

# Praying God's Word

adapted from <http://www.prayingscriptures.com>

Would you like your prayers to be more powerful? Pray the Scriptures! Hebrews 4:12 says that *God's Word is alive and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword*. When we speak and pray the Scriptures, we are coming into agreement with God, and His power is released to answer our prayers. Praying the Scriptures guides you to the will of God in your prayers.

Maybe you feel like God doesn't hear your prayers? Or maybe you don't know what to pray for in certain situations. Scriptures such as 1John 5:14 tell us we can have confidence in God. Not only does He hear our prayers, but He also promises to answer them when we pray in line with His will. He hastens to perform His Word!

## Benefits of Praying the Scriptures

Praying the Scriptures will increase your spiritual growth. You actually learn what God says about certain situations, and by praying His Word you will see His results.

Praying Scripture Prayers also is a great way to memorize Scripture and to hide the Word of God in your heart!

## Tips for Praying the Word

by John Piper

1. Realize that there is a direct connection between the degree to which our minds are shaped by Scripture and the degree to which our prayers are answered. Jesus said, "If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you" (John 15:7).
2. Remember that, as D. M. M'Intyre says, God only answers petitions that his Son has had a hand in formulating. "If we ask anything according to his will he hears us" (1 John 5:14).
3. Note that the early church prayed Scripture. For example, the prayer of Acts 4:24–30 quotes Psalm 2. Also Old Testament prayers like Ezra's prayer in Nehemiah 9:6–37 are rehearsals of biblical history and biblical texts.
4. Praying the Word means reading (or reciting) Scripture in a spirit of prayer and letting the meaning of the verses become our prayer and inspire our thoughts.
5. There are many possible ways to do it, not just one. It can be done alone or in groups. You can pause after each phrase, or each sentence, or each paragraph, or each chapter.

6. I would suggest the following procedure as a starter:

Find a quiet time and place.

Begin with a brief prayer like, “O Lord, I need you, I come seeking you and needing help. Open my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of the word” (Psalm 119:18).

Read a chapter of an epistle quickly to get the gist of it. The reason for this is that the meaning of the individual sentences is controlled by their context. We must not make a verse mean anything we like.

If anything has “jumped out” as especially relevant to you, dwell on it and let it inspire and shape your prayer even before you go back to read a sentence at a time.

If you bump into difficulties you can’t understand, make a mental note of it for later thought and research. Be honest. But then move on to what does seem clear.

Now go back to the first sentence and read it with the question: If this sentence were to become a prayer about my life, what would it sound like? It may convict you and lead you to a prayer of confession and repentance. It may inspire you to pursue a new act of obedience and lead to a prayer for power and enablement.

Try running the verse through your day and seeing its relation to breakfast and work and leisure plans. Try seeing it in relation to different people at home, work, and church. You will find one verse can produce a half hour of prayer when viewed from a dozen different situations and relationships.

Try to build biblical ways of speaking into your head and heart. Especially important here is the need to enrich our vocabulary of praise. The psalms are great for this.

If this all seems difficult, try the simplest form of praying Scripture first; namely, praying Scripture prayers, like Acts 4:24–30; Ephesians 1:16–23; 3:14–19; Philippians 1:9–11; Colossians 1:9–14; 1 Thessalonians 3:11–13; Hebrews 13:20–21; Revelation 4:8, 11; 5:9–10, 12–14, etc.

All you need to do here is pretend that you are the biblical author and then read it as your own, perhaps changing some pronouns.

If you have a list of concerns that you want to pray for, read the chapter a third time for clues as to how these things should be prayed for.