



# A Simple Guide to Prayer

## ***Tips before you start:***

- Go to a private place with no interruptions
- Do not take your phone
- Take a journal and pen to write down your thoughts
- Set somewhere comfortable (but do not lie down)
- Clear your mind by taking your time so you don't feel rushed
- You can pray this prayer in any order. We have suggested this order as we have seen it works well for others

## **Step one: Self-preparation**

Prayer begins not by asking but by silent self-preparation. Do not rush into prayer. As Buttrick says, "Prayer is friendship with God. Friendship is not formal, but it is not formless: it has cultivation...the casual mind kills it." Meditate on who God is before you start.

***Tip:*** Try a breath prayer here by slowly breathing in deeply while saying to yourself, "His light fills the world" and breathing out saying "It fills this room". Repeat several times until you feel relaxed. Do not move forward until you can focus on what can be, not just what is because "whatever you ask for in prayer, believing, you shall receive."

## **Step Two: Thanksgiving**

Start by praying for specific, detailed things you are thankful for. Spend time thanking God for specific large and small blessings you have received. Be specific! "If we are thankful for everything, we may be thankful for nothing." Thank God for both material (home, warm bed, family) and immaterial things (hope, faith, love of others, friendships)

***Tip:*** If it helps, write out specific things you are thankful for in a journal or piece of paper as part of your prayer.

## **Step Three: Confession**

Prayer can now move from Thanksgiving to confession. Be aware of extremes, however. Confession should not be brutal and destructive nor should it be soft, casual, and surface. In short, do not be over-aware or under aware, seek to be transparent to God. Be specific without being ruthless or full of excuses. Confess to God about those you have wronged, but also realize that all sin is wronging God. Be transparent about where you are, God's friendship is loving and your honesty will help you in the next step.

***Tip:*** If it helps, say and finish the sentence, "God I confess..."



#### **Step Four: Accept God's Forgiveness**

Confession is incomplete without resolve. God is the only one who can resolve our sins. Visualize, see and hear God's forgiveness. Be aware of your posture during this time. Open your arms to accept forgiveness, use a posture of forgiveness. **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."** [1 John 1:9](#) Buttrick says it best, "True confession is cleansing of the soul."

**Tip:** Try saying out loud, "I accept your forgiveness"

#### **Step Five: Intercession**

Intercession prayer is the act of praying on behalf of or for someone else. Intercessory prayer is asking God to be involved on someone else's behalf. Without intercessory prayer, we might become selfish. Jesus almost always prays for others and His example is important to us in this step. Be specific, "genuine love sees faces, not a mass. Intercession requires us to bear on our heart the burden of those for who we pray"

**Tip:** This is a good time to pray for others you have said you would pray for or who you know are struggling. Bring your prayer list with you, or write your prayer list in your journal so you can pray for them again.

#### **Step Six: Petition**

Petition is asking God for prayers that are about you and your life. We save this step for last in order to clear our minds of any selfishness or greed through the other steps of prayer. In this step "let your requests be known to God." Be specific, honest, and transparent. Depending on what is happening in your life this might be a time of great joy or deep sorrow, don't be afraid of either. "but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." [Phil 4:6](#)

**Tip:** Keep a list of your prayer requests in your journal so you can look back in time and see how God has been answering your prayers and in what ways God has adjusted your outlook.

#### **Step Seven: Adoration**

Our prayer time should end like it began, in adoration. Buttrick says it best, "Prayer is listening as well as speaking, receiving as well as asking: and its deepest mood is friendship held in reverence. This prayer time should end with "In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen"

**Tip:** The word amen means, "Let it be". Try ending with something like, "Let all things be according to your will" or "thy will be done".