

21

DAYS OF PRAYER  
PRAYER GUIDE



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## 21 DAYS OF PRAYER

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# How to Use This Guide

As you participate in 21 Days of Prayer and join fellow Christians for three weeks of prayer and fasting, we want to bless you with a prayer guide that will give you plenty to pray about these next 21 days.

We designed this prayer guide so that, from Day 1 to Day 21, you can follow a linear path through prayers recorded in Scripture. The Bible has so many amazing prayers for us to pray aloud, so much material to take from as is. We have laid out these 21 prayers so that you can follow biblical prayers in an historical progression from creation to commission.

Pray each prayer out loud to begin and end the day. Let each passage and reflection guide your own daily prayers.

Pray through this guide with your family. Introduce it to a friend. Our hope is that your relationship with God will deepen these next three weeks. We hope that this is an encouragement and a helpful resource, both for you and as a tool for reaching people with the love of God.

# A Lifestyle of Prayer

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where He prayed.

Mark 1:35

Prayer is most effective when it isn't something we do every now and then, but when it's a lifestyle we cultivate. To understand how to have a lifestyle of prayer, we can look at the example Jesus gave during His life on earth:

## TIME

Jesus got up early in the morning to spend time with His Father. Make a daily appointment with God, whether first thing in the morning, at lunch, or before bed. Faithfully keep it.

## PLACE

Jesus had a specific place He went to pray. Having a designated place to pray helps us remove distractions and frees us to worship and pray out loud.

## PLAN

When Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, He gave them a prayer outline. We call it The Lord's Prayer. It begins Day 1 of the 21 Days of Prayer.

# Day 1

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven,  
    hallowed be your name.  
Your kingdom come,  
    your will be done,  
    on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
    and forgive us our debts,  
    as we have also forgiven our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
    but deliver us from evil.  
For yours is the kingdom and the power  
    and the glory, forever. Amen.

Matthew 6:9-13

This prayer, known as The Lord's Prayer, is how Jesus taught his disciples to pray. It is the gospel, the good news of Jesus spoken back to God.

Let this be your daily prayer, in addition to the rest of the prayers in this booklet. You join the world church in praying God's will be done. Commit this to memory. Day to day, you will naturally focus on different parts of the prayer and learn to appreciate why this ought to be our daily prayer in every season of life.

## Day 2

### THE LORD MY SUSTAINER

I cried aloud to the LORD,  
and he answered me from his holy hill.  
I lay down and slept;  
I woke again, for the LORD sustained me.

Psalm 3:4-5

King David penned this psalm as he was fleeing from his son Absalom, who wished to take the kingdom of Israel from his father.

We remember how precious sleep is when we're sleep deprived. We learn to appreciate each new day once we realize that tomorrow is not guaranteed.

May these verses speak powerfully to you in their simplicity. God answers prayer. We wake because our lives are in His hands. Pray daily, when you go to sleep and when you wake. Let God be your first and last thought. You will cry out and God will answer.

## Day 3

### GOD OF LOVE

For as high as the heavens are above the earth,  
so great is his steadfast love  
toward those who fear him;

As far as the east is from the west,  
so far does he remove our transgressions  
from us.

As a father shows compassion to his children,  
so the LORD shows compassion  
to those who fear him.

[Psalm 103:11-13](#)

The Lord who hears is the God who loves. The One who sustains you is the One who loves you. The fear of the Lord, as King Solomon wrote, is the beginning of wisdom. The fear—the awe and reverence—of the Lord does not lead us to conclude that God is fearsome in anger or judgment alone; God’s infinite love is dimensionless. It is often characterized as the love a father shows his children. That is how Jesus taught us to pray: “Our Father.” And contrary to most people’s conception of God, our awesome Father is best characterized by love that removes our wrongs as far as the east is from the west.

See Also: [1 John 4:7-12](#)

# Day 4

## GOD OF CREATION

From your lofty abode you water the mountains;  
the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your  
work.

You cause the grass to grow for the livestock,  
and plants for man to cultivate,  
that he may bring forth food from the  
earth,

and wine to gladden the heart of man,  
oil to make his face shine,  
and bread to strengthen man's heart.

[Psalm 104:13-15](#)

God the Creator is revealed clearly through the beauty and genius of the natural world. This world has not been randomly generated, persisting by chance. No—we have a God who not only created the universe, but sustains it. He sends the rain and the sunshine, the wind and the waves. We might plant seeds and water them, but God gives the growth. The psalmist continues, praising God for our responsibility to care for creation, and for the blessings God provides specially for us. We encourage you to read all of Psalm 104, a tremendous witness to the wonder of God's creation.

See Also: [Genesis 1-2](#), [Psalm 118:24](#)

## WONDERFUL MAKER

You formed my inward parts;  
    you knitted me together in my mother's womb.  
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.  
Wonderful are your works;  
    my soul knows it very well.  
My frame was not hidden from you,  
    when I was being made in secret,  
    intricately woven in the depths of the earth.  
Your eyes saw my unformed substance;  
    in your book were written, every one of them,  
    the days that were formed for me,  
    when as yet there was none of them.

Psalm 139:13-16

Not only does God take immense pleasure in all of creation; He delights in you. The psalmist describes the intimate process of creation. Our loving God created us fearfully to worship Him and wonderfully to display His glory. Even if our circumstances might cloud our judgment, our souls are in tune to the wonder of God's creation. Even when we cannot see the way forward, God recorded our days before we were formed. Every human being has been made in God's image. Praise God today because He made you with dignity and worth. You are wonderfully made.

## BUILD MY HOUSE

Unless the LORD builds the house,  
those who build it labor in vain.  
Unless the LORD watches over the city,  
the watchman stays awake in vain.  
It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest,  
eating the bread of anxious toil;  
for he gives to his beloved sleep.  
Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD,  
the fruit of the womb a reward.

Psalm 127:1-3

God loves family. When God revealed Himself to Moses in a burning bush, God told Moses that He was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Exodus 3:6). Through that great family, the people of Israel were born.

King Solomon connects the themes of work and family together in this short psalm. We work in vain to sustain a family if the Sustainer is not included in our planning. Sometimes we work tirelessly to provide for our spouse and kids, but we workaholics shift our focus from family to the work itself, forgetting that sleep is a gift from God, and that anxious work neglects to trust in God our Provider. Make time for your spouse and for your children, who are your legacy and a reward.

## YOU FIGHT FOR ME

In my distress I called upon the LORD;  
to my God I cried for help.  
From his temple he heard my voice,  
And my cry to him reached his ears.  
Then the earth reeled and rocked;  
The foundations also of the mountains  
trembled and quaked, because he was angry.  
Smoke went up from his nostrils,  
And devouring fire from his mouth;  
Glowing coals flamed forth from him.  
He bowed the heavens and came down;  
Thick darkness was under his feet.

Psalm 18:6-9

How wrong we are if we think God does not care for us! God chose a people for Himself, Israel, to bless the rest of the world. Yet, the ancient Egyptians forced them into slavery and oppressed God's people. Israel cried out in their distress, and God did not deal with their Egyptian tormentors lightly.

We encourage you to read all of Psalm 18 out loud. Feel the love of God expressed as wrath, the awesome power against those who seek to harm God's children. He does not sit idly by while we experience hardship and pain at others' hands. Take comfort in a God who fights for us.

See Also: [Exodus 14:14](#)

# Day 8

## MY DELIVERER

And Miriam sang to them:

“Sing to the LORD,  
for he has triumphed gloriously;  
the horse and his rider  
he has thrown into the sea.”

Exodus 15:21

“Be still, and know that I am God.  
I will be exalted among the nations,  
I will be exalted in the earth!”

Psalms 46:10

Miriam’s song is one of the very oldest written texts in Scripture. Moses’s sister sings how God delivered His people from the bonds of slavery and their Egyptian oppressors. God parted the Red Sea, and though Israel passed safely through, the waves collapsed and swallowed the pursuing Egyptian army.

Your fight is not your own. God takes it personally when you are under attack, but He does not drag out the fight. “Deliver us from evil,” goes the Lord’s Prayer. Pray for help knowing God is sure to deliver you. Be still and know that He is God.

## Day 9

### CREATE IN ME A CLEAN HEART

Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and renew a right spirit within me.  
Cast me not away from your presence,  
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.  
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,  
and uphold me with a willing spirit.  
Then I will teach transgressors your ways,  
and sinners will return to you.

[Psalm 51:10-13](#)

King David was the first great king of Israel. Under his reign, Israel prospered in the Promised Land. Yet David was not without his faults. He wrote this psalm in the wake of his adulterous affair with Bathsheba, after murdering her husband Uriah to have Bathsheba as his wife.

We might be saved, but we continue to sin, even in large degrees. God sustains us, loves us, and fights for us, but He also calls us to respond in faith and obedience to His commands. We do not need clean hearts to approach God, but we do need them for the ministry ahead. Ask God to restore the joy of your own salvation back to you. He will uphold and guide you. And then you will be able to teach others the ways of God, and they too will return to Him.

See Also: [James 5:16](#)

## Day 10

### HEAL ME

“Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed;  
Save me, and I shall be saved,  
For you are my praise.”

[Jeremiah 17:4](#)

Throughout Scripture, the spiritual and the physical do not exist separately. God is described with physical attributes, and comes in human form as Jesus. We are not merely flesh and blood but images of God, and Christians are children of heaven.

So too, don't neglect to pray for physical needs. “Give us this day our daily bread,” is absolutely a plea for physical nourishment, but it is not a prayer separated from the Holy Spirit's work in our lives. When you or someone you know is in pain, goes for surgery, or is emotionally/mentally injured, God's hands can be healing hands. He does not just save, but heals those he delivers from evil and restores that which has been broken. Never stop praying for good health. God did not design us to suffer.

See Also: [Mark 5:25-34](#)

# Day 11

## WHEN I AM WEAK

To keep me from becoming conceited... a thorn was given to me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

### 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

God fights for us and heals us, but there are times when it seems certain negative things are around to stay. Paul does not name the thorn in his side in this letter, and many have speculated about what the thorn might be. For us, that is not important. Paul's conclusion is far more interesting anyways.

The Christian life is not without suffering, even persistent pains. Yet God never says He does not care. Instead, "My grace is sufficient for you." God's power is best displayed when our imperfections show through. We are weak, but God is strong. When we are strong in these times, it is the power of Christ that rests upon us. He is our strength.

# Day 12

## I FEEL FORSAKEN

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?  
Why are you so far from saving me,  
from the words of my groaning?  
O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer,  
and by night, but I find no rest...

Yet he has not despised or abhorred  
the affliction of the afflicted,  
and he has not hidden his face from him,  
but has heard, when he cried to him.

[Psalm 22:1-2, 24](#)

Sometimes, we suffer so much that words of comfort and even thoughtful gifts do nothing to ease our pain. Sometimes, we simply feel forsaken. Is God even out there, listening to my prayers?

Yet God is not far from saving us. He has delivered us out of more evil than we know. These were the same words cried out by Jesus on the cross. God's answer may be slow, or quiet, or even "No." But our Father hears us when we cry. The psalm does not end by abandoning God; neither do Jesus's cries of unimaginable pain go unanswered. Three days later the Father raised His son from the grave. Neither are we forsaken in our deepest doubt, or in our darkest hour.

See Also: [Mark 15:34](#)

## THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside quiet waters.

He restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness  
for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the  
valley of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy  
shall follow me all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

### Psalm 23

One of the most beautiful passages in all the Bible comes right after one of the most challenging, and not by accident. When we walk through such dark valleys, we can say we fear no evil, for God is indeed with us. Yet this enduring psalm is encouraging in any season. Pray this out loud more slowly than usual. Pray it over your family and your friends. Memorize this along with the Lord's Prayer, and it will encourage you the rest of your life.

## THE BENEDICTUS

“And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

Luke 1:76-79

This is only the second half of Zechariah’s beautiful prophecy over his son, John the Baptist. A new day was dawning upon Israel, who had been struggling in constant cycles of deliverance and bondage. A succession of prophets had proclaimed a coming savior to deliver Israel from bondage once and for all. John the Baptist was the last of these prophets. Dawn was breaking.

Known as The Benedictus, Zechariah’s prayer lifts language from Psalm 23 to describe how God was breaking through history in a new, incredible way. The Shepherd was coming in the flesh to usher his flock into everlasting peace.

## THE MAGNIFICAT

“His mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.  
He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud  
in the thoughts of their hearts;  
He has brought down the mighty from their thrones  
and exalted those of humble estate;  
He has filled the hungry with good things,  
and the rich he has sent away empty.  
He has helped his servant Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,  
As he spoke to our fathers,  
to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”

[Luke 1:50-55](#)

Out of context, this sounds like a cry of victory after a battle. In fact, this is the end of the Magnificat, the song Mary sang soon after the angel Gabriel told her that she would carry God's son. She visited her cousin Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist, and John kicked in Elizabeth's womb as Mary came near. Even the unborn John rejoiced in the presence of his coming savior! Mary prophesies a great reversal of power: the humble shall be exalted, and the strong overthrown. All of God's promises will be fulfilled through her child: Immanuel, God with us.

See Also: [1 Samuel 2](#)

# Day 16

## FOR ENEMIES

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.”

[Matthew 5:43-45](#)

Does it make sense to pray for those who wish you harm?

Day 7 we asked God to fight for us. Day 8 we prayed for God’s swift deliverance. But in Jesus, we have our soul’s salvation. And our Savior says, “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” Though Jesus came to liberate the captive and preach good news to the poor, he also loved the rich and powerful, the sinners and traitors, and those who crucified him. Jesus had plenty of enemies, inside and outside, Jewish and Roman. But did he hate any of them? Did he wish any of them harm?

Pray for those who hurt you and wish you harm. Wish them blessings, pray for their good. Then, Jesus says, you can be called sons of his Father.

See Also: [Romans 5:6-11](#)

# Day 17

## PERFECTLY ONE

“I ask that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.”

John 17:21-23

Jesus, the night he is betrayed, asks for complete unity. He prays specifically for us, those who will believe in him through the ministry of his first disciples. This unity is beyond tolerance and shallow peace. The unity Jesus prays for is the same intimate, awesome bond of love that exists between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He prays that we might be one with God, as he is with the Father.

Pray for unity. The unity of the church. Unity of our country. Between races and nations. For peace between enemies. For your marriage. For your family. Pray for unity so often that you see the fruit of it: that the world might know that God sent Jesus and that Jesus loves them. Only the united church can effectively witness the love of God.

# Day 18

## YOUR WILL BE DONE

And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

Mark 14:36-37

Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

For almost three weeks you've prayed this over and over, but possibly never with as much agony and resistance as Jesus showed before he went to the cross. Have you ever prayed God's will be done, when it was the last thing you ever wanted to happen? Mostly we subscribe to the god of the easily life, but our God challenges and even occasionally breaks us. Had Jesus walked away, he would have survived. But then what of God's will for the salvation of the world?

God's will is not the easy way. But pray, pray, pray that it will be done. Jesus's vision of unity, our ministry of peace and reconciliation, involves hardship because the gospel makes violent, godless enemies. Even we can be the chief obstacle in our own path. But God's will be done. Never lose His vision for your life, or for the world.

## Day 19

### SEND ME!

And he touched my mouth and said,  
“Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is  
taken away, and your sin is atoned for.”

And I heard the voice of the Lord saying,  
“Whom shall I send and who will go for us?”

Then I said, “Here I am! Send me.”

And he said, “Go.”

[Isaiah 6:7-9](#)

The young prophet Isaiah stood before the presence of God in the temple of Jerusalem, where an angel touched a burning coal to his lips and proclaimed the forgiveness of sin. His guilt was taken away. And then God asked, “Who will go?”

The blood of Jesus has washed us clean. By his stripes we are healed. God’s will was accomplished on the cross, and three days later the Father raised his Son. Jesus appeared to his disciples, and before he ascended back to heaven, he gave us a commission: “Go, make disciples of all nations and baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Pray that you participate in this great commission. Pray: Send me! And go, proclaim the love of God.

See Also: [Matthew 18:18-20](#)

# Day 20

## FOR ALL PEOPLE

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

1 Timothy 2:1-4

Praying for all people seems a little time consuming, but doable as people pop into mind. Yet, if 'kings' was switched with 'presidents', 'congressmen', and 'senators', we might get a little heated. Yet what is the fruit of such a prayer? Leading peaceful and dignified lives.

Our Savior desires all people to come to saving grace through the blood of his cross and power of his resurrection. All people. It's why he's sent us to make disciples, and why praying for everyone is essential for the Christian life, a life of sharing the gospel and being Jesus to the world. Who have you left out of your prayers these last weeks? Write them down, too. Pray for them. Pray especially that they might know and walk in the love of God through Jesus Christ, to lead and love well.

# Day 21

## LORD, COME

Lord, come!

1 Corinthians 16:22

“Surely I am coming soon.”  
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

Revelation 22:20

This is the simplest prayer thus far, and the oldest prayer of the church. It is the penultimate verse in Scripture, speaking of the penultimate expression of the gospel message: Christ will return to judge and restore the universe. It's fitting that your 21 Days ends here.

Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Yes it is. And before that final Amen, Jesus will come back in glory and victory. Though we want to see all people saved, though we want to finish life in old age and wish the world to continue for generations to come, there is a day set and on the horizon when Jesus will return, when evil will be annihilated by the love of Christ forever, and God will live among his people in a renewed universe. Never lose that vision. Never stop praying this prayer. Lord, come!

## AFTERWORD

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Don't settle here. This 21 Days of Prayer is over, but your prayer life is only now just being rejuvenated. This new season holds many joys and many struggles for you. It is a time of trial, as always, when people will try to test the Spirit of Christ within you. Are followers of Jesus really any different than the rest of the world?

Fall in love with talking to God. Learn to listen for longer stretches, to develop prayer habits morning and night that you refuse to sacrifice for anything else. Love Scripture. Love the church. Love people. Love Jesus, most of all.

This guide is not just designed for you. This is a tool for sharing. This is a guide for prayer, but also to connect dots between Scripture, theology, and practice. This is the gospel through 21 days of prayer. We hope you have noticed how often two completely different passages can use the exact same language to describe the love of God, our place on earth, and the ministry of Jesus. We hope you have seen how the words of everyday people in extraordinary situations have agreed across generations about the God's goodness and his work throughout history. Be encouraged. Be strengthened. Return to this often. And then, after praying, "Send Me!", give this away.

The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you always.