

Use the Lord's Prayer to Learn How to Pray

From Ashley at the website Faithfully Planted

One way to pray like Jesus is to pray the Lord's Prayer word for word. You can also personalize it and use Jesus' words as a structure for your prayers. This guide breaks the prayer down, verse by verse so that you can pray like Jesus.

Step One: Start with Praise & Worship

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name."

The word "hallowed" here means "honored as holy." The first step to any prayer is to give God glory and honor and praise. This positions our hearts to be aware of God's presence as we pray.

Here, Jesus also directs us to acknowledge God as our Father in heaven.

God is the creator of the universe, the alpha and omega, the King of Kings, the Almighty. But, He is also our good, good Father who loves us and wants an intimate relationship with us.

Beginning prayer by calling him "Father" and praising His name brings us into His presence the right way; with reverence and awe, but also with intimacy and relationship.

You aren't just praying to a distant, powerful King. You are praying to the loving, tender God of your heart, who knows you fully and loves you deeply.

The words we choose have power; don't be hesitant or afraid to call Him your Heavenly Father.

Step Two: Pray God's Will Be Done

"Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

Jesus tells us to pray God's will over our own because the ultimate goal of prayer is not to convince God of our heart but to align it with His. Praying God's will to be done in our situation puts His agenda before our own.

This is the mark of a truly surrendered heart.

We can certainly pray specifically for our hearts desires, He knows them anyway. But ultimately our main desire should be for God's will to prevail.

Even if His will is the opposite of our desire.

Even more specifically, Jesus instructs us to pray God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. What does this mean?

It means that we desire His will to be done freely, without disobedience or obstacle or hindrance of human sin. Jesus tells us to pray this way not because God needs us to do HIS will, but because He *chooses* to use us to do the work of His Kingdom.

To do His good work, we have to trust Him and obey Him while striving to deny our sinful human nature. In Heaven, these issues are not present. But on earth, they are.

We should desire His will to be done and for us to not stand in the way of it by disobeying or sinning.

Step Three: Pray For Your Needs

"Give us this day our daily bread,"

Here, Jesus transitions into instructing us to pray for the provision of our needs, no matter how seemingly insignificant or mundane.

We need daily bread in the sense that we need God to daily dwell with us and guide us, but also that we need literal daily bread to stay alive.

Pray for both His physical *and* spiritual provision in your life and the lives of those you love. God created us with bodies and souls that both need daily

substance to sustain it. Pray for the things that you need and thank Him for all that He has already blessed you with.

Step Four: Confess Sin & Ask For Forgiveness

"..and forgive us our debts,"

Many times when we pray, we forget these next two steps but they are vitally important to our walk with God.

We need to regularly ask God to search our hearts and reveal our sin to us. We need to regularly be confessing those sins to God and asking Him to forgive us.

Prayer is about cultivating a relationship with Jesus and in any relationship; part of intimacy is humility and openness. Humble, open, teachable hearts apologize when they are wrong.

The mark of a truly humble heart is a genuine desire to apologize for wrongdoing and seek forgiveness.

Do not leave any sin unconfessed; unrepented sin erodes relationship with God and hinders intimacy with Him.

Ask the Lord to search your heart and reveal and unrepented sin to you.

Step Five: Ask For Help Forgiving Others

"..as we also have forgiven our debtors."

You may not think that you regularly need to forgive others, but this doesn't just refer to obvious conflicts. This can mean forgiving someone for disappointing you or letting you down as well as forgiving someone who has wronged you.

The way we talk about others and post on social media should show you how badly we need the help of the Holy Spirit to continually offer forgiveness to others.

We should offer it freely, whether it is deserved or requested because we have been forgiven when we did not deserve it.

It is our duty as Christians to portray the love of Christ to the world and this means forgiving when the world would say retribution is justified. This means forgiving those who slander you or speak against you when the world would say they don't deserve your kindness.

This is not an easy task. Our flesh will fight against this tooth and nail so we need to regularly pray for the strength to forgive others.

Step Six: Pray For Safety, Protection & Deliverance

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Though God allows us to be tempted and tested, He is never the tempter (**James 1:13-14**). We lead ourselves into situations where we are tempted. Here Jesus is showing us how to pray against this and keep us from being our own worst enemy.

This part of prayer is important because our flesh is weak against temptation. Though we *can* withstand and overcome through the strength of God (**Philippians 4:13**) it is better if we can steer clear of temptation from the beginning.

We should also pray that we do not cause temptation for any other brother or sister in Christ.

Pray also here for protection and safety, as we have a real enemy who lives to attack God's people. Pray, as Jesus says, for "deliverance from evil."