

DISCOVERY SERIES

# LET'S PRAY

Talking to God with the Words of the Bible



**James Banks**



*introduction*

## Let's Pray

Talking to God with the Words of  
the Bible

**T**he prayers of the Bible are an amazing gift from God and have much to teach us. They help us understand how Jesus, Job, Moses, David, Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Mary, Peter, Paul, and many others talked with God.

These prayers can also help us talk to God. Just as Jesus used several of the David's prayers in His final moments on the cross (see MATT. 27:46 cf.

PSALM 22:1 and LUKE 23:46 cf. PSALM 31:5), we too can find in the prayers of Scripture, words that can help carry our thoughts and emotions to God.

When we use the prayers from God's Word humbly and expectantly to encourage us in our own prayers, we open our hearts and lives to deeper faith, renewed strength, fresh blessings, and God's power.

God invites us closer to Him through the prayers of the Bible. His Spirit "helps us in our weakness" (ROM. 8:26). As we pray God's Word from our hearts, the Holy Spirit breathes new life into our prayers and into us.

*James Banks*

# *contents*

## *one*

### **Prayers to Praise and Honor God . . . . 5**

## *two*

### **Prayers to Confess Sin and Humble Ourselves . . . . . 11**

## *three*

### **Prayers About Everyday Needs . . . . 17**

## *four*

### **Prayers for Guidance and Direction . . . . . 23**

## *five*

### **Prayers to Say Thank You . . . . . 27**

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***Note to our readers:***

An **asterisk** (\*) at the end of a prayer means that pronouns in the Scripture verse have been changed to help the reader personally apply the prayer.

The word "**from**" before a verse reference indicates that a *portion* of the verse has been used.



*one*

## Prayers to Praise and Honor God

**N**ot far from my home is a place of local legend called Sennett's Hole. A quarter-mile hike through the woods takes you there to a picturesque bend in the Eno River framed by granite rocks and old-growth trees.

Locals say it was the site of a mill in the 1700s and that the pioneer who built the mill lost his life in the waters' depths when spring floods turned the river into a torrent. More than a few people have been caught in swift currents that converge where the river bends, evidenced by the search-and-rescue teams that show up every so often.

But most days, calmer waters beckon. One sweltering

summer afternoon the cooling depths called me and my 13-year-old son down the trail to the water's edge, our 110-pound black Lab "Bear" happily trotting along beside us.

On the far side of the river a rope hangs from a solid old sycamore, offering relief for a swing and a leap. While Bear and Geoff hopped from boulder to boulder on the water's edge, I swam to the rope swing and called out to let them know I was there.

As soon as Bear heard my voice, he leaped into the river and began to paddle the distance, just under the length of a football field. I swung from the rope and swam out to meet him. We crossed the rest of the way together. ▀

That afternoon taught me a lesson in love. At the sound of my voice, a dog dared a leap and a long and potentially dangerous swim. I loved him for it, and it made me wonder. If a dog's daring love for me made my heart go out to him, how much more does our flawless heavenly Father (in whose image we're made) respond when we dare to delight ▀ in Him?

▀ **Love prompts action.** *This reflects what God did for us in the incarnation. Because of love and for the sake of restoring relationship God, in the person of Jesus, came near. Psalm 37:4 tells us that as we delight in the Lord He awakens desires within us that reflect His heart.*

True praise—praise with an active faith that is greater than only emotion—is a daring thing. It challenges us to leave old paths of the human heart behind and reach for something beyond ourselves, giving ourselves up to

God. Praising God doesn't come naturally to me. My struggle is with self—a dangerous current that runs strong and deep in my heart. Sure, the Bible tells me to “always be joyful,” “never stop praying,” and that it's God's will” that I “be thankful in all circumstances” (1 THESS. 5:16-18), but there are times I just don't feel like it. Still, by the grace of God, ever so slowly I'm learning delight isn't just something you feel—it's something you do.

God's Word commands us to “take delight” in Him. The words in Psalm 37:4 are in the imperative. The command confronts us in our complacency and calls us to a higher way of thinking. That isn't easy—it costs us something. But even though it begins as work, it doesn't end that way.

God never leaves us where we are. With every effort we make to draw near, we're promised He will come close to us (JAMES 4:8). Dare to delight in God and He not only gives you your heart's desire, He *becomes* it. The following pages are filled with the Spirit-inspired praises of God's people. Make them your own and you'll never regret it. Dive in and pray these prayers, and it won't be long till you discover that God is moving to meet you.



***“True praise challenges us to leave old paths of the human heart behind and reach for something beyond ourselves, giving ourselves up to God.”***



# PRAYERS

## ***No one is stronger than you!***

Your right hand, O LORD, is glorious in power. Your right hand, O LORD, smashes the enemy. In the greatness of your majesty, you overthrow those who rise against you. You unleash your blazing fury; it consumes them like straw. —EXODUS 15:6-7

## ***You created everything!***

Let all that I am praise the LORD. O LORD my God, how great you are! You are robed with honor and majesty. You are dressed in a robe of light. You stretch out the starry curtain of the heavens; you lay out the rafters of your home in the rain clouds. You make the clouds your chariot; you ride upon the wings of the wind. The winds are your messengers; flames of fire are your servants. You placed the world on its foundation so it would never be moved. You clothed the earth with floods of water, water that covered even the mountains. At your command, the water fled; at the sound of your thunder, it hurried away. Mountains rose and valleys sank to the levels you decreed. Then you set a firm boundary for the seas, so they would never again cover the earth. You make springs pour water into the ravines, so streams gush down from the mountains. You send rain on the mountains from your heavenly home, and you fill the earth with the fruit of your labor. You cause grass to grow for the livestock and plants for people to use. You allow them to produce food from the earth—wine to make them glad, olive oil to soothe their skin, and bread to give them

strength. You made the moon to mark the seasons, and the sun knows when to set. You send the darkness, and it becomes night, when all the forest animals prowl about. O LORD, what a variety of things you have made! In wisdom you have made them all. —PSALM 104:1-10, 13-15, 19-20, 24

### ***No one can measure your greatness.***

I will exalt you, my God and King, and praise your name forever and ever. I will praise you every day; yes, I will praise you forever. Great is the LORD! You are most worthy of praise! No one can measure your greatness. Let each generation tell its children of your mighty acts; let them proclaim your power. I will meditate on your majestic, glorious splendor and your wonderful miracles. Your awe-inspiring deeds will be on every tongue; I will proclaim your greatness. Everyone will share the story of your wonderful goodness; they will sing with joy about your righteousness. —PSALM 145:1-7\*

### ***Nothing is too hard for you.***

O Sovereign LORD! You made the heavens and earth by your strong hand and powerful arm. Nothing is too hard for you! You show unfailing love to thousands, but you also bring the consequences of one generation's sin upon the next. You are the great and powerful God, the LORD of Heaven's Armies. You have all wisdom and do great and mighty miracles. You see the conduct of all people, and you give them what they deserve. You performed miraculous signs and wonders in the land of Egypt—things still remembered to this day! And you have continued to do

great miracles in Israel and all around the world. You have made your name famous to this day. —JEREMIAH 32:17-20

### ***You have sent us a mighty Savior.***

Praise the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has visited and redeemed his people. You have sent us a mighty Savior from the royal line of your servant David, just as you promised through your holy prophets long ago. We have been rescued from our enemies so we can serve God without fear, in holiness and righteousness for as long as we live. —LUKE 1:68-70, 74-75\*

## **PRAYER STARTERS**

### ***Who is like you?***

Who is like you among the gods, O LORD—glorious in holiness, awesome in splendor, performing great wonders? —EXODUS 15:11

### ***You rescued me!***

Sing to the LORD! Praise the LORD! For though I was poor and needy, you rescued me from my oppressors. —JEREMIAH 20:13\*

### ***All glory to the only wise God.***

All glory to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, forever. Amen. —ROMANS 16:27

### ***You reign!***


Praise the LORD! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God. Praise the LORD! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. —from REVELATION 19:1, 6




two

## Prayers to Confess Sin and Humble Ourselves

**O**f all of Jesus' names and titles, the one I like best is the one the Pharisees gave Him: Friend of Sinners. I believe it was one of His favorites too. Jesus said that He "came to seek and save those who are lost" (LUKE 19:10). "Friend of Sinners" captures the reason He came better than any other title. A true friend will love you even when you don't deserve it and will go out to look for you when you've lost your way. Jesus does all of that and more: "There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends" (JOHN 15:13).

I love to think of Jesus as my friend, but friendship is a two-way street. I need to ask myself, "What kind of a friend am I to Jesus?" If I'm someone's friend, I'm going to care for our relationship. I'll be mindful of things that could be hurtful or cause distance between us.  Nothing has caused Jesus more pain than sin.

 **"Let us draw near to God** with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful" (HEBREWS 10:22-23 NIV).

Remembering how much my sins cost Jesus helps me be a better friend to him. So do the Bible's prayers of confession and humbling ourselves before God.

There is honesty in these prayers: "You know what your servant is really like" (2 SAM. 7:20); "How can I know all the sins lurking in my heart? Cleanse me from these hidden faults" (PSALM 19:12).

There's real humility in these prayers, and a spot-on description of what sin does to us: "Sin has drained my strength; I am wasting away from within" (PSALM 31:10); "my sins pile up so high I can't see my way out" (PSALM 40:12). These prayers clearly set forth God's holiness and show a humble admission that His judgment of sin is justified and the discipline He gives is deserved.

But you'll also find joy. "Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! Yes, what joy for those whose record the LORD has cleared of

guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty!" (PSALM 32:1-2). These prayers show us the way to innocence and the joy God so longs to give.

The psalmist reminds us, "If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened" (PSALM 66:18 NIV). These prayers teach us the best way to pray; they mark the path that leads to the cross and to our Savior's heart. God has mercifully given us these prayers to show us the way back to Him.

## PRAYERS

***You know me completely,  
yet you love me.***

What more can I say to you? You know what your servant is really like, Sovereign LORD. Because of your promise and according to your will, you have done all these great things and have made them known to your servant. How great you are, O Sovereign LORD! There is no one like you. We have never even heard of another God like you! <sup>1</sup> —2 SAMUEL 7:20-22



***"God has  
mercifully given  
us prayers of  
confession to  
show us the way  
back to Him."***

**1** ***To communicate God's faithfulness*** and unending love for His people, the prophet Hosea seeks reconciliation with his unfaithful wife. Even though she has abandoned him and their children and returned to prostitution, he pursues her, buying her back not as a slave but a beloved wife.

### ***My guilt overwhelms me.***

O LORD, don't rebuke me in your anger or discipline me in your rage! Your arrows have struck deep, and your blows are crushing me. Because of your anger, my whole body is sick; my health is broken because of my sins. My guilt overwhelms me—it is a burden too heavy to bear. But I confess my sins; I am deeply sorry for what I have done. —PSALM 38:1-4, 18

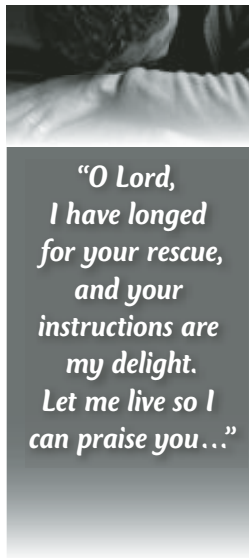
### ***I humble myself before you.***

LORD, my heart is not proud; my eyes are not haughty. I don't concern myself with matters too great or too awesome for me to grasp. Instead, I have calmed and quieted myself, like a weaned child who no longer cries for its mother's milk. Yes, like a weaned child is my soul within me.

—PSALM 131:1-2

### ***I have wandered, but I love you.***

O LORD, listen to my cry; give me the discerning mind you promised. Listen to my prayer; rescue me as you promised. Let praise flow from my lips, for you have taught me your decrees. Let my tongue sing about your word, for all your commands are right. Give me a helping hand, for I have chosen to follow your commandments. O LORD,



***“O Lord,  
I have longed  
for your rescue,  
and your  
instructions are  
my delight.  
Let me live so I  
can praise you...”***

I have longed for your rescue, and your instructions are my delight. Let me live so I can praise you, and may your regulations help me. I have wandered away like a lost sheep; come and find me, for I have not forgotten your commands.

—PSALM 119:169-176

### ***Wash me clean, Lord.***

Purify me from my sins, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Oh, give me back my joy again; you have broken me—now let me rejoice. Don't keep looking at my sins. <sup>▶</sup> Remove the stain of my guilt.

—PSALM 51:7-9

<sup>▶</sup> ***“As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us” (PSALM 103:12 NIV).***

## **PRAYER STARTERS**

### ***I am unworthy of all of your kindness.***

I am not worthy of all the unfailing love and faithfulness you have shown to me, your servant. —from GENESIS 32:10

### ***Help, forgive, and save me for your glory!***

Help me, O God of my salvation! Help me for the glory of your name. Save me and forgive my sins for the honor of your name. —PSALM 79:9\*

### ***I repent of my rebellion.***

LORD, see my anguish! My heart is broken and my



soul despairs, for I have rebelled against you. —from  
LAMENTATIONS 1:20

***Have mercy on me.***

O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner. —from LUKE 18:13



*three*

## Prayers About Everyday Needs

**S**ometimes I rush into heaven's throne room with a list. Though God's Word encourages us to "come boldly to the throne of our gracious God" (HEB. 4:16), there are moments when I wonder if I'm a little too bold. When my mind is filled with the things of this earth, I can only imagine what it looks like in heaven...<sup>▶</sup>

Imagine the Father, seated on the throne and ruling in glory, "high and exalted." Around His throne are seraphs, hiding their faces in worship before the awesome wonder of the Ancient of Days (ISAIAH 6:1-2). And like a child

**Jesus has not only brought peace** between God and humanity but has given those who trust in him a new identity. We are no longer strangers and enemies but are now, in Christ, sons and daughters of God (cf. COLOSSIANS 1:20-22 NIV).

bursting in without knocking, here I come, making all of my wants and wishes known.

Rough as that picture is, there's still a grace-filled beauty to it. I am a child, a child of the Father saved by faith in His crucified Son (JOHN 1:10-12). I can come boldly and entirely without fear, because God is "Abba, Father" (ROM. 8:15). He knows my daily needs and cares deeply about them. It's not propriety He's concerned about—it's the condition of my heart. And the more my heart matures, the more it will beat in rhythm with His own.

God wants us to grow and "mature" (HEB. 6:1) in our understanding of what it means to have a relationship with Him. Andrew Murray explains,

The little child may ask of the father only what it needs for itself; and yet it soon learns to say, "Give some for sister too." But the grown-up son, who only



*"Prayers about everyday needs help us maintain perspective. They are not only about things necessary for life on earth—they're also about our deepest need: a growing relationship with our Father in heaven."*

gives for the father's interest and takes charge of the father's business, asks more largely, and gets all that is asked.

Prayers about everyday needs help us maintain perspective. They are not only about things necessary for life on earth—they're also about our deepest need: a growing relationship with our Father in heaven. Jesus makes this priority for our living and asking very clear: "Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need" (MATT. 6:33).

God wants to us to bring our everyday needs to Him with faith and expectation so that we will live in loving dependence on Him and know the blessing of being caught up in His purposes. He is the "author of life" (ACTS 3:15), and we exist for Him and because of Him. In His kindness, He wants to bless us and draw us near with love that gives life to our souls. There is no blessing greater than God. 📖

📖 **Prayer is not a business transaction.** *We do not give something to get something in return. It is relational intimacy. In prayer, at our point of greatest need, we can encounter God and receive His presence.*

## PRAYERS

### ***You are my Shepherd.***

The LORD is my shepherd; I have all that I need. You let me rest in green meadows; you lead me beside peaceful streams. You renew my strength. You guide me along right

paths, bringing honor to your name. Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me. You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies. You honor me by anointing my head with oil. My cup overflows with blessings. Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will live in the house of the LORD forever. —PSALM 23:1-6\*

### ***You provided in the past.***

O God, when you led your people out from Egypt, when you marched through the dry wasteland, the earth trembled, and the heavens poured down rain before you, the God of Sinai, before God, the God of Israel. You sent abundant rain, O God, to refresh the weary land. There your people finally settled, and with a bountiful harvest, O God, you provided for your needy people. ▢ —PSALM 68:7-10

▢ *In Joshua 4:1-11 the Lord instructs Joshua to build a memorial of stones as a way to teach future generations about God's faithfulness.*

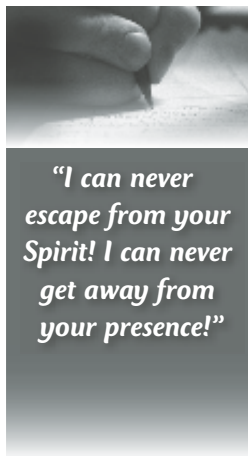
### ***All of life depends on you.***

The earth is full of your creatures. Here is the ocean, vast and wide, teeming with life of every kind, both large and small. See the ships sailing along, and Leviathan, which you made to play in the sea. They all depend on you to give them food as they need it. When you supply it, they gather it. You open your hand to feed them, and they are richly satisfied. But if you turn away from them, they panic.

When you take away their breath,  
they die and turn again to dust.  
When you give them your breath,  
life is created, and you renew the  
face of the earth. —from PSALM  
104:24-30

***You are with me wherever I go.***

I can never escape from your Spirit!  
I can never get away from your  
presence! If I go up to heaven, you  
are there; if I go down to the grave,  
you are there. If I ride the wings  
of the morning, if I dwell by the  
farthest oceans, even there your  
hand will guide me, and your strength will support me.  
I could ask the darkness to hide me and the light around me  
to become night—but even in darkness I cannot hide from  
you. To you the night shines as bright as day. Darkness and  
light are the same to you. —PSALM 139:7-12



***“I can never  
escape from your  
Spirit! I can never  
get away from  
your presence!”***

## **PRAYER STARTERS**

***Please keep my needs in your thoughts.***

As for me, since I am poor and needy, let the Lord keep  
me in his thoughts. You are my helper and my savior.  
O my God, do not delay. —PSALM 40:17

***You forgive my sins and give me joy.***

Though I am overwhelmed by my sins, you forgive them

all. What joy for those you choose to bring near, those who live in your holy courts. —from PSALM 65:3-4\*

***Please answer my prayers and take care of me***

Answer my prayers, O LORD, for your unfailing love is wonderful. Take care of me, for your mercy is so plentiful. —PSALM 69:16



*four*

## Prayers for Guidance and Direction

**S**cripture tells of God guiding His people through all kinds of circumstances. He went ahead of Israel through the wilderness, leading them with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (EXOD. 13:21). He sent angels to lead Lot and his family out of Sodom (GEN. 19:16) and Peter out of prison (ACTS 12:7). Both David and Isaiah describe God affectionately as a Shepherd (PSALM 23; ISAIAH 40:11), and Micah prophesied about Jesus, "he will stand to lead his flock with the LORD's strength" (MICAH 5:4). The Bible's message is comforting and clear: Our heavenly Father cares deeply about the intimate details of our lives.

Yet with all of the instances of God leading in Scripture,



the prayers for guidance and direction are relatively few. Haddon Robinson writes, "It's surprising to note that nowhere in the Old Testament, the teachings of Jesus, or the New Testament epistles do we see any description of a step-by-step process by which we can determine God's will." There's a reason for this.

God's guidance stems from our relationship with Him. Our Shepherd wants to feed us, carry us in his arms, hold us close to his heart, and gently lead us (ISAIAH 40:11). We are to "pray continually" (1 THESS. 5:17 NIV) because it's impossible to discern God's leading in our lives without prayer. As with prayers about everyday needs, the Bible's prayers for guidance and direction are relational prayers. Relational prayer doesn't just seek God's will—it seeks His face as well. Relational prayer puts us in a place where the Lord can help us discover His leading and respond with deeper obedience and love. God reminded His people through Isaiah, "Only in returning to me and resting in me will you be saved. In quietness and confidence is your strength" (ISAIAH 30:15). Fresh strength flows into us as we pray and fast and wait before Him in His Word.

The temptation we often face is to run our own lives and then ask God to bless us. What God wants from us is very different. Oswald Chambers observes, "If we could see the floor of God's immediate presence, we would find it strewn with the 'toys' of God's children who have said, 'This is broken, I can't play with it anymore, please give me another present.' Only one in a thousand sits down in the midst of it all and says 'I will watch my Father mend this.'"

David prayed, "O Lord, *I give my life to you* . . . Show me

the right path, O LORD; point out the road for me to follow. Lead me by your truth and teach me, for you are the God who saves me. All day long I put my hope in you" (PSALM 25:1, 4-5, emphasis added). The Bible's prayers for guidance and direction all have dependence as their starting point. In every instance God matters more than what is asked, even though the request may be urgent.

Our Shepherd wants us near Him, especially when we don't know which road to take. These are prayers to help us draw close.

## **PRAYERS**

### ***Show me the right path.***

O LORD, I give my life to you. No one who trusts in you will ever be disgraced, but disgrace comes to those who try to deceive others. Show me the right path, O LORD; point out the road for me to follow. Lead me by your truth and teach me, for you are the God who saves me. All day long I put my hope in you. —PSALM 25:1, 3-5

### ***Send your light to guide me.***

Send out your light and your truth; let them guide me. Let them lead me to your holy mountain, to the place where you live. There I will go to the altar of God, to God—the



*"Prayers for guidance and direction are relational prayers. Relational prayer doesn't just seek God's will—it seeks His face as well."*

source of all my joy. I will praise you with my harp, O God, my God! —PSALM 43:3-4

### **Guide my steps by your Word.**

Your laws are wonderful. No wonder I obey them! The teaching of your word<sup>1</sup> gives light, so even the simple can understand. I pant with expectation, longing for your commands. Come and show me your mercy, as you do for all who love your name. Guide my steps by your word, so I will not be overcome by evil. Ransom me from the oppression of evil people; then I can obey your commandments. Look upon me with love; teach me your decrees. Rivers of tears gush from my eyes because people disobey your instructions. —PSALM 119:129-136

📖 **“Blessed are those** who do not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but who delight in the law of the LORD and meditate on his law day and night” (PSALM 1:1-2 NIV).

## **PRAYER STARTERS**

### **Show me your presence, Lord.**

Show me your glorious presence. —from EXODUS 33:18

### **Show me how to have more faith.**

Show me how to increase my faith. —from LUKE 17:5\*

### **What should I do?**

What should I do, Lord? —from ACTS 22:10



*five*

## Prayers to Say Thank You

**W**here would you be without Jesus? Take a moment to really think about it. The words of Ephesians 2:12 sum it up well: “without God and without hope.” Without Jesus, we would be hopelessly, eternally lost.

We can never thank God enough and praying the “thank you prayers” of the Bible cultivates gratitude in us and opens our eyes to “the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints” (EPH. 1:18 NIV). Praying them is like counting the treasure of everything God has ever done for you and ever will.

Jesus once met 10 lepers at the Samaritan border on the way to Jerusalem. He healed all of them, but only one came back to say thank you.

Where were the other nine? Too caught up in the gift to remember the Giver. I'd love to point a finger of blame at them, but I've joined their party more times than I'd like to admit.

The one who came back and fell at Jesus' feet, "thanking him for what he had done," was a Samaritan. Jesus told him, "Stand up and go. Your faith has healed you" (LUKE 17:15-16, 19). But the word Jesus used isn't the same one Luke used to describe the physical healing. It's the same word used of the woman who wiped Jesus' feet with her tears (see LUKE 7:50). Jesus wasn't just telling him, "Your faith has healed you." He was saying, "Your faith has *saved* you."

Real gratitude makes us come back to God. There's a choice to be made. We can go our own way distracted by all God has given us, or we can come to Jesus and worship Him for what He has done.

Keep your eyes on the gift and (maybe) you'll be blessed as long as it lasts. Turn your heart to the Giver, and you'll be blessed for eternity.

## PRAYERS

***You are the one who is over all things.***

O LORD, the God of our ancestor Israel, may you be praised forever and ever! Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty. Everything in the heavens and on earth is yours, O LORD,

and this is your kingdom. We adore you as the one who is over all things. Wealth and honor come from you alone, for you rule over everything. Power and might are in your hand, and at your discretion people are made great and given strength. O our God, we thank you and praise your glorious name! But who am I, and who are my people, that we could give anything to you? Everything we have has come from you, and we give you only what you first gave us! We are here for only a moment, visitors and strangers in the land as our ancestors were before us. Our days on earth are like a passing shadow, gone so soon without a trace. —from 1 CHRONICLES 29:10-15



***“Without Jesus,  
we would  
be hopelessly,  
eternally lost.  
Real gratitude  
makes us  
come back  
to God.”***

### ***Thank you for making me.***

You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered! I can't even count them; they

outnumber the grains of sand! And when I wake up, you are still with me! —PSALM 139:13-18

***I trust you and praise you with all of my heart.***

Praise the LORD! For he has heard my cry for mercy. The LORD is my strength and shield. I trust him with all my heart. He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy. I burst out in songs of thanksgiving. —PSALM 28:6-7

***Thank you for the simple message of salvation!***

O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank you for hiding these things from those who think themselves wise and clever, and for revealing them to the childlike. Yes, Father, it pleased you to do it this way! —from MATTHEW 11:25-26

## **PRAYER STARTERS**

***Thank you for being near.***

I thank you, O God! I give thanks because you are near. People everywhere tell of your wonderful deeds. —PSALM 75:1\*

***Thank you for hearing me.***

Father, thank you for hearing me. You always hear me. —from JOHN 11:41-42

***Thank you for answering my prayer.***

I thank you for answering my prayer and giving me victory! —PSALM 118:21



**A**nyone who has tried to pray for more than five minutes can understand 16th-century English poet John Donne's personal struggle to pray:

I throw myself down in my chamber, and I call in and invite God and his angels thither, and when they are there, I neglect God and his angels for the noise of a fly, for the rattling of a coach, for the whining of a door . . . I talk on, in the same posture of praying; eyes lifted up; knees bowed down; as though I prayed to God; and, if God, or his angels should ask me, when I thought last of God in that prayer, I cannot tell. Sometimes I find that I had forgot what I was about, but when I began to forget it, I cannot tell. A memory of yesterday's pleasures, a fear of tomorrow's dangers. A straw under my knee, a noise in mine ear, a light in mine eye, an anything, a nothing, a fancy . . . troubles me in my prayer.

Origen, one of the early church fathers, wrote that the prayers of the Bible are filled with "unutterably wonderful declarations." Praying the prayers of God's



Word helps us delight in Him and discover fresh new vistas of hope and joy.

God bless you as you pray! May our loving Lord draw you ever nearer and smile upon you as you pray His Word and His promises back to Him.



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