



Breath prayer is a good example of “praying without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17) It is a very short prayer of praise or petition - six to eight syllables at most. The words of the prayer can be easily adjusted to your heart’s desire.

Known as the “Jesus Prayer” or “Prayer of the Heart,” early practitioners would repeat to the rhythm of their breath the phrase, “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.” In time, the prayer was shortened to, “Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy” or simply, “Jesus, mercy.” “Jesus,” as you breathe in; “mercy,” as you breathe out.

You may adjust the words of the prayer as you choose. For example, as you breathe in, use your favorite name for God such as Lord, Jesus, Spirit, Creator, etc. As you breathe out, use a word/phrase that expresses the need/desire of your heart, such as “lead me,” “remake me,” “I am Yours,” etc.

There’s no limit to developing your breath prayer. It may be the same from day to

day or it may change.

The breath prayer is usually said silently within. But some people sing it; others chant it. It can be used during your regular prayer time; during nighttime sleeplessness; during times of high stress; anytime. It’s your prayer; use it your way.

Begin with a few minutes and gradually increase the time to 15 or 20 minutes as you become disciplined with the prayer. You may want to use a timer to free yourself from watching the clock. Some find it useful to write in a journal of their experience with the prayer.

Sample Breath Prayers

Jesus, let me feel your love.

O Lord Show me your way.

Holy one, heal me.

Jesus Alleluia, have mercy.

Holy Wisdom, Guide me.

Father/Mother (Abba/Amma), let me feel your presence.

For a more detailed explanation and additional ideas for breath prayer, see

<https://gravitycenter.com/practice/breath-prayer/>