

RE → FOCUS

21 DAYS OF PRAYER AND FASTING

What Is Prayer?

Prayer is communicating with God. Whether talking or listening, to pray is to approach the Almighty with the intention of communing with Him. E.M. Bounds says it this way, “Prayer is a divine arrangement in the moral government of God designed for the benefit of men and women intended as a means for furthering the interests of His cause on earth and carrying out His gracious purposes in redemption and providence.” He also says that, “Prayer is a direct address to God that secures blessings and makes us better because it reaches the ear of God.”

What are the purposes of prayer?

- To allow us to know God more intimately
- To nourish our souls
- To help us fight our battles
- To help us align ourselves with the heart of God (Psalm 37:4)

Verses on Prayer:

- [Ephesians 6:18](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 5:16-18](#)
- [Colossians 4:2](#)
- [1 John 5:14](#)
- [Psalm 145:18](#)
- [Hebrews 4:16](#)
- [Matthew 6:6](#)
- [James 5:16](#)

9 Steps of Prayer:

1. Be still in God’s presence. Relax and breathe. Focus your mind on the Lord.
2. Acknowledge the presence of the Holy Spirit and confess your need for Him to draw near to you.
3. Begin with Praise. Tell God who He is. Speak His attributes out loud to Him.
4. Come to God with a pure heart. Be honest and open with God. Confess your sins to the Lord. Ask Him to reveal any unconfessed or unknown sin to you.
5. Confess your need for and dependence upon the Lord.
6. Thank God for His blessings and work in your life.
7. Speak your petitions to the Lord. Tell Him your needs and the needs of others.
8. Listen to God. Ask Him to reveal Himself and His will to you.
9. Write any impressions or reflections in your prayer journal. Make note of anyone or anything God has brought to your mind.

What is Praise and Adoration?

First, let's define praise. Praise or Adoration is telling and acknowledging God as holy, telling Him who He is, reminding yourself and God of His attributes and character. A good way to learn to praise God in your prayers is to simply begin by completing this sentence:

Lord You are _____. Simply tell the Lord who He is.

To help you get started, compile a list of attributes and names of God that describe God's character. For example: Faithful, Just, Forgiving, Loving, Truth, Light of the World, Joy, Bread of Life, Merciful, Kind, etc.

Why is Praise the most important aspect of prayer?

- Praise puts God in His rightful position.
As we praise God, we declare His sovereignty and recognize His nature and power.
- Praise shifts our focus from self to God.
Not a list of wants (selfish)
Praise is unselfish and helps us centralize our thoughts and place them on God.
- Praise is practical. It helps us realize God's power to answer our petitions.
As we realize God and all that He is, it gives us confidence to pray big prayers of faith.
It helps us remember who God is.
- Praise sparks victory!
2 Chronicles 20
Praise sends the enemy running.

What Is Confession?

In his book, *The Hour That Changes the World*, Dick Eastman defines confession as, "the act of declared admission." In essence, when we confess as a form of prayer, we speak truth to God about the reality of ourselves in light of who He is. The Greek meaning of the word *confess* that we find in the New Testament means, "to agree with God." We agree with God when we speak the truth about ourselves, and the truth about God.

Often, we think of confession as just a verbal accounting of the things we've done wrong. And though this is a part of confession, it is not the whole. It is vitally important that we give an account of our wrong doings and hear ourselves say them. It somehow makes our sins more real and shows us the depravity of our own sick hearts. But confession is more than this.

Confession becomes more when we confess that Jesus is Lord and tell Him and others of His greatness. It becomes more than a list of missteps when we declare that He is our all-powerful, creator and give verbal admission to our need for God and to our dependency upon Him. When we tell Jesus that we long for heaven and express our undying gratitude for the fact that His

justice coupled with His grace and mercy saves us from an eternity without Him, we are making confession less about ourselves and more about Him. This is Christ-like confession, always pointing others away from ourselves and toward our Savior.

The great theologian, Andrew Murray once said, “God cannot hear the prayers on our lips often because the desires of our heart after the world cry out to Him much more strongly and loudly than our desires for Him.” Our hearts, minds, souls, and our lips need to get to a place of “Christ-confession” – that is of vocalizing our love and passion for Him, admitting the depth of our depravity without Him, and declaring our unwavering affection and gratitude for Him.

What Is Thanksgiving?

In his book, *What’s So Amazing About Grace?*, Philip Yancey says, “If we comprehend what Christ has done for us, then surely out of gratitude we will strive to live 'worthy' of such great love.” Are you thankful for the blessings of God? Does your heart overflow with words of gratitude for Jesus and what He has done for us? For the Christian, thanksgiving should not be merely the last Thursday in November, but rather a life-long perspective that causes us to verbalize daily our gratitude for the favor and faithfulness of God in our lives.

Thanksgiving, as a part of prayer, should never be an afterthought. It should emerge from the overflow of a life that has been touched by the grace of God and His Son, Jesus. As we ponder what Christ has done for us, and the blessings we have received as a result of being adopted as sons and daughters of the King of Heaven, words of gratitude should pour from our lips. No matter what circumstance we face, no matter the depth of our sorrow, there is always something for which we can be thankful, because there is always within our reach our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!* – Psalm 107:1

Recommended Books on Prayer

- [*The Hours that Changes the World*, Dick Eastman](#)
- [*The Pursuit of God*, A. W. Tozer](#)
- [*With Christ in the School of Prayer*, Andrew Murray](#)
- [*31 Days of Praise*, Ruth Myers](#)
- [*A Praying Life*, Paul Miller](#)
- [*A 12-Month Guide to Better Prayer*, Barbour Publishing](#)
- [*Fervent*, Priscilla Shirer](#)
- [*Praying the Attributes of God*, Rosemary Jensen](#)
- [*E. M. Bounds on Prayer*, E. M. Bounds](#)
- [*Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*, Time Keller](#)

How to Pray Scripture

The following resource is meant to serve as a guide for you to use the Scriptures and what God has communicated through his Word as a means of communicating back to Him in prayer. In each section, you'll find step-by-step instructions for how to pray the Scriptures, as well as, an example that will walk you through John 15:5.

1) Read the verse/passage a few times. Take your time, going through it slowly.

"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." – John 15:5

2) Write down any truths you observe from the passage. You can ask yourself questions like:

- What does this passage teach me about God?
- What does this passage reveal about me?
- How does it impact the way I live?

- *God is the vine*
- *I am the branch*
- *Whoever abides in God bears fruit*
- *I can do nothing apart from God*

3) Now, change the wording of those statements into phrases you can say to God (You can think of them as one-line prayers)

- *God, you are the vine*
- *Lord, I am one of your branches*
- *Whoever abides in you bears fruit*
- *I can't do anything without you, God.*

4) Take a moment to still your mind and heart, thinking about these truths and how they impact your life. Allow them to lead you to fellowship with God, communicating with Him about what He has communicated to you through His Word.

Father, you are the vine and I am a branch. Your Word has told me that I can't do anything without you. My ability to bear fruit in life is completely dependent on my ability to stay connected to you. Thank you that I can stay connected to you by your Spirit and through your Word. As I go throughout my day today, keep me connected to you. Keep me from being distracted with other things and help me focus my mind and my heart on you.

Other Resources on Praying Scripture:

<https://www.thenivbible.com/blog/how-to-pray-scripture/>

http://www.stonecroft.org/wp-content/uploads/old/Praying_Scripture.pdf

Praying Scripture Resource by Austin Anderson. Used with permission.