



# SEVEN WAYS TO PRAY

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

Ephesians 6:18

My experience in prayer has been a journey with Jesus for 36 years. My heart to know, love and be known by my heavenly Father has not changed. But the depth and breadth of the richness in prayer has grown exponentially in its eternal consequences and earthly value. The more I pray — the less adequate I feel. The more I pray — the more I feel dependent on the Spirit to guide my way to God — to intercede in intimacy with Him. Prayer is the Lord's loving reminder that He is God and I am not. Writing to the Ephesian Christians Paul instructs them to "Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers." Below is my modest attempt to describe a few ways to pray:

## 1. CONTEMPLATION

When we contemplate in prayer we marinate our mind and heart in the Word of God. As we meditate on Scripture we ask, "What is the context?" "How does this apply to readers in their day?" "How does this instruct me for today?" As we process the Word in prayer we draw closer to the **living Word — Jesus**. Truth transforms our thinking and behavior to become like Christ's.

"I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches. I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word"

Psalms 119:14-16

## 2. CONFESSION AND REPENTANCE

Like a car driven daily picks up road residue, so our soul is soiled every day by doing life. Life is messy

and sinful. It requires ongoing cleansing from our Savior Jesus. Prayer is our safe environment for mercy and forgiveness. Our holy heavenly Father cannot look on sin, but He does accept our faith in His sinless son as the **payment for our sins**. We confess to acknowledge our wrong and we repent to turn from our wrong. Prayer positions us for God's forgiveness.

**“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness”**

1 John 1:9

### 3. REJOICE

Prayer is joyful. We celebrate our good and generous God. We praise Him for His loving favor and His beautiful creation. Our hearts elevate in grateful worship when we recite the Lord's blessings of: Christ's salvation, the Holy Spirit's comfort, friends who pray with us and family who love and care for us. Prayer is our pipeline to express **joyful thanksgiving** to Jesus. We can't help but rejoice for we serve our risen Savior and Lord. Joy mutes the screechy voices of anger.

**“Then Hannah prayed and said: “My heart rejoices in the Lord; in the Lord my horn is lifted high. My mouth boasts over my enemies, for I delight in your deliverance”**

1 Samuel 2:1

### 4. CRY OUT

Pain and suffering aggressively call for prayer. In our darkness we ask other children of the light to agree with us in prayer. Though we may feel abandoned by our heavenly Father — by grace and in prayer — we will not abandon our faith in Him. When we hurt deeply, we have the opportunity to go **deeper in our communion** with Christ. He becomes our confidant as we suffer with the One who suffered for us. Prayer may not remove our pain, but it sustains us in our pain.

**“Hear my prayer, Lord; let my cry for help come to you.  
Do not hide your face from me when I am in distress.  
Turn your ear to me; when I call, answer me quickly”**

Psalms 102:1-2

### 5. PETITION

Our heavenly Father delights in giving good gifts to His children. Similar to any good parent He gives us what's best for us and not always what we want. So, we are commanded to **persistently ask the Lord** in prayer for what pleases Him. When our prayers align with His will — our life becomes a big

deal. In fact, prayer is the platform for the Holy Spirit to align our will with His. Thus, we petition God for healing, wisdom, and salvation of the lost and trust Him with the results.

**“So we fasted and petitioned our God about this,  
and he answered our prayer”**

Ezra 8:23

## 6. JESUS MODEL

Jesus taught His disciples how to pray — we call it the **Lord’s prayer**. The prayer is comprehensive:

Communal - “Our Father”

Majestic - “In heaven”

Reverence and awe of God’s holiness - “Hallowed be your name”

Kingdom minded - “Your Kingdom come”

Seeks God’s will - “Your will be done”

Requests daily provision - “Give us daily bread”

Asks forgiveness - “Forgive us”

Offers forgiveness - “As we forgive”

Keep from temptation - “Lead us not”

Protection from the devil - “Deliver us from the evil one.”

Pray like Jesus.

**“This, then, is how you should pray”**

Matthew 6:9

## 7. SPONTANEOUS

Every moment of the day is opportunity for spontaneous prayer. “Lord thank you for giving me this opportunity. Heavenly Father I trust You to lead the conversation with my co-worker. Dear Lord, give me wisdom to parent my child today. Jesus, I need You to show me how to love my spouse as You love them.” Create a prayer habit, so its the entrance and exit of your thoughts, words and actions. **Pray without ceasing** and you will not cease to be amazed at God.

**“Pray continually”**

1 Thessalonians 5:17

**PRAYER:** Heavenly Father, grow me into a humble person of prayer.

**RELATED READINGS:** Job 33:26; Isaiah 56:7; Philippians 1:4; 2 Thessalonians 1:3



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