

Prayer Options

Prayer can be challenging for some and easy-as-breathing for others. Followers of Jesus pray for a variety of reasons: obedience, connection with God, to overcome temptation, protection, discernment, wisdom, strengthen faith, healing, alignment with God's will, etc.

As a Small Group community one of your goals is to grow in your faith. Prayer can be a great way to grow your faith and to grow together. Listed below are several different ways to pray individually or together – this is not exhaustive or meant to be prescriptive, but rather a guide.

EX: decide to use one format as you close your meeting time or in between meetings.

5 Finger Prayer

Thumb (closest to you) Pray for those closest to you.

Index Finger (points the way) Pray for those who teach, instruct, heal, serve.

Middle Finger (tallest) Pray for leaders and those in authority.

Ring Finger (weakest) Pray for those who are experiencing illness, hardship or need strength.

Pinkie (smallest) Pray for yourself.

ACTS

Adoration – a time to adore, praise, and worship God

Confession – a time to confess how we fall short and sin. Recognition that God is holy.

Thanksgiving – a time to be thankful.

Supplication – a time to ask God for needs of the world, our country, leaders, church, family, etc.

Thankful for Prayer

Pray in thanks for the ability to talk with God, through the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:26-27). By our faith the Holy Spirit helps us with our daily problems and in our praying. We don't even know what we should pray for nor how to pray as we should, but the Holy Spirit prays for us with such feeling that it cannot be expressed in words. And the Father who knows all hearts knows, of course, what the Spirit is saying as he pleads for us in harmony with God's own will.

EX: Heavenly Father, I know that intentional prayerfulness is essential for those who are in Christ. I thank you for making a way for me to connect with you, even when I may be overly anxious that I'm "praying wrong," or praying outside of your will, or not being able to put to words what I am trying to say. Thank you that your Spirit is interceding for me. Thank you for giving me the Holy Spirit and for making a way for my unspoken groanings toward you to be transformed into prayers that conform to your will. Thank you, God, ever in search mode, for receiving those prayers directly from my heart, enabling me to be in potentially constant communication with you.

The Lord's Prayer (Mt 6:9-13)

Try it in your own words. Think about what each sentence means and reword it and summarize it. Sometimes it helps to write it down – as you write – write it as if you were writing/speaking to God (because you are ☺).

*EX: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. (God is holy and deserves honor)
Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. (God's kingdom is perfect – invite God's will to rule our lives)*

Give us this day our daily bread. (God is provider of ALL. He is faithful and good in doing so as we have need)

Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. (God's unlimited grace and forgiveness. Confession of sin and repentance leading to Jesus' gift of forgiveness and restoration)

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. (God's power – acknowledge your dependence on and need for the Holy Spirit to work in you and through you.)

Pray the Scriptures

Paul's Prayer for Others (Col 1:3-12)

Be thankful for other's faith and changed lives.

Ask God to help them know what He wants them to do.

Ask God to give them deep, spiritual understanding.

Ask God to help them live for Him.

Ask God to give them more understanding/knowledge of Himself.

Ask God to give them strength and patience for endurance.

Ask God to fill them with joy, strength and thankfulness.

Other Paul prayers: Phil 1:3-11, 4:4-9, Eph 1:15-22, 6:10-20, Col 1:9-14, 3:12-17

Psalms prayers: Ps 5:1-3, Ps 19, Ps 25:4-11, Ps 27:7-14, Ps 51:1-17, Ps 147, 148, 149, 150

Popcorn Prayer (in a group)

These prayers are short and jump around the group multiple times... like popcorn. Someone starts with a phrase like: "God you are _____", "God thank you for _____", "God help me _____". These can last as long or short as you like.

When a believer prays it isn't simply spoken into thin air; we have the Holy Spirit, who communicates for us and carries our needs to the Lord. The Holy Spirit is part of the Trinity, so He knows the mind of God intimately. He fully grasps the circumstance we are praying over - even the parts that remain unseen or utterly confusing to us. Also, the Spirit dwells within every believer and knows each one's mind and heart. With this full knowledge, the Holy Spirit can carry out His responsibility to make sure our petitions match God's desires. (1 Cor 2:11, Rom 8:26-27). We can pray with confidence.