for His blessing. As James points out, God sees our heart, and when we ask for blessing with the motivation not only to help ourselves but to help others, this gets His attention.

“Oh, that You would bless me...”

1 CHRONICLES 4:10

Ask God for His blessing. Recognize your need for His provision, and set your heart toward wanting more than you need so that you can be a blessing to others.

02. INFLUENCE

Next, Jabez asks for more influence. As God's blessings increase in our lives, we ask for and experience greater opportunity to influence the world around us for Him. God has the power to open doors of opportunity for us to make a difference. We want to walk through doors that only He can open, so let us ask Him to give us more influence for His Name.

"Enlarge my territory..."

1 CHRONICLES 4:10

Pray for more influence. Knowing that God can make a way, trust in Him to open doors and lead you on the best path for your life and for His glory.

03. PRESENCE

We need God's presence in our lives. Through His power at work within us, God can do more than we could ever ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20). As we ask for blessing and influence, we also need to ask for His presence as Jabez did. We need to make sure that we are not operating out of our own strength but through the presence and the hand of our Almighty God.

"Let Your hand be with me..."

1 CHRONICLES 4:10

Pray and acknowledge your need for God's presence, asking Him to be at work in your life today.

04. PROTECTION

Finally, Jabez asks the Lord to protect him. There is harm, pain and evil in the world as a result of humanity's sin, and we are vulnerable to it. But we can pray for God to protect us and others.

"Keep me from harm"

1 CHRONICLES 4:10

Pray and tell God specific areas where you feel the need for His protection and ask Him to cover areas that you can't yet see.

Praying for People to Know God

God desires everyone to know Him. He says in His Word that He would leave the ninety-nine to go after the one who doesn't know Him. As followers of Christ, we are called to partner with Him, praying for those who don't know Him to come to know Him.

01. ASK THE FATHER TO DRAW THEM TO JESUS

God draws people to Him. It's not something we can make happen out of our own efforts, so we pray that the Father would draw those He's placed on our hearts to Jesus.

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them...

JOHN 6:44

Think about the people you know who are far from God. Let your heart be open to God and anyone He may bring to your mind. It may help to write down their names as you focus on praying for them.

PRAYER:

"Father, I pray for the following people (list specific names), that You would draw their hearts to You. Send Your Holy Spirit to them, and give them the desire to give their lives to You. Help them to recognize that their longing for more in life is a longing for You. Open their ears to hear Your voice. Amen."

02. IDENTIFY YOUR JUST ONE

As Jesus commits to going after the one, we follow his example in identifying just one person in our lives who needs to know God.

Then Jesus told them this parable: "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent."

Luke 15:3-7 NIV

Ask God to give you eyes to see the people around you as he does. Write down the names of 2-5 people who are on your heart, and ask God to give you clarity about the identify of your Just One in this season.

PRAYER:

"God, thank you for coming after me when I've lost my way. Thank you for doing that for others who are important to me (Name them.). Thank you for putting the following people in my life (Name the 2-5 who you wrote down.) Show me which one of them, or someone else, is my "Just One" in this season. Amen."

03. INVEST IN A RELATIONSHIP WITH A JUST ONE

After we identify our Just One, we then need to invest in a genuine, authentic relationship with them. We do not make people into “projects,” but rather we appreciate them as people made in the image of God, and we build real relationships with them.

While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” On hearing this, Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.

Matthew 9:10-12, NIV

Ask God to open opportunities for, and give you wisdom about, building a relationship with your Just One.

PRAYER:

“Father, you took initiative in building a relationship with me by coming to earth as Jesus. I commit to taking initiative in building a relationship with (Name your Just One.). Show me wise ways to do that, so I may be helpful and not hurtful, genuine and not judgmental. Open opportunities for us to connect, and give me courage to take advantage of those opportunities. Help me to connect with them in a way that honors and demonstrates who You are. Amen.”

04. INVITE A JUST ONE TO CHURCH

As we invest in our Just One, we also look for the right time to invite them to church—our church or another church if that’s best. Connection with a faith community is essential for spiritual growth, and we want that for our Just Ones.

The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, “Follow me.” ...Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” “Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” Nathanael asked. “Come and see,” said Philip.

John 1:43-46, NIV

Ask God to show you when and how to invite someone to go to Jesus with you.

PRAYER:

“God, thank you for always being ready to receive me as I am. Thank you for creating your church where we can experience community and come to know You through worship, teaching, and conversations. I want my Just One (Name him/her) to have that experience. Show me the right time, and give me the right approach, for inviting them to church. I commit to being faithful to your promptings, courage in following through, and gentle in my invitation. Amen.”

05. INTRODUCE A JUST ONE TO JESUS

Attending church is an important step in someone's life, but it's not enough on its own. We want our Just Ones not just to experience church but also to encounter Jesus. Jesus is the one who is capable of changing their lives.

The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus.

John 1:41-42, NIV

...Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect

1 Peter 3:15, NIV

Ask God to show you when and how to introduce someone to Jesus.

PRAYER:

"Jesus, I'm so thankful to know you. Thank you for the following person or people (Name them.) who introduced me to you. I'm forever changed in this life and in the one to come, because I know you. I pray that my Just One (Name him/her.) will also come to know you. Give me wisdom about when and how to introduce them to you. Amen."

06. PRAY FOR OTHERS TO KNOW GOD

In addition to our Just Ones, we also know other people who we want to have transformative relationships with Jesus. Sometimes we aren't the right person, in the right place, at the right time to influence them. So, we can pray for other Christians to influence the people around them positively, as we also look for opportunities to influence others beyond our Just Ones. God's plan to reach people is worked through those who already know and love Him.

Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field.

MATTHEW 9:38

We should be open to opportunities to plant spiritual seeds in the lives of the people we encounter each day. We may have no idea who has already been praying for them and the culminating impact our kind word, compassionate act, or loving attitude can have to draw someone to Christ.

PRAYER:

"Father, I pray for the lost around me to meet believers who will influence them in a positive way. Lord, let my life shine in such a way that people want to know the God I serve. Allow others to see my genuine love and concern for them in all that I say and do. Let me be Your hands and feet to serve them and let them know just how much You love them. Amen."

Personal Prayers

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 6:18, NIV

We can pray in all situations with all kinds of requests for all of the people that God has created. You are not limited by the categories below; rather, they are designed to get you started and maybe to prompt you to pray for people who you might not think of on your own.

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. Pray for those in your family and your circle of influence (anyone you're connected to). Write down the names of specific people and pray for them.

AUTHORITY FIGURES

- International leaders and situations
- National leaders and situations
- State leaders and situations
- Local leaders and situations

MY FAMILY

- My husband or wife
- My parents
- My brother(s) and/or sister(s)
- My grandparents
- My extended family
- My son(s) and/or daughter(s)
- Family friends

MY CHURCH

- PCC Kids
- PCC Students
- PCC Church leaders, including my campus leaders, my Dream Team leader, my small group leader, and leaders of other campuses and ministries
- My friends at church, including my fellow Dream Team members and my fellow Small Group members
- The Dream Team of volunteers who make PCC happen every week
- The other campuses (Powhatan, Midlothian, Riverside, Online, Farmville, Nottoway, Aylett, VCCW)
- Pastors and leaders of other churches

MY LIFE

- My Career or Calling
- My employer and/or employee(s)
- My (or my kid's) teachers or professors
- My friends
- My feelings. I am currently experiencing these emotions: anger, depression,
- My dreams
- My worries

Praying Scripture

The Word of God is one of the most valuable tools we have to build a dynamic daily prayer life. It brings power, truth, and encouragement to our prayer time. You don't have to come up with all of the words to pray all on your own. You can use the words already written in the Bible as prompts for how to pray. Read through the samples below, and use them as models of prayer.

01. Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters, He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for His name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely Your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

PRAYER:

"God, You are my Provider, and I know You will take care of me. Thank You for guiding me to places of rest. You are my source of energy and passion. You keep me going and lead me toward a life of purpose and freedom. I know that even when I experience my darkest seasons of difficulty and challenge, I have nothing to be afraid of because You are with me. Your presence and power are a constant comfort to me. I know that You are preparing the way for me and that my enemies cannot touch me because You are taking care of me. I know that You have blessed me, and I thank You for choosing me and anointing me with purpose. Your blessings are so much more than I could ask for. I know that You are good, God, and that You are with me all the days of my life."

02. James 4:8

Come near to God and He will come near to you .

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.”

03. Psalm 139:23-34

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.

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. Lead me to live a life that draws people to You. Help me live my life on earth in a way that impacts eternity.”

04. Matthew 6:33

But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

PRAYER:

“Your Word tells me that if I seek first Your Kingdom and Your righteousness, You will lead me to a life of blessing, purpose, and freedom. I am Yours today, God, and I give this day to You. Help me to focus on Your priorities first, sharing Your love and making Your Name known. I know that by focusing on You rather than myself, I will receive joy and peace.”

05. 2 Timothy 1:7

For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.

PRAYER:

“Father, I know You have not given me a spirit of fear or timidity, but one of power, love, and self-discipline. Forgive me when I live timidly. Please renew my spirit and let power, love, and self-discipline fill me. Help me to look more like You every day.”

06. Romans 8:28

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.

PRAYER:

“God, You promise me in Your Word that in all things You work for my good. Right now, there are circumstances in my life that don't feel good, and that I can't see an ounce of good in (talk to God about the specific situations that are causing you difficulty or pain). Even though this is how I feel, I choose to believe Your truth over my feelings. Even in situations that seem hopeless, I know You are working on my behalf and that You want more for me than I could ever want for myself. Thank You for having a purpose for me and for working all my life circumstances for good.”

07. Romans 8:38-39

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

PRAYER:

"God, I am in awe of Your love for me. You are so great, and I am so small, yet You love me fully. I remind my soul today that nothing can separate me from Your love—I am so grateful! There is nothing I can do to win or lose Your love; You love me without condition. I can live confidently and peacefully knowing I have always been, and will always be, fully loved by You."

08. Philippians 4:6-7

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

PRAYER:

"Father, my heart feels anxious (tell God what is giving you anxiety). I don't like this feeling, but I'm thankful I can come to You and receive peace. Even though my mind and heart are racing, I'm coming to You knowing that You provide healing and calm for my soul. I lay down all worries, all my physical and mental anxiety, and any attempt at trying to control it all (tell Him the things you are laying down right now). I surrender it all to You. I need Your peace that transcends my human understanding. Even if things are unstable around me, I pray that Your peace will be evident in my heart and my life. Guard my heart and mind, God."

09. Jeremiah 29:11-13

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

PRAYER:

"My God, I try to make so many plans for my life, but I know Your plans for me are best. Thank You for loving me enough to have a plan for my life. You have promised me that when I call on You, You will listen to me. Thank You for listening when I pray. I am confident knowing that I serve a God who cares about my life. I want to find You every day, and You say that if I seek You with all my heart, I will find You. Thank You for showing me the way to You. I lay my plans down at Your feet and receive Your plans for me (mention your plans and lay them down before God). I trust You, and I ask You to guide me toward Your plans."

10. Hebrews 13:5

"Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

PRAYER:

"Father, I am so comforted by the fact that You will never leave me. You are always with me. As I go through my life and take on each new situation, I'm comforted by knowing I'm not alone because You are by my side. Help me feel Your presence. When I feel uncertain or afraid, I pray You will comfort me through Your Holy Spirit and remind me that I am never alone."

11. Matthew 11:28-30

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

PRAYER:

“Lord Jesus, I am so tired and worn out (tell God the areas that you’re tired and weary). I feel exhausted mentally and physically. Life feels hard, and I feel like I can’t keep up my current pace. You invite me to come to You when I am weary, and I fall at Your feet desperate for rest, peace, and perspective. Show me where I am trying to do things on my own. Show me where I need to rest instead of strive. Teach me Your ways. Show me how to walk in gentleness, humility, and rest.”

12. Psalm 91:1-2

Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.”

PRAYER:

“God, I am so grateful that I can find rest in your shadow and refuge in your presence. You are my God, and I trust You. When I face anything that brings me uncertainty or fear (confess these things to Him), I know that I can come to You as my safe place. Thank You for Your strength and protection in my life.”

Appendix of Additional Prayers

Lectio Divina

This prayerful approach to reading the Bible includes 5 steps:

Step 1:

SELECT A SCRIPTURE PASSAGE upon which to reflect. God will often direct you to a certain book or passage of the bible.

Step 2:

READ THE PASSAGE out loud two or three times. The first time, just get a feel for it. When you read it a second time, take note of the word, words, or phrase to which your attention is being drawn. Perhaps God is drawing your attention to something in particular...

We can trust that God is always speaking to us through his Word. Re-reading the passage a third time can also help solidify which phrases or ideas are jumping out at us. Sometimes a word stands out clearly while at other times the experience may be more subtle. It may come later or not at all, and that's okay.

Step 3:

REFLECT ON THE WORD OR PHRASE that stood out to you. Maybe you have a journal that you can use to answer questions like, "How is God speaking to me through this word or phrase? Is there an invitation or a call? Does a memory surface?" Sometimes we may experience certain feelings or have an impression or image of something. During this step, take your time and allow God to speak to you.

Step 4:

RESPOND TO GOD. How do you want to respond to what God is saying to you? What is your prayer? Allow your words to come from a place deep within you... where the Spirit dwells.

Step 5:

REST. This kind of rest involves quieting your mind, being still, and simply presenting yourself before God... Savor the silence. Connect with His Presence deep in your soul.

The Daily Examen

Ignatius of Loyola developed a prayer exercise to use daily. Consider using this once a day; it's especially designed for the end of the day.

Step 1:

GIVE THANKS for the good and perfect aspects of your day.

Step 2:

INVITE THE HOLY SPIRIT to be at work while you pray, revealing truth to you, and giving you wisdom as you pray.

Step 3:

REVIEW YOUR DAY, noting any failures or mistakes.

Step 4:

ASK GOD TO FORGIVE you for the things you realized and named in Step 3.

Step 5:

LOOK TO TOMORROW, asking for God to be at work in the moments you anticipate.