



# PRAYER GUIDE

## WHY PRAYER?

Most believers know that time with the Lord is important. He has designed us to need to take time alone regularly to pray, read His Word, worship, and fellowship with Him. **What happens for a lot of people is they try to pray but end up feeling like they are doing it wrong because they are bored and don't feel anything.** Would it make you feel better to know that even Jesus' disciples struggled to pray? (see Matthew 26:41) As the world grows more chaotic, we need to learn how to engage with Him consistently so that we can understand what He is doing in our lives and on the earth. God is waiting to meet with you. He wants to draw you in, captivate you, fascinate you, and keep you coming back. You simply need to choose to learn how to spend time with Him and be patient with the process of growing in prayer.

## KNOW WHO YOU ARE PRAYING TO

How you view God determines how you will approach Him in prayer. **Having a correct understanding of Him causes you to want to spend time with Him.** God is a tender Father who deeply loves you, and Jesus is a Bridegroom King filled with desire for His people (Isaiah 62:4-5). As you begin to understand these truths about God, you will be more energized to seek Him and experience new depths of relationship with Him. Instead of approaching Him with shame or hesitation, you come before Him with confidence that He loves you and enjoys spending time with you (John 17:23). Jesus tells us that He stands at the door of our hearts and knocks, and to those who hear His voice and open the door, He will come in and dine with them (Revelation 3:20). The invitation to meet with God is always open!

## WHAT TO PRAY

**Often when we pray, our mind is blank and we struggle to get going.** A prayer list can help you know what to pray about. A prayer list also helps you move beyond just praying for your own felt needs. Here are some things you can include on your prayer list:

- **PERSONAL LIFE** - praying for your own heart, ministry, and circumstances (physical, relationships)
- **PEOPLE AND PLACES** - praying for individuals (family and friends), ministries (local church, missionaries), and cities (places the Lord has endeared you to)
- **LEADERS** - praying for people in authority over our church, city, state, and nation
- **JUSTICE ISSUES** - governmental and social issues (human trafficking, natural disasters, disease)





## WHEN TO PRAY

One of the hardest things you will ever do is fight to carve out time to be with God each day. **If you do not set a time daily to pray, others will set your time for you, and the result will always be very little time for prayer.** Jesus modeled the importance of both focused time set apart to meet with God in a quiet place and turning our thoughts toward Him throughout the day. You might share your thoughts, seek His will, or whisper words of worship to connect with Him throughout your day. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you know the best way to spend your time in this season of your life!

## WHERE TO PRAY

**There are several places in the Bible where we see people in a one-on-one meeting with God where they are alone and unhindered by the distractions of daily life.** There is nothing more holy or spiritual about praying in an empty room versus a room full of people. But when the room is empty, and it's just you and God, it can be a lot easier to hear Him (Psalm 46:10).

## HOW TO PRAY

There is no right or wrong way to pray, and no two people will have prayer lives that look the same. Learning how to pray is a lot like learning how to speak when we are babies. We begin with short phrases and then begin to put sentences together. As we learn more about God, we begin to find new ways to communicate with Him. **The best way to pray is to be real. Pray what comes to your heart and mind.** It's ok to be honest and blunt. Turn off your phone or anything else that can distract you. If you fall asleep or miss a day, hit delete and get back up and start again. He sees your weak efforts and they count to Him! Start with 15 minutes and try this:

- **Enjoy the simple presence of God in silence, without the need to offer words.**

Some people find that playing or singing a worship song to start this helps to switch from a busy mind to a quiet one ready to hear from the Lord.

- **Listen to God's word for you in this particular moment through Scripture.**

Try reading 1-2 Psalms, followed by a Gospel passage or a few verses of an epistle.

- **Thoughtfully express to God the thoughts and feelings of your heart and mind as you contemplate that Scripture.**

Write out a prayer in a journal or simply offer what is in your heart. Try finding a truth or a promise to thank Him for and then ask Him to show you more about how that truth is working in your life or how He would like you to embrace that truth in a new way. Talk to Him about commands that we are to obey by telling Him you want to obey it and asking Him for the power to obey.