

A Rhythm of Prayer



Helping develop daily prayer

An Introduction to a Rhythm of Prayer

A RHYTHM OF DAILY PRAYER is an opportunity to craft a daily rhythm of prayer into your life. When it comes to praying daily we have two options, we can either try to fit prayer into our day, or we can build our day around times of prayer. A rhythm of daily prayer helps to establish a framework for this second option to become a meaningful daily reality, keeping us mindful of the Lord's presence with us throughout the each and every day.

From early Church history, Christians have developed forms of daily prayer and worship. These have often used scripture to guide and to provide words that inspire and engage the spirit of the person praying. Often specific words and form are used to highlight particular theological insights making such liturgy also a means of teaching and discipling.

The pages ahead provide a **Morning**, **Midday** and **Night** prayer that can be used individually, as a family, with a friend or with a group. Within, each prayer time there is time for you to add your own prayers and blessings, and space to read scripture. At the end there are example blessings that can be used or adapted along with other guides which may enhance your time of prayer.

You will also note that some of the text is in bold-type. If you are doing this with another person or as part of a group, have one person lead, reading the text in normal type, then together respond by reading the text in bold-type. Read slowly, thoughtfully and prayerfully.

This book is a tool and you are encouraged to adapt how you use it with your own ideas so that it works best for you, remembering of course that the idea of a rhythm means regular engagement. The hope is to encourage prayer as a regular daily discipline and source of spiritual nourishment.

May God bless you as you use this rhythm of prayer.

Rev. Joe Keighley

Morning Prayer

I/we rise this day in the power of Christ's birth and baptism,
in the power of his crucifixion and burial,
in the power of his rising and ascending,
in the power of his descending and judging.

O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

Blessed are you great and mighty God;

We give you glory, honour and praise both now and forevermore!

This I call to mind, and therefore I have hope:

The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

In a moment of quiet reflection, invite the Lord to be enthroned anew in your life in every situation, in every circumstance and in every relationship.

Ask Him to bring to mind anything that He wants you to lift to Him in prayer. If there is anything in your life right now that has left you feeling hopeless, stressed, weary or overwhelmed, bring it to the Lord and invite the God of hope to renew and to restore.

The Lord is our hope:

May the God of hope fill me/us with all joy and peace as I/we trust in him, so that I/we may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

(Rom 15:13)

Gracious and Almighty God,

Because of your great mercy and grace, we lay our lives down before you afresh today as a living sacrifice. We choose to die to our old self, and ask you to pour your mighty resurrection power through us.

We invite you to lead us, and ask that you help us to know and to yield to your leading. Teach us and empower us to respond in humble obedience to your still, small voice in every circumstance.

Morning Prayer continued

Pause and reflect.

Scripture Reading: Read a portion of Scripture that the Lord may be laying on your heart or follow a scripture reading plan.

You may want to take a moment to say the Lord's Prayer

You may like to prayer a Blessing Prayer - examples at the back

Take a moment to listen to what God is saying to you, and be aware of how he is asking you to respond.

One or both of the following may be used to finish:

O High King of Heaven,

Revive your living Church and send your Holy Spirit to breathe new life in us, filling us with Your presence. Wherever we may go today, may you reach out through us to touch the lost, to care for the least and to minister to the broken. May your Kingdom come this day and may your name be honoured in all that we say and do. Amen.

This day we turn to our saviour,

Christ as a light illumine and guide me.

Christ as a shield overshadow me.

Christ under me, Christ over me,

Christ beside me, on my left and my right.

This day be within and without me,

Be in the heart of each to whom I speak,

In the mouth of each who speaks to me.

Christ as light, Christ as a shield.

I/we rise today in power's strength invoking the Trinity

Believing in threeness,

Confessing oneness,

Of creation's Creator.

Midday Prayer

Be still and know that I am God. (Psalm 46:10)

The LORD is my rock, my fortress, and my saviour;

My God is my rock, in whom I find protection. He is my shield, the power that saves me, and my place of safety. (Psalm 18:2)

We come to you as the sun rides high. **To pause and give you glory.**

Come Holy Spirit. **We hand every burden over to you now and thank you for your prevailing peace.**

Trust in him at all times, pour out your heart before him;

God is a refuge for us. (Psalm 62:5-8)

Hand any thoughts, cares or concerns over to the Lord and invite Him to be Lord over all.

Take a moment to listen to what God is saying to you, and be aware of how he is asking you to respond.

O precious and glorious God,

Bless us as we go about our work. Be with us this afternoon and be ever close to us. Help us to see you in others and to see others as people made in your image. Keep us in the beautiful attitudes of your peace and presence; joyful, gentle, gracious.

May the favour of the Lord our God rest on us and establish the work of our hands for us. (Psalm 90:17)

You may like to close with a worship song/hymn, by reading a Psalm, or this final prayer...

May God's rest be on us.

As the sunlight shines upon us, may the light of the Son shine through us.

As the rain falls refreshing the parched ground, may your Holy Spirit wash over us and bring us life. **Amen.**

Night Prayer

It is good to give thanks to the LORD

And to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;

To declare your loving kindness in the morning

And your faithfulness by night. (Ps 92:1-2)

Father, we come to you as the day ends to recognise your blessings poured upon us in your mercy and grace.

Thank you, Father.

For all the encouragement and strength you have given through this day, for all you have provided and all the kindness you have shown.

Thank You, Jesus.

For all that we have seen and learnt both of and from you today, for each new insight you have revealed and every old insight you have enabled us to see in a fresh light.

Thank You, Holy Spirit.

Pause and thank God for all he has done this day

Merciful and gracious God, I confess to you before the whole company of heaven and before one another that I have sinned today in thought, word and deed. Forgive me Lord for what I have done and for what I have failed to do in your name.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion, blot out my transgressions.

Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. Forgive me Lord and raise me up to new life in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Prayer time: Pray as the Lord leads you.

Take a moment to listen to what God is saying to you, and be aware of how he is asking you to respond.

Night Prayer continued

Say this blessing together or individually

May You bless me/us and keep me/us, may You make Your face to shine upon me/us and be gracious to me/us; may You turn Your face towards me/us and give me/us peace. (Numbers 6:24-26)

OR alternatively you may like to take turns to bless each other:

May You bless [name] and keep her/him, may You make Your face to shine upon her/him and be gracious to her/him; may You turn Your face towards [name] and give her/him peace. (Numbers 6:24-26)

Closing prayer

Lord, it is night.

**The night is for stillness. Let us be still in the presence of God.
It is night after a long day. What has been done has been done,
What has not been done has not been done; let it be.**

The night is dark.

**Let our fears of the darkness of the world
And of our own lives rest in you.**

The night is quiet.

**Let the quietness of your peace enfold us, all dear to us, and all who
have no peace.**

The night heralds the dawn.

**Let us look expectantly to a new day, new joys, new possibilities.
Amen.**

Blessings for you to Pray

Precious Heavenly Father, we thank you that you have saved us, redeemed us and made us priests in your Kingdom. As your priests we proclaim blessing in the authority given in the name of Jesus:

Pick and adapt the examples as necessary. Add your own words and personalise for specific people and situations.

For Families:

[Names] we bless you in the name of the Lord. We bless your marriage and the relationship between husbands and wives, that you may be strong, cultivating deep roots of love, walking in forgiveness toward each other; united in one heart and one voice.

We bless fathers and mothers to have hearts turned towards their children, and children to have hearts for their parents. May deep strong and healthy relationships be formed. We bless you, fathers and mothers, to be strengthened and refreshed as you carry out responsibilities and as you set a good and godly example for all children. May your house be filled with love, peace and understanding.

For the Community:

We bless the health and well-being of this community, that it may be strong and well. We bless all who live here and visit here in the name of Jesus and speak against any and all sickness and disease that seek to invade this community. We bless each business and place of work, that whatever they do will be right before the community and before God, that they be fruitful and profitable, and that each care for and respect those employed.

For Schools and Places of Learning:

We bless every place of learning to be safe and secure, filled with inspiration and creativity, where teachers, pupils and support staff may flourish and thrive. We bless each child and student to have an increased capacity to learn and grow, and to develop good, healthy relationship with those around them.

Blessings continued

For Churches:

We speak to every local Church in our community and speak the blessings of the Lord upon you. In the name of Jesus we bless you that the Holy Spirit and the Word of God may flow freely and fully, that each minister and leader may know the power and presence of God. May all believers find restoration and redemption in Christ, and may they be fully empowered and released to serve Jesus in those places they are each called to. May grace and generosity be as abundant as God's love in these communities of faith.

For a non-believer:

We bless [name], that you would discover the life-changing truth of forgiveness and acceptance found in Christ Jesus. May you come to experience the wonder of having new life, of knowing God, and of becoming children and citizens of God's Kingdom. May you come to know the fullness of this reality.

For another Person:

I bless you in the name of the Lord, that the grace of Christ may rest upon you. I bless you in his name that the Father's love might surround you and fill you, that you may know in your deepest being just how fully and completely God accepts you and rejoices over you.

For Healing for Another:

I bless [name], in the name of Jesus, that the fullness of his peace may flood your heart and mind, sinking deeply into every part of your being and life. I bless you that your body may be strengthened and healed so that you are free to walk in the joy of the Lord.

For what God is Doing:

Lord, we bless what you are doing. We love it, and we bless it so that it would increase. We welcome all that you do and have for us, acknowledging that you are Lord and God. May your works continue in fullness overcoming anything that seeks to diminish or resist it.

Praying the Lord's Prayer

The following offers ideas for praying through the Lord's prayer

PRAISE: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name

- Invoke the name of God
- Recognize God for who he is
- Praise him as our loving heavenly Father – the God who is close and who cares
- Praise him for his holiness (“hallowedness”)
- Perhaps you'll want to pray through some of God's other attributes

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

- Pray for God's will in whatever the pressing situations are
- Pray for the government and all who are in leadership – national and local leaders, that they might be sensitive to God's kingdom agenda
- Pray for the church that we might be faithful to God's calling to mission
- Pray for the spread of God's kingdom
- Pray for missionaries and church leaders
- Pray for justice and peace that reflect the presence of God's kingdom
- Pray for people in your own circle of family and friends who need to welcome Jesus and his agenda into their lives

PROVISION: Give us today our daily bread.

- Ask God to provide those things that you need to get through the day – food, water, home, finances
- Ask God to provide spiritual bread – a Word from him that would encourage you for the day
- “OUR daily bread” – pray for the basic needs of others – especially those who seem to be without – for those in our community and those abroad who are going hungry
- In asking, give thanks for his provision
- Be open to the fact that God might be calling you to help provide for the daily needs of others

Praying the Lord's Prayer continued

FORGIVENESS: Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

- Examine your life and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal your own sinful attitudes and actions – seek God's forgiveness
- Thank God for the forgiveness that is ours through the cross and the resurrection of Christ Jesus
- Repent of the things which need to be forgiven – that is, set a new course, a new direction
- Pray for those who have sinned against you – forgive them and ask God to forgive them – whether or not those people recognize their need for forgiveness
- Pray for the people who have made themselves enemies – either of you personally or your people and country

PROTECTION: And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one.

- Ask God to get you and others through the tough times
- Pray for protection from all that is evil – whether it be spirits or attitudes or political powers
- Pray for the safety of those in the hotspots (wars, earthquakes, famines, etc) around the world
- Ask God to protect the faith of those who are persecuted because of their faith in Christ

DOXOLOGY: For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever Amen.

- While not a part of the original prayer in the New Testament, this is a good way to conclude your prayer – with a word of praise that summarizes all that has been spoken.

Lectio Divina

While more of a way of reflecting on scripture, it also informs your ways of praying. You can use this practice when reading scripture during the Daily Rhythm of Prayer.

1. Preparation: Do what you must to quiet and prepare yourself to hear from God. Sit in silence for several minutes and take whatever posture will help you prepare to receive and experience God's presence.

2. Reading/Listening: When you sense that your heart is prepared, begin by slowly reading the selected passage of Scripture. Move slowly through sentences and phrases. As you read, pay attention to what word, phrase, or idea catches your attention.

3. Meditation: Next, begin to meditate on the word, phrase, or idea that has captured your attention. Repeat it again and again. What thoughts come to mind as you meditate on this word, phrase, or idea? What are you reminded of in your life? What does it make you hope for?

Adoration: How can I love and praise God on the basis of this?
What do I see here that I can praise him for?

Repentance: How do I fail to realize this in my life? What wrong behaviour, harmful emotions or attitudes result when I forget this?

Thanksgiving: How can I thank Jesus as the ultimate revelation of this attribute of God and the ultimate answer to this sin or need of mine?

Aspiration: How does this show me what I should or could be and do? How would I be different if this truth were powerfully real to me?

4. Prayer: Now begin to speak to God. Tell God what idea captured your attention and what came to mind as you meditated upon it. How is God using this word, phrase, or idea to bless and transform you? Tell God what you have been thinking and feeling as you've listened and meditated.

5. Contemplation: Finish by focusing your attention on the fact that God's presence is with you. If, as you try to focus on God's presence, you sense a need to read the text again - to continue meditating or to simply continue talking with God - allow yourself to do so.

Scriptures to Guide Your Prayers

"So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and in His good time He will honour you. Give all your worries and cares to God, for He cares about what happens to you." - 1 Peter 5:6-7

"O Lord, You have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar." -Psalm 139:1-2

"Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him." - Psalm 37:7

"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer. That I may obey you in thought, word and deed." - Psalm 19:14

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." - Philippians 4:6

"Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth" - Psalm 46:10

"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 saints."
- Ephesians 6:18

"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land." - 2 Chronicles 7:14

"You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you." - John 15:16

"But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you."
- Luke 6:27

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful." -Colossians 4:2

Expand Your Rhythm

The Following are ideas to add or adapt into your prayer rhythm to help encourage spiritual growth and your relationship with God.

Prayers Moments: Short prayers offered up to the Lord constantly throughout the day. Anything or anyone around you might spark the topic for these prayers. Let the Holy Spirit continually show you what and how to pray as you go about your day.

Prayer Box: Keep a decorative box where you typically pray at home. Fill it with various prayer lists, quotes, photos, small objects-anything that may help prompt your heart in prayer. As the Lord leads, open it up and ask God to use the items to guide you as you pray. Add to it as you come across new ideas, people or subjects.

Prayer Journal: Keep a record specifically for prayers and answers.

Daily Journal: Use this journal to freely write thoughts, feelings, ideas, prayers and other things Use it to pour your heart out honestly before the Lord.

Prayer Corner: Consider having a chair or a specific place where you can go to pray. Make it a special area you know is designated to go to when you want to spend time with God.

Devotional Books: At times, you may wish to use a book specifically written to guide you along in your times with the Lord. These can be used alongside the Prayer Rhythm. Word for Today is a good example.

Song Lyrics: Songs can often be a wonderful resource to help put words to what your heart feels. Use these words to help guide your prayer.

Annual Prayer List: Once or twice a year, make a specific effort to bring to mind themes for your life for the coming six months or year. Make a list and refer back to this list in your prayer times over the coming months.

Drawing: Give the Lord complete freedom to use whatever creativity He desires as you spend time with Him. Pull out some crayons, markers, colourful pens or paint. Don't worry about the finished product just draw out your thoughts, feelings, scripture and/or prayers. Incorporate creative, "doodles" in your prayer journal to add meaning as you write.

Notes Page

Use this page to record names of people you are praying for, or other reminders and notes that are meaningful.

"Is prayer your steering wheel or your spare tire?"

- Corrie ten Boom