

THE PRAY WARRIOR

Learning to Pray

A Practical 7-Day Journey

With Pastor David Small



A course to read and put into practice

Seven guided lessons with KJV Scripture, worked prayer examples, teaching graphics, and a personal prayer workbook.

Begin with an honest conversation. Build confidence through practice. Continue with a guided 30-day prayer plan.

Expanded companion to the free online 7-Day Prayer Journey

Welcome to your prayer journey

You can learn to pray by beginning where you are. These seven lessons will help you speak honestly with God, learn from Jesus, pray with Scripture, bring others before Him, and continue through difficult seasons.

In 38 years of ministry, I have seen God answer prayer in ways I could not arrange. I have also learned the importance of continuing when answers are slow. My hope is that this course helps you take your next faithful step in prayer.

How to use the course

Allow about 20–25 minutes per lesson. Read the teaching and the full Bible passage, study the worked example, then spend time praying and writing. Each day has three pages: teaching, an example with a graphic, and a practice page. Move at your own pace.

The worked examples use everyday situations. The Antigua and Guyana accounts are my own ministry experiences. Scripture quotations are KJV; the guided prayers are personal responses you can adapt.

This is the deeper, expanded companion to the free online 7-Day Prayer Journey. Its lesson titles and readings intentionally differ, with fuller teaching, worked examples, and a workbook. You can begin here or after the online journey. Leader's guidance is on page 36.

Find your lesson

New to faith? Begin here • page 3

Day 1 Begin an honest conversation with God • page 4

Day 2 Learn from the Lord's Prayer • page 7

Day 3 Pray with faith and confidence • page 10

Day 4 Pray using God's Word • page 13

Day 5 Pray for others • page 16

Day 6 Keep praying through difficult seasons • page 19

Day 7 Make prayer a way of life • page 22

Your continuing prayer plan • page 25

The Lord's Prayer and practical help • pages 27–28

Your next 30 days and reusable journal • pages 29–35

Before you begin

What would you like to learn or practice through these seven days?

New to faith? Begin here

You may be opening this course because you want to pray but are not sure where you stand with God. You are welcome here. Bring your questions, and take time to understand the invitation Jesus gives you.

A relationship begins with Jesus

The Christian message begins with God's love. Our sin separates us from Him, and we cannot earn our way back by becoming good enough. Jesus Christ died for our sins and rose again. Through Him, God offers forgiveness and new life. Read John 3:16–17, Ephesians 2:8–10, and Romans 10:9–13 in your KJV Bible.

Turning to Christ means acknowledging your sin, turning toward God, and trusting Jesus as Savior and Lord. You can speak to Him honestly today.

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Romans 10:13 (KJV)

Begin with the ABC of prayer

Address God as your Father. Come through Jesus and tell God that you want to know Him. If you are still exploring, be honest about that too.

Bring your needs and the people on your heart. Begin with your need for forgiveness and a new life. Tell Him where you need help to turn from sin.

Communicate with Him honestly. Express your trust in Jesus and your willingness to follow Him. Bring your questions as you learn.

A prayer you can make your own

Father, I need Your forgiveness. I have sinned, and I turn to You. I believe Jesus died for my sins and rose again. I trust Him as my Savior and Lord. Help me leave my old ways and learn to follow You. Thank You for Your grace. In Jesus' name, amen.

These words express faith; the words themselves do not save us. Our trust is in Jesus Christ.

Take your next step

Read a short part of John's Gospel each day. Tell a trusted pastor or mature Christian about your decision or questions. Join a Bible-teaching church, ask about baptism, and begin Day 1. You do not have to learn everything alone.

My question or next step

Begin an honest conversation with God

Today's aim: Pray a simple personal prayer using the ABC approach.

Read in your KJV Bible: Matthew 6:5–8; Hebrews 4:14–16

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

Hebrews 4:16 (KJV)

You can begin praying with the words you already have. You do not need to sound like a preacher or wait until you feel spiritually strong. Through Jesus Christ, you are invited to come to God for mercy and help. That invitation is where this course begins.

In Matthew 6, Jesus warns against praying to impress people. He directs our attention to the Father who sees us in secret. A quiet room can help us focus, but a perfect room is not required. What matters is turning toward God with an honest heart.

I have taught a simple ABC of prayer for years. Address God as your Father. Bring your needs and the people on your heart. Communicate with Him honestly. This is a helpful starting point, not a rule that every prayer must follow.

Address God as your Father. Pause before listing your requests. Remember whom you are speaking to. Thank Him for welcoming you through Christ. If the word father carries painful memories, let Jesus teach you about the goodness of your heavenly Father rather than measuring God by a human failure.

Bring your needs and the people on your heart. Name something specific. You may need wisdom for a decision, provision for your family, or patience with someone you love. God already knows your need, but Jesus still teaches us to ask. Prayer gives us a way to express our dependence on Him.

Communicate with Him honestly. Tell God when you are grateful, afraid, distracted, or unsure what to say. Include confession where you need forgiveness. Then leave a quiet moment to reflect on His Word and how you should respond. Let Scripture guide your next faithful step.

Today, keep it simple. Choose a place, put away one distraction, and pray for five minutes. If your attention wanders, return gently. Your first step is to begin the conversation.

The ABC of prayer



From an ordinary moment to an honest prayer

Imagine sitting at the kitchen table before a difficult workday. You are tired, your thoughts are moving quickly, and you are worried about a conversation with a colleague. You can begin right there. The following prayer shows how the ABC approach can guide you without making your words stiff or formal.

Address. Father, thank You that I can come to You through Jesus. You know me and You know the day ahead.

Bring. Please give me patience and wisdom for my conversation at work. Help my colleague with the pressures they are carrying too.

Communicate. I am worried that I will become defensive. Forgive my pride. Help me listen carefully and speak truthfully with kindness.

Notice how the prayer moves from relationship to a real need and then to an honest response. It includes another person, not only the speaker's concerns. The prayer also prepares the speaker to act: listen carefully and speak kindly. You can use the same pattern at a hospital bedside, before a family conversation, or at the end of the day.

Now replace the work situation with one from your own life. Do not copy details that are not true for you. Read your prayer aloud once, then pray it naturally. If you only have a minute today, one sincere sentence for each letter is enough to begin.

Talk about it

What helps you speak honestly with God, and what tends to make you hold back? Share only what you are comfortable sharing.

Put it into practice

1. Choose a place where you can pause for five minutes. Silence notifications if possible.
2. Address God as your Father. Thank Him for one specific kindness.
3. Bring one personal need and the name of one other person to Him.
4. Communicate honestly. Tell Him what is difficult and ask for help with your next step.
5. Sit quietly for a moment, then write one sentence about your prayer.

A prayer to begin

Father, thank You that I can come to You through Jesus. I bring You my needs, my questions, and the people I love. Forgive me where I have sinned. Help me speak honestly and trust Your care. Teach me to make room for You today. In Jesus' name, amen.

Your response

What have I been hesitant to tell God?

Write your own three sentence prayer using Address, Bring, and Communicate.

When and where will I return to prayer tomorrow?

Today I practiced: I prayed honestly, even if my words were simple.

Date: _____

Tomorrow we will let the Lord's Prayer give shape to our conversation with God.

Learn from the Lord's Prayer

Today's aim: Use the themes of the Lord's Prayer to guide your own words.

Read in your KJV Bible: Matthew 6:9–15

"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name."

Matthew 6:9 (KJV)

Sometimes we sit down to pray and immediately run out of words. Jesus gives us a prayer we can return to. In Matthew 6:9–13, He teaches us to honor the Father, seek His will, ask for provision, seek and extend forgiveness, and ask for protection from evil.

Begin with the Father and His holy name. Before thinking about what must change around you, remember who God is. Praise can be as simple as thanking Him for His faithfulness. You are approaching someone worthy of your trust and reverence.

Next, pray for His kingdom and will. This opens our prayers beyond our own plans. Ask God to shape your choices, your home, and your relationships according to what pleases Him. Name one place where obedience may cost you something: telling the truth, making an apology, or choosing patience.

Ask for daily bread. Jesus makes room for ordinary needs. Food, work, shelter, strength, and help with today's responsibilities belong in prayer. Notice the word *our* in the prayer. As you ask for provision, remember people who have less than you do and consider whether you can help.

Bring your need for forgiveness. Be specific without making excuses. Then ask for grace to forgive those who have hurt you. Forgiveness does not require pretending that harm was acceptable, immediately restoring trust, or abandoning wise boundaries. Reconciliation involves more than one person.

Ask for help against temptation and evil. Think about a situation in which you are vulnerable. Pray, and make a practical choice that supports obedience. You may need to leave a conversation, limit a distraction, or ask someone trustworthy for support.

You can pray the Lord's Prayer word for word, thoughtfully and sincerely. You can also pause over each theme and add your own words. The aim is to let Jesus shape what you desire and how you come to the Father.

The pattern Jesus taught



Let the pattern shape a real decision

Imagine deciding whether to accept a job that would change your family's routine. You have a preference, but you also need wisdom. The Lord's Prayer helps you bring the decision to God with more than a request for your favorite outcome. These are personal responses to its themes, not quotations from Scripture.

Honor and seek. Father, You are wise and good. Help me desire what pleases You as I consider this work.

Ask and confess. Provide for my family. Forgive me for making decisions from pride or fear, and help me listen to those affected.

Seek help and worship. Protect me from dishonest shortcuts. Help me take the next right step. Whatever happens, I want my choices to honor You.

Prayer brings your motives, responsibilities, and needs into the light. After praying, gather the facts, consider your commitments, and seek wise counsel. Asking for God's will includes being willing to hear an answer you did not expect.

For today's exercise, choose one small decision. Pray through the themes slowly. You may linger on forgiveness one day and daily provision another day. The pattern gives direction while leaving room for your real circumstances.

Talk about it

Which theme in the Lord's Prayer receives the least attention in your prayers, and how might including it change your week?

Put it into practice

1. Read Matthew 6:9–13 slowly in your KJV Bible.
2. Pause to praise God and ask for His will in one decision.
3. Name a daily need, then pray for someone else's provision.
4. Confess a sin and ask for grace to forgive an offense.
5. Ask for protection and choose one practical step away from temptation.

A prayer to begin

Our Father, Your name is holy. Let Your will shape my decisions today. Provide what my household needs and help me care for others. Forgive my sins and teach me to forgive. Guard me from temptation and guide me in what is right. In Jesus' name, amen.

Your response

Which part of the Lord's Prayer do I tend to hurry past?

What would seeking God's will look like in one decision today?

Write one personal request under a theme from the Lord's Prayer.

Today I practiced: I paused over the themes of the Lord's Prayer and prayed in my own words.

Date: _____

Tomorrow we will bring our worries and doubts to God with faith.

Pray with faith and confidence

Today's aim: Turn one worry into a specific request and a faithful next step.

Read in your KJV Bible: Philippians 4:4–9; Hebrews 4:14–16

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”

Philippians 4:6 (KJV)

When I was pastoring in Antigua, there were times when I had no money and the cupboards were empty. On two separate occasions, the Lord sent sisters to my door with food. They were not members of my church. I remember those moments as reminders of God's care.

A testimony can encourage our faith, but it does not give us control over how God will answer our own requests. Faith rests in His character. We can ask clearly for what we need while leaving the outcome and timing in His hands.

In Philippians 4:6, the expression Be careful for nothing speaks to anxiety and worry. Paul invites believers to bring their requests to God with thanksgiving. You do not need to hide your anxiety before you pray. You can bring the very thing that is troubling you into the conversation.

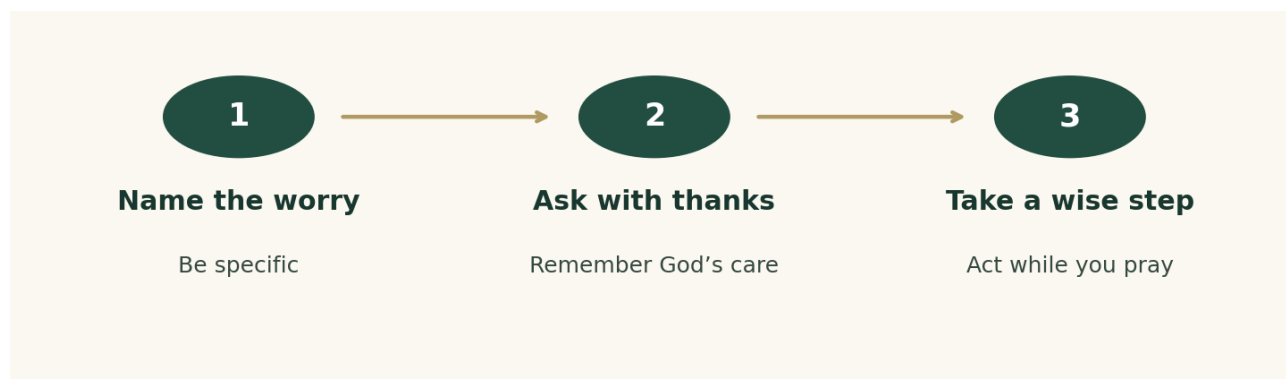
Try naming your concern in one sentence. Instead of a vague request for everything to improve, tell God what is happening and what help you need. If you are looking for work, ask for provision, opportunities, wisdom in applying, and strength to keep going. Prayer and practical action can belong together.

Thanksgiving helps you remember what is still true while a problem remains unresolved. Thank God for one past kindness or one present support. You do not need to call a painful situation good. You can acknowledge pain while being grateful for the help you have received.

Doubt and distraction do not have to end your prayer. Tell God where you struggle to trust. If your mind drifts to a task, write a brief reminder and return. You may find it helpful to pray aloud quietly or use a short written prayer.

An unwanted outcome does not prove that your faith was inadequate. Today's practice is to bring your need honestly, remember God's goodness, and take the next wise step available to you. Confidence grows as you continue to come to Him.

Bring your worry to God



A prayer when the bills feel overwhelming

Imagine opening a bill you cannot yet pay. Your first thoughts may be fear or shame. Begin by naming the concern honestly. You can ask for provision and for wisdom to use the resources and opportunities available to you.

Name. Father, I am worried about this bill and I do not know how I will cover it.

Ask with thanks. Please provide what I need and help me see the next responsible step. Thank You for the support I have already received.

Respond. Give me courage to ask for help, review my spending, and speak honestly with the people involved. Keep fear from deciding my actions.

When the sisters brought food to my door in Antigua, the provision came through people. That memory encourages me to stay open to ordinary ways God may care for us. Asking for help is not a failure of faith. It may be a wise response to the very need we have brought to Him.

For this exercise, choose a concern that you can describe clearly. Avoid measuring the value of the prayer by whether your feelings change immediately. Record the request, identify one action you can take, and return to God when the worry rises again. Thanksgiving and honest need can sit together in the same prayer.

Talk about it

How can you encourage someone to trust God without suggesting that a difficult outcome means their faith is weak?

Put it into practice

1. Write one worry as a single sentence.
2. Turn it into a specific request for God's help.
3. Thank Him for one kindness or source of support.
4. Name one wise action you can take today alongside prayer.
5. When the worry returns, use your written prayer to turn toward God again.

A prayer to begin

Father, You know what is weighing on me. I ask for Your help with this need. Strengthen my trust when I am afraid, and give me wisdom for the next step. Thank You for the care You have already shown me. Help me receive Your answer with humility. In Jesus' name, amen.

Your response

What am I worried about, and what am I asking God to do?

What do I know about God that can support my trust today?

What practical step will I take, and when?

Today I practiced: I brought one worry to God and chose a wise next step.

Date: _____

Tomorrow we will learn to let Scripture supply words and direction for prayer.

Pray using God's Word

Today's aim: Turn a short Scripture passage into a personal prayer while respecting its meaning.

Read in your KJV Bible: Psalm 23

"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want."

Psalm 23:1 (KJV)

When I pastored in Guyana, I helped a lady in our church memorize Scripture. Learning a passage gives us words to return to when our own words are hard to find. It also helps us remember who God is when our feelings change.

Praying Scripture begins with reading it carefully. Before taking a sentence into your prayer, notice the surrounding passage. Ask what it says about God, what is happening, and how a faithful response might look. We want our prayers to be shaped by the passage's meaning.

Today, read Psalm 23. David describes the Lord as his shepherd. The psalm speaks of provision, restoration, guidance, and God's presence through danger. Carry those truths into the circumstances you face today.

Begin with what the passage reveals about God. Because He is the shepherd, you can thank Him for His care. Then name your need. Perhaps you are weary and need restoration, or you face a decision and need guidance. Ask Him to lead you in what is right.

Keep the biblical words and your own response distinct. Psalm 23:1 is Scripture. A prayer such as Lord, help me trust Your care for my family today is your response to Scripture. Your prayer can be simple and personal without pretending to be a new Bible verse.

Read the passage in its setting. Ask whether a statement is a command, a general truth, a poem, or a promise to a particular person. When you are unsure, seek help from a trusted teacher or pastor.

A useful rhythm is read, notice, respond, and act. Read slowly. Notice one truth. Respond to God in prayer. Choose one action that fits what you have read. You may spend several days with the same passage; you do not have to rush to another one.

From Scripture to prayer



A worked example from Psalm 23

Read Psalm 23 before using this example. Notice that the shepherd leads and restores, and that the psalm also speaks of a dark valley. God's care and difficult circumstances appear in the same passage. This helps us pray with hope without pretending that hardship is absent.

Notice. The psalm describes God's care and guidance. I need both as I face a demanding week.

Respond. Lord, thank You for caring for me. I feel stretched and unsure which responsibility to address first. Restore my strength and guide me in what is right.

Act. Today I will ask for wise advice about my commitments and make room to rest instead of treating exhaustion as a virtue.

Let the psalm guide your response: thank God for His care, ask for restoration, and seek His direction. Carry one phrase into your day and return to it when you need a reminder of His presence.

If a passage is confusing, begin with what is clear and ask for help understanding the rest. Write the reference beside your prayer so you can return to the surrounding verses. Over time, a short passage learned carefully can give you language for many different seasons.

Talk about it

What is the difference between responding to a passage and using a verse to support an outcome you have already chosen?

Put it into practice

1. Read all six verses of Psalm 23.
2. Choose one phrase and write it exactly, including the reference.
3. Write what it reveals about God in your own words.
4. Turn that truth into thanks and a specific request.
5. Choose one response, such as resting, seeking wise guidance, or making a right choice.

A prayer to begin

Lord, thank You for Your care as my shepherd. Restore me where I am weary and guide me in what is right. Help me trust Your presence in the difficult places. Teach me to understand Your Word and respond with obedience. In Jesus' name, amen.

Your response

Which phrase from Psalm 23 will I carry with me today?

What does this passage teach me about God's care and guidance?

Write a personal prayer that responds to the passage.

Today I practiced: I read a passage in context and used it to guide my prayer.

Date: _____

Tomorrow we will bring other people's needs before God.

Pray for others

Today's aim: Make a simple prayer list and pray specifically for three people.

Read in your KJV Bible: 1 Timothy 2:1–6

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;"

1 Timothy 2:1 (KJV)

Intercession means praying to God on behalf of others. It gives love a practical expression, including when you cannot solve a person's problem or be physically present. You bring the person and their need to the Father, trusting His wisdom and care.

In 1 Timothy 2, Paul widens the circle of prayer. He includes all people and specifically mentions those in authority. Our prayers can reach beyond family and friends to church leaders, neighbors, public officials, and people whose choices we find difficult.

Begin with three names. For each person, write one known need. Pray for provision where there is lack, comfort in grief, wisdom in a decision, or strength for a responsibility. You can also pray for their relationship with God and for people who will support them well.

When you do not know what a person needs, avoid making up a story about their life. Ask God to help them in the circumstances He knows. If appropriate, ask the person how you can pray. Give them freedom to share as much or as little as they wish.

Respect what people entrust to you. A private concern should not become a public prayer request without permission. You can pray faithfully without passing along details. If someone comes to mind unexpectedly, praying for them is a loving response; you can respond with a brief prayer and a thoughtful message.

Prayer can also open your eyes to practical service. You might prepare a meal, offer a ride, listen without rushing, or send a kind message. Offer help without pressure and without assuming you know what the person needs better than they do.

Include someone who is hard for you to love. Ask for their good and for God to work truthfully in the situation. You can pray for them while maintaining appropriate boundaries. Today, let your prayer list become a small, faithful expression of love.

A wider circle of prayer



Pray specifically without assuming

Imagine a friend tells you they are caring for an ill parent. They have shared enough for you to pray, but you do not need to ask for every private detail. Start with what you know and leave room for what you do not know.

Pray for the need. Father, please help my friend as they care for their parent. Give them strength, rest, and the support they need.

Pray beyond the need. Guide those involved in the parent's care. Give this family wisdom and moments of comfort together.

Offer care. After praying, I can ask whether a meal or an errand would help. I will let my friend choose rather than deciding for them.

A prayer list becomes useful when it helps us remember people, not when it grows so long that we cannot use it. Begin with three names. Keep requests brief. Review them once a week, update what you have permission to know, and give thanks for signs of help.

When praying for someone difficult, ask God to work for their good and to make your own response truthful and loving. You do not need to excuse harmful behavior. You can ask for justice, repentance, protection, and healing while refusing to nurture revenge. The aim is to bring the person before God with honesty.

Talk about it

How can prayer lead to practical care while still respecting another person's privacy and choices?

Put it into practice

1. Write three names: someone close to you, a leader, and someone difficult to love.
2. Record one known need for each, without adding unnecessary private details.
3. Pray for each person by name for about one minute.
4. Thank God for something good in their life or ask Him to help you see them with compassion.
5. Choose one appropriate act of care and follow through.

A prayer to begin

Father, I bring these people before You. Provide what they need, comfort them in pain, and guide them in truth. Help those who lead to act with wisdom and integrity. Show me how to love without controlling, and help me offer practical care where I can. In Jesus' name, amen.

Your response

Who are my three people, and what will I ask for each?

Whose needs do I often overlook?

What act of care can I offer while respecting their privacy and wishes?

Today I practiced: I prayed for three people by name and considered a practical act of care.

Date: _____

Tomorrow we will make room for honest prayer when answers seem slow.

Keep praying through difficult seasons

Today's aim: Write an honest prayer of lament and choose a sustainable way to keep praying.

Read in your KJV Bible: Luke 18:1–8; Psalm 13; 2 Corinthians 12:7–10

“And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;”

Luke 18:1 (KJV)

There are seasons when prayer feels natural, and seasons when every sentence takes effort. You may be grieving, exhausted, disappointed, or tired of asking about the same need. Scripture makes room for those experiences. You can bring them to God without disguising them.

Read Psalm 13 in your Bible. Notice how the psalmist speaks honestly about distress and asks God for help. Lament is prayer that brings pain before God. It can include questions, tears, and requests for change. It is a way of turning toward Him with what is actually happening.

In Luke 18:1, faint means to lose heart or give up. Jesus tells the story of the persistent widow so that His followers will keep praying. God is not like the unjust judge who has to be worn down before he cares. The contrast helps us trust God's justice and continue calling on Him.

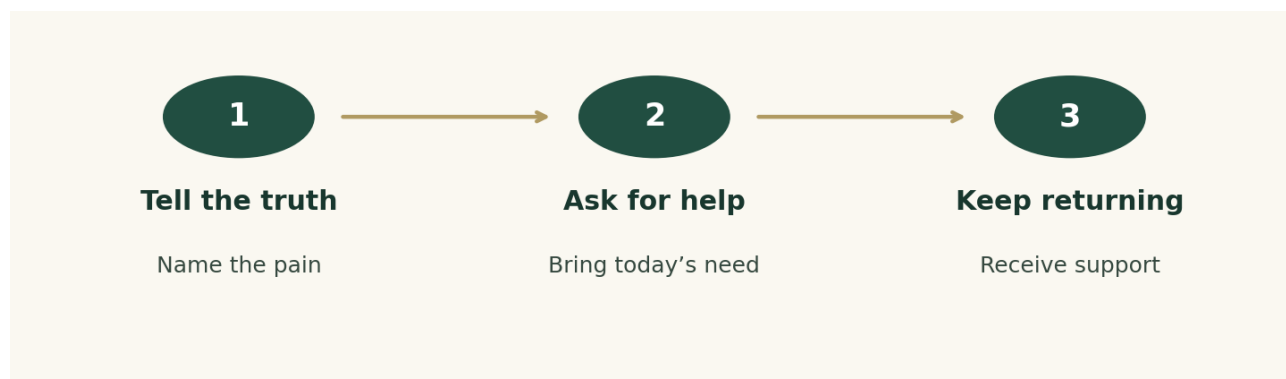
Persistence does not mean that we can force our preferred outcome through enough repetitions. In 2 Corinthians 12:7–10, Paul describes repeatedly asking for a burden to be removed and receiving an answer about sufficient grace. Sometimes continuing in prayer includes learning to receive strength for circumstances that remain.

When I was pastoring in Guyana, I wanted to provide lunch for visiting church leaders but was unsure how I would manage it. I brought the need to God. My next-door neighbor provided lunch without my asking. I remember that kindness with gratitude. Yet no testimony gives us a timetable for another person's answer.

If you are weary today, shorten the prayer rather than abandoning it. Tell God what hurts. Ask for the help you need today. Let a trusted person pray with you. Receiving practical support can be part of continuing faithfully through a hard season.

You do not have to record every unresolved request as a failure. Keep space in your journal for what remains unanswered, what has changed, and what you still do not understand. Bring the truth of your experience to God again tomorrow.

Prayer when you are weary



A prayer when the answer has not come

Imagine praying for a loved one for months with no clear change. You may feel reluctant to pray again because the request reminds you of disappointment. Lament gives you permission to bring that disappointment into prayer itself.

Tell the truth. Lord, I am tired of waiting and I do not understand what is happening. I love this person and I feel helpless.

Ask for help. Please work in their life and help me love them wisely. Give me strength for today and show me where I need support.

Keep returning. I cannot see the whole picture. Help me keep bringing this to You without pretending I am not hurting. I will return tomorrow, even if my prayer is brief.

This prayer leaves the request open. It does not tie God's faithfulness to a deadline. It also asks for help in the person praying. We can ask for circumstances to change and ask for grace to endure at the same time.

If words fail, read a few verses from Psalm 13 or ask a trusted person to pray with you. You do not have to make your pain presentable. For your journal, write what remains unresolved and one form of support you can receive this week. Continuing may look quieter than it did in a stronger season, but it is still a meaningful response.

Talk about it

What kind of support helps you keep praying when you feel disappointed, and what kinds of responses make it harder?

Put it into practice

1. Read Psalm 13 and notice its movement from distress toward trust.
2. Complete the sentence: Lord, what hurts today is...
3. Write one request for help with today, rather than trying to solve the whole future.
4. Name one truth about God you want to hold onto.
5. Choose a manageable prayer time and a trusted person you can approach for support.

A prayer to begin

Lord, You know the burden I am carrying. I bring You my disappointment and the questions I cannot answer. Please help me today. Give me strength to keep turning toward You, wisdom to receive support, and grace for the things I cannot change. In Jesus' name, amen.

Your response

What do I need to tell God honestly about this season?

What specific help am I asking for today?

What will help me continue, and whom can I ask to pray with me?

Today I practiced: I brought a difficult feeling to God and chose a manageable way to continue.

Date: _____

Tomorrow we will build a plan for prayer beyond this course.

Make prayer a way of life

Today's aim: Create a realistic plan for the next seven days of prayer.

Read in your KJV Bible: 1 Thessalonians 5:16–22

“Pray without ceasing.”

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (KJV)

You have practiced coming honestly to God, learning from Jesus, bringing worries, praying Scripture, interceding, and continuing through difficulty. The next step is to make room for these practices in an ordinary week. A useful plan is one you can return to when life is busy.

Paul's invitation to pray without ceasing points us toward an ongoing life of dependence on God. It does not require withdrawing from responsibilities to speak every moment. We can have a set time for prayer and also turn toward God briefly throughout the day.

Choose a daily anchor. You might pray after breakfast, before leaving for work, or when the house becomes quiet. Begin with a length of time you can usually manage. Ten to fifteen minutes is a useful starting point. Let consistency grow from a manageable beginning.

Add brief pauses to existing routines. In the morning, thank God and ask for guidance. At midday, bring one person to Him. In the evening, review the day with gratitude and confession. These pauses can help prayer become part of your daily attention.

Use a journal to remember requests, Scripture, answers, and questions. Record what actually happened. Give thanks for the help and encouraging changes you notice. Keep unanswered requests in the journal too; they belong to your real relationship with God.

Consider inviting a willing friend to pray with you once a week. Agree on what stays private and keep the time manageable. Encouragement works best when it makes returning easier, rather than making someone ashamed of a missed day.

If your routine breaks, begin again at the next opportunity. You do not need to repeat the entire course before you can return to God. Choose one practice from this week that helped you most and make it part of tomorrow. The course is ending, but the conversation can continue.

A daily rhythm of prayer



Build a plan that fits a real week

Imagine someone who wants to pray every morning but often leaves home in a hurry. A plan that depends on a perfect morning is likely to be fragile. A daily anchor plus a shorter fallback makes returning easier.

Daily anchor. After breakfast, I will spend ten minutes reading a short passage and praying at the kitchen table.

Brief pauses. At lunch, I will pray for one person. Before bed, I will thank God for one kindness and confess anything I need to make right.

Fallback and review. If I miss the morning time, I will use a two-minute ABC prayer before bed. On Sunday, I will review what helped and adjust the plan.

Use this as an example, not a required schedule. Your anchor might come after a shift, during a quiet afternoon, or when a child is asleep. Choose a time that fits your responsibilities. A smaller plan practiced honestly can teach you more than an ambitious plan that you continually postpone.

Look for growth in what you practice: speaking more honestly, returning after distraction, remembering others, using Scripture carefully, or taking an obedient step. Finish the course by choosing what you will keep doing next week.

Talk about it

Which part of your prayer plan seems most realistic, and what adjustment will help you return after a disrupted day?

Put it into practice

1. Choose your usual prayer time, place, and a realistic duration.
2. Choose a shorter fallback prayer for a disrupted day.
3. Attach morning, midday, and evening prayer prompts to existing routines.
4. Choose one Scripture passage and three people for the coming week.
5. Set a day to review your plan and adjust what is not working.

A prayer to begin

Father, thank You for meeting me as I learn to pray. Help me make room for You in ordinary moments. Keep me honest, thankful, and attentive to others. When I miss a day, help me return. Let this practice grow into a faithful walk with You. In Jesus' name, amen.

Your response

My daily prayer time, place, and fallback plan will be...

The practice I will keep using is... because...

My three people and Scripture passage for next week are...

Today I practiced: I made a practical plan for the next week and chose a review day.

Date: _____

Use the closing page to review what you learned and choose your next step.

Your continuing prayer plan

You have reached the end of the lessons. Now choose a manageable rhythm for the next week. Fill in the details below so that your next step is clear.

My usual prayer time and place will be

The daily routine I will connect prayer to is

On a disrupted day my shorter prayer plan will be

The Scripture passage I will return to is

Three people I will pray for this week are

One person I could invite to pray with me is

I will review this plan on

A simple rhythm for the week

Begin with gratitude. Read a short passage. Bring a personal need and another person to God. Finish by choosing one faithful response. Use the ABC approach when you need a simple starting point.

Recognize growth and keep going

Return to the hope you wrote at the beginning. What changed in the way you understand or practice prayer? Look for small, concrete signs of growth rather than a perfect record or a guaranteed outcome.

- ☐ I begin more honestly, even when I am unsure what to say.
- ☐ I use the themes Jesus taught to guide my prayers.
- ☐ I bring a worry to God and take a wise next step.
- ☐ I read Scripture in context before turning it into prayer.
- ☐ I remember other people by name and care for them practically.
- ☐ I can bring disappointment to God and receive support.
- ☐ I return after a missed day and adjust my routine when needed.

One example of growth I noticed

One practice I want to strengthen over the next week

Keep using your course

Repeat the lesson that matches your next step. At the end of the week, review what helped, what was difficult, and what needs to change. Use the Prayer Assessment to choose a practical next step.

Prayer Assessment: thepraywarrior.com/prayer-assessment/

Prayer Journal: thepraywarrior.com/printable-prayer-journal/

Ask for prayer: thepraywarrior.com/contact/

A closing prayer

Father, thank You for inviting me to pray. Keep me honest, thankful, and ready to care for others. Shape my desires through Your Word and sustain me when I wait. Help me return to You tomorrow and live what I have learned. In Jesus' name, amen.

Continue with the reference prayer, practical help, and 30-day plan on the following pages. Photocopy the journal pages for your own use or your study group.

The Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:9–13 • King James Version

Read the prayer slowly. The italic text below is the exact KJV wording, arranged by verse. The explanations are teaching notes, not part of the biblical text.

Verse 9

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Begin with relationship and reverence. Jesus directs us to the Father and teaches us to honor His holy name.

Verse 10

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Ask for God's rule and purposes to shape your life. Bring one decision or desire before Him with a willingness to obey.

Verse 11

Give us this day our daily bread.

Ask for what is needed today. Remember that the prayer says *our*: include the needs of others alongside your own.

Verse 12

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

Here, debts means sins or offenses before God, and debtors means those who have wronged us. Confess your sins and ask for grace to forgive others (see Matthew 6:14–15).

Verse 13

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Ask for guidance and deliverance from evil. End by acknowledging God's rule, power, and glory.

Make room for your own response

Read one verse, pause, and add a personal prayer. If you are praying with others, invite each willing person to respond to one theme. There is no need to fill every silence.

When prayer feels difficult

You do not need to solve every struggle before you pray. Use the response that fits today, and return to the relevant lesson when you want more guidance.

My mind keeps wandering

Keep a small notepad beside you. Write down the distracting task, then return to one sentence of prayer. Try praying quietly aloud or using the ABC approach. Returning is part of the practice, not a reason to start over.

I do not know what to say

Begin with one honest sentence about your day. Read Matthew 6:9–13 or Psalm 23 and respond to one theme. You can use a guided prayer from this course until your own words come more easily.

I feel guilty or unworthy

Bring the specific wrong to God, ask for forgiveness, and consider what you need to make right. Hebrews 4:14–16 invites us to approach through Jesus for mercy and grace. Seek help from a trusted pastor if guilt keeps you trapped in vague self-condemnation.

God seems silent

Name the disappointment without forcing an explanation. Read Psalm 13. Keep asking for help and remain open to wise counsel and ordinary forms of support. A quiet prayer time does not mean you have failed.

I cannot find a quiet place

Use the space available: a chair, a short walk, or a few minutes before a routine begins. If privacy is limited, pray silently. Choose one manageable daily anchor rather than waiting for perfect conditions.

I missed several days

Return at the next opportunity. Use a shorter prayer today and adjust the routine if needed. You do not owe a longer session to make up for missed minutes.

I am not sure whether an impression is from God

You can pray for someone without claiming certainty about why they came to mind. Test your response against Scripture and seek wise counsel for significant decisions. Do not pressure someone by presenting an untested impression as God's command.

A simple prayer for today: Father, meet me in this difficulty. Help me take one honest step toward You and receive the help I need. In Jesus' name, amen.

Return to the Father

Build an honest, repeatable conversation with God.

Begin after the seven lessons. Read the passage in your KJV Bible, use the prompt, and jot a brief response in your journal. Allow about ten minutes. These are 30 additional days of practice; move at your own pace.

Day 1 Begin honestly

Read: Matthew 6:5–8

Use the ABC approach to tell God how you are arriving today.

Day 2 Notice one kindness

Read: Psalm 103:1–5

Thank God for one concrete kindness you have received.

Day 3 Name a daily need

Read: Matthew 6:9–13

Ask for provision for one need, then remember someone with a similar need.

Day 4 Make something right

Read: Matthew 6:9–15

Confess one wrong and choose an appropriate step toward making it right.

Day 5 Leave a quiet moment

Read: Psalm 23

Read slowly, pause, and reflect on how to respond without forcing an impression.

Day 6 Include another person

Read: 1 Timothy 2:1–6

Pray for one person by name and one known need.

Day 7 Review your rhythm

Read: Colossians 4:2

Thank God for what helped you return. Adjust your prayer time if needed.

Weekly reflection: What helped me return to prayer, and what will I adjust?

Let Scripture guide you

Practice reading in context and responding in your own words.

Day 8 Remember your shepherd

Read: Psalm 23:1–6

Thank God for His care and name where you need guidance.

Day 9 Pray for God's will

Read: Matthew 6:9–13

Bring one decision and ask for willingness to obey.

Day 10 Bring a worry

Read: Philippians 4:4–9

Write one worry, turn it into a request, and include thanksgiving.

Day 11 Ask for mercy and help

Read: Hebrews 4:14–16

Bring a weakness honestly and ask for grace for today.

Day 12 Pray for leaders

Read: 1 Timothy 2:1–6

Ask for wisdom and integrity for a church or community leader.

Day 13 Keep asking

Read: Luke 18:1–8

Return to one unresolved request without setting God a deadline.

Day 14 Review one passage

Read: Psalm 23

Record how this passage has shaped your prayers this week.

Weekly reflection: What helped me return to prayer, and what will I adjust?

Widen your circle

Let prayer deepen your attention to other people.

Day 15 Pray for your household

Read: Ephesians 3:14–21

Ask God to strengthen each member of your household in faith and love.

Day 16 Remember your church

Read: Nehemiah 1:4–11

Bring your church's needs to God with confession, hope, and willingness to serve.

Day 17 Care for a neighbor

Read: Matthew 6:9–13

Pray for a neighbor's needs and consider a practical act of kindness.

Day 18 Pray for someone difficult

Read: Matthew 6:9–15

Ask for their good and for a truthful, loving response from you.

Day 19 Remember someone hurting

Read: Psalm 13

Ask for comfort and support for someone facing grief or disappointment.

Day 20 Offer practical care

Read: James 5:13–18

Pray for someone who is ill or struggling and offer an appropriate act of care.

Day 21 Review with gratitude

Read: Psalm 103:8–14

Give thanks for people who have supported you and update your prayer list.

Weekly reflection: What helped me return to prayer, and what will I adjust?

Continue through ordinary days

Practice persistence and build a sustainable routine.

Day 22 Pray in the waiting

Read: Luke 18:1–8

Name what remains unresolved and ask for help to continue.

Day 23 Make room for lament

Read: Psalm 13

Tell God one painful truth and one request for today.

Day 24 Ask for sustaining grace

Read: 2 Corinthians 12:7–10

Ask for strength in a situation you cannot presently change.

Day 25 Receive support

Read: Hebrews 4:14–16

Bring your need to God and consider whom you can ask to pray with you.

Day 26 Practice three pauses

Read: Daniel 6:10

Use morning gratitude, midday intercession, and evening reflection.

Day 27 Return after disruption

Read: Matthew 6:5–8

Use a short ABC prayer when the day does not go as planned.

Day 28 Review your plan

Read: Mark 1:35–39

Choose the time, place, and fallback prayer you will keep using.

Weekly reflection: What helped me return to prayer, and what will I adjust?

Carry the practice forward

Day 29 Notice what has grown

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16–22. Look back through your journal. Notice a change in honesty, attention to others, use of Scripture, willingness to obey, or returning after a missed day. Thank God for one specific example.

One change I notice in my prayer life

Day 30 Choose your continuing rhythm

Read Matthew 6:5–13. Revisit your prayer plan on page 25. Keep the practices that helped you, change what did not fit, and choose a review date for the next month. Consider inviting a willing friend to pray with you.

The practice I will continue and the adjustment I will make

Your next month

My usual prayer time and place

My fallback plan and review date

Father, thank You for what You have taught me. Help me carry this practice into the next month with humility and joy. Let my prayers lead me to love and obey You in everyday life. In Jesus' name, amen.

My prayer journal

Date: _____ Passage: _____

Use this page as often as you wish. Record what is true today; you do not need to fill every space.

One truth I notice in the passage

What I am thankful for

My prayer in my own words

People and needs I am bringing to God

One faithful action I will take

Requests and reflections

Review date: _____

Keep room for answers, changes, uncertainty, and requests that remain unresolved. Describe what happened without feeling you must explain every cause.

A request I am continuing to bring to God

What has changed since I began praying

What remains unresolved or difficult to understand

Help or support I have received and want to give thanks for

My next prayer or practical response

Scripture quotations are from the King James Version.

Leader's note

Use this course with a small group, prayer partner, or church class. Read the teaching aloud, explore the worked example, and invite a response to the discussion question. Allow people to pass and keep personal journal entries private.

A simple 45-minute gathering

Welcome and opening prayer — 5 minutes.

Read the Scripture and explore the teaching — 10 minutes.

Discuss the worked example and lesson question — 10 minutes.

Allow personal prayer and journal time — 10 minutes.

Pray together and choose a next step — 10 minutes.

If you are recording the course

Use the teaching and example pages as your script. Introduce the Scripture reference, distinguish the KJV quotation from your explanation, and pause at each practice instruction. Invite listeners to pause the recording while they pray or write. Describe the teaching graphic briefly for those listening without a screen.

Welcome those exploring faith

Point newcomers to page 3. Give them room to ask questions and offer a personal conversation after the gathering. Help those who wish to follow Jesus connect with a local church and learn about baptism.

Style for course and website

Capitalize pronouns referring to God and Jesus: He, Him, His, Himself, You, and Your. Keep pronouns referring to readers or other people in their normal grammatical case. Keep God, Jesus Christ, and Holy Spirit capitalized. Preserve the wording and capitalization of every KJV quotation exactly.

The course and the online journey

The free website journey is a brief introduction. This course is its expanded companion, with intentionally different lesson titles and fuller readings. Day 4, for example, studies all of Psalm 23. Use either resource on its own or offer the course as the next step.

Online journey: thepraywarrior.com/7-day-prayer-journey/