

A REFLECTION ON PRAYER

How to Deepen Your Prayer Life

Honest, unhurried ways to meet God in everyday conversation

Simplify to Glorify

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

How to Use This Guide

Whatever season you are in, you are welcome here. There is nothing to perform and nothing to fix. This is simply a quiet place to meet God where you are.

Read slowly. Take one day or one section at a time, or return to the part that matters most to you right now. There is no wrong way to use this.

How to Deepen Your Prayer Life

If you have ever finished a prayer wondering whether you did it right, you are in good company. Maybe your prayers feel clumsy lately, or like words you are sending up into a quiet room. Maybe you have stopped praying as much as you once did, and you are not sure how to begin again.

Here is what I want you to know first. A deeper prayer life does not start with better words. It starts with remembering who is listening, and that He is glad you came.

Prayer is a conversation, not a performance

Even Jesus, who was God in the flesh, made room to step away and pray. When the crowds grew and the demands piled up, He did not push through on His own strength. He slipped away to quiet places to be with His Father, again and again.

But Jesus Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray.

Luke 5:16

If the Son of God made room for honest, unhurried prayer, then you are not weak for needing it too. Prayer was never meant to be something you pass or fail. It is a conversation with a Father who already knows your heart and welcomes the sound of your voice.

Begin with thanks, and ask plainly

A gentle place to start is simply with *thank You*. Not because God needs flattery, but because remembering what He has already carried you through steadies your heart for whatever you are facing now.

Then ask for what you actually need, in plain words. We often hesitate to bring God the small things, as if He were too busy, and we try to fix the big things ourselves before we ever think to pray. Yet Scripture is honest that we have not because we ask not. Your Father is not bothered by your needs. He delights to be asked.

Pray His will, and come with a clean heart

There will be seasons when you do not know what to pray for, when right and wrong feel tangled and the road ahead is unclear. In those moments it is enough to pray as Jesus prayed in the garden, *not My will, but Yours*. The safest place you can stand is inside the will of a God who loves you.

It also helps to come honestly, with nothing tucked away. If your prayers feel like they are bouncing off the ceiling, it is worth quietly asking God to show you anything that has come between you and Him. He is not waiting to shame you. He is waiting to forgive.

You were never meant to pray alone

Some of the most powerful prayers happen when two tired people simply agree together before God. If you do not have a prayer partner, finding one trusted friend to pray with may be the gentlest gift you give yourself this year.

It also helps to pray the Scriptures back to God, letting His own words shape your asking when your own run dry. And on the days you have no words at all, take heart. The Spirit Himself prays for you, in groans too deep for language, when you cannot manage a single sentence.

He is nearer than your best words

You do not have to tidy up your prayers before you bring them. You do not have to feel a certain way or sound a certain way for God to lean in and listen.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and pleading with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7

So begin again tonight, in whatever words you have. The God who slipped away to pray, and who hears the groans you cannot put into language, is not grading your prayer. He is simply glad you came.

More Ways to Pray

Prayer has never been one-size-fits-all. Across the centuries, Christians have found many doors into the same conversation, and you are free to try each of them until you find the ones that fit your season. None of these earn you anything. They simply give your heart more ways to turn toward Him.

Pray the pattern Jesus gave

When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, He did not hand them a technique. He gave them a pattern, the prayer we now call the Lord's Prayer.

Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father, who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.'

Matthew 6:9

You can pray it word for word, slowly, letting each phrase land. Or you can let each line open a door of its own: calling God Father, honoring His name, welcoming His will, asking for today's bread, making peace over yesterday's debts, and asking for help with what is coming. One line can hold a whole morning.

Notice where the prayer begins. Before a single request, Jesus teaches you to say *Father*. Whatever you bring today, you are bringing it to a parent who wanted to be asked. Some women pray one petition each day of the week and find that by Saturday they have prayed about everything that matters. There is no wrong pace. The pattern is a handrail, not a script.

Pray the Psalms

When your own words run dry, the Psalms will lend you theirs. This was the prayer book Jesus Himself grew up praying, and it has carried believers for three thousand years.

Trust in Him at all times, you people; Pour out your hearts before Him; God is a refuge for us. Selah.

Psalms 62:8

Whatever your heart is holding, some psalmist has carried it before you. On the weary days, reach for Psalm 23. When you are sorry, Psalm 51 will say it with you, and when the night feels unsafe, Psalm 91 was written for exactly that. Read one out loud, slowly, making its lines your own as you go. And where the psalmist says *my shepherd*, you are allowed to mean it about yourself.

Do not worry when a psalm says something rawer than you would dare to. That is part of the gift. The Psalms prove that honest anger, fear, and even complaint belong inside prayer, because they have been inside Scripture all along.

Keep small hours

Daniel knelt to pray three times a day, and believers ever since have found that a few fixed moments keep the conversation from getting lost in the noise. Even Jesus kept a protected hour.

And in the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and prayed there.

Mark 1:35

You do not need a monastery. Grace at meals, a verse with the morning coffee, one quiet minute before the light goes out. It helps to let each small hour lean on something you already do every day, so the praying borrows strength from a rhythm you already keep.

You do not have to begin with three. One small moment, kept gently, is a lovely place to start, and it will make room for the others when you are ready. Small hours, faithfully kept, become a life of prayer without ever feeling like a program.

Breath prayers when your day is busy

A breath prayer is a sentence small enough to ride on one breath, prayed as often as you remember it. *Lord Jesus, have mercy on me* has been prayed this way for nearly two thousand years.

pray without ceasing,

1 Thessalonians 5:17

This is how ceaseless prayer becomes possible for a woman with a full calendar. You pray at the red light, in the school pickup line, while the kettle boils, with your hand on a doorknob before a hard conversation. The day does not have to stop for prayer when prayer has learned to ride along with the day.

You can also write your own. Breathe in: *You are near*. Breathe out: *I am Yours*. Or borrow a line of Scripture and split it across the breath, in: *The Lord is my shepherd*, out: *I shall not want*. Choose one for the season you are in, and let it keep finding you all day long.

Listen, too

Prayer is a conversation, and conversations have two sides. Now and then, end your asking early and sit quietly with a single question: *Lord, what do You want me to notice?*

Search me, God, and know my heart; Put me to the test and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there is any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way.

Psalm 139:23-24

Do not grade what happens next. Sometimes a verse surfaces, sometimes a name, sometimes nothing you can describe. Keep a journal nearby and write down whatever seems worth keeping, then test it gently against Scripture, because God does not contradict His own Word.

If the silence feels awkward at first, you are in good company. Most of us have to relearn how to be quiet with someone we love. Start with two minutes. Silence is not empty when Someone is in it.

Sing it

Singing may be the most underused door into prayer there is. David did not only speak his prayers. He sang them, in every kind of season.

I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul will make its boast in the Lord; The humble will hear it and rejoice.

Psalm 34:1-2

A hymn hummed over the dishes is a prayer. So is the worship song you keep on repeat in the car. The old hymns carry an extra grace: when you sing *Great Is Thy Faithfulness*, you are praying words that have steadied generations of tired believers before you, and their faith gets to carry yours for a verse or two.

Keep a short list of songs that turn your heart toward God, and reach for it on the days your speaking voice has nothing left. Let your singing voice take a turn.

Praying With and For Others

Prayer deepens in company. The believers in the book of Acts prayed together constantly, and some of what God means to give you in prayer arrives only through other people.

Keep a simple prayer list

Write the names and needs you carry down the margin of a page, and pray through a few each day. Leave room beside each one, because the day will come when you write down how God answered, and few things build faith like rereading that column. There is a page for this at the end of this booklet.

Pray Scripture over the people you love

When you want sturdier words than your worry can produce, place a name inside a verse. Pray Philippians 4:6-7 with your daughter's name in it, or Numbers 6:24-26 over a friend before her hard appointment. You are not inventing the blessing. You are delivering one God already wrote.

Pray out loud, even alone

There is something about hearing your own voice that steadies a wandering mind. You do not need eloquence, and no one is listening but the One who loves you. Praying out loud on the drive to work has carried many a tired woman through a season the quiet could not.

Join fasting to a heavy prayer

When a matter weighs more than usual, Christians have long joined prayer to a small fast, skipping one meal or one comfort and letting the empty space remind them to pray. This is not a hunger strike to move God's hand. It is a way of telling Him, with your body, that this matter is weighty to you, and of making room to hear Him in it.

Pray with your household

Grace at dinner counts. So does one honest sentence each at bedtime, or a quick prayer in the car before the school doors open. Children learn to pray by hearing tired, honest grown-ups do it imperfectly. Your unpolished family prayers may be the deepest theology lesson your house ever gets.

Ways In: A Quick Reference

There is no right door into prayer, only the one nearest you today. Tuck this page somewhere you will find it again, and when one way wears thin for a season, simply try another. The Father behind every door is the same.

WAY TO PRAY	WHEN IT HELPS	AN ANCHOR
The Lord's Prayer	When you need a trusted pattern	Matthew 6:9-13
Praying the Psalms	When your own words run dry	Psalms 62:8
Breath prayers	In the middle of a busy day	1 Thessalonians 5:17
ACTS – adore, confess, thank, ask	When the page feels too open	Hebrews 4:16
Listening silence	When you have said it all	Psalms 46:10
A prayer walk	When sitting still is hard	Psalms 19:1
A prayer list	When you carry many people	James 5:16
Scripture over loved ones	When you want sturdy words	Philippians 4:6-7
Singing and hymns	When your heart needs lifting	Colossians 3:16
Fasting with prayer	When a matter feels weighty	Matthew 6:17-18
Praying with a friend	When your faith feels thin	Matthew 18:19-20
One-word prayers	When you are simply worn out	Romans 8:26

My Prayer List

Write the names and needs you are carrying, and leave the last column open. Coming back to fill it in is one of the quiet joys of a praying life.

NAME OR NEED	WHEN I BEGAN	HOW GOD ANSWERED

AS YOU PRAY THROUGH IT

Father, these are the people and burdens I am carrying to You. Thank You that You hear every name, including the ones I can only sigh. Amen.

A Week of Praying Differently

Pick a different way in each day this week, from the quick reference page. There is no grade at the end. It is simply a walk through the library of prayer, finding the rooms where you breathe easiest.

DAY	A WAY I WILL TRY	HOW IT MET ME
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

AT WEEK'S END

Lord, thank You for every door that leads to You. Show me which of these to keep, and meet me in it again tomorrow. Amen.

More Resources

When prayer feels hard or far away, these passages gently teach you how to come. Return to them slowly, on the days you are not sure what to say.

Luke 5:16

Jesus stepped away from the crowds to pray, showing that prayer is relationship before it is duty.

Matthew 6:9-13

Jesus gives the pattern for honest, unhurried prayer that begins by addressing the Father.

Philippians 4:6-7

Bring every worry to God with thanksgiving, and His peace will guard your heart and mind.

Romans 8:26

When you do not know what to pray, the Spirit Himself intercedes for you with wordless groans.

James 5:16

Confess honestly and pray for one another, for the prayer of a righteous person accomplishes much.

Matthew 7:7

Ask, seek, and knock, and trust that your Father in heaven hears and answers His children.

Notes

A Note Before You Go

However these pages found you, I am so glad they did. Please know that nothing on your worst day disqualifies you from being deeply loved by God.

If you would like to keep going, my journals, scripture cards, and devotionals are gentle companions for longer seasons — grief, caregiving, depression, and more. You can find them at simplifytoglorify.com.

With love and prayers,

Carla

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