



Prayer Guide

The Lord's Prayer as a Guide

The Lord's Prayer may be recited, or used as a general guide for our own prayers. Below is one sample, taken from 3DM materials, of what it might look like to use the Lord's Prayer as a scaffolding for our own prayer times. After each phrase is recited, the person praying can pause and add their own prayer along the same theme:

The Father's Character (Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name): Contemplating and praising God for who He is. Remembering that God is our father and we can come to him personally and in trust. Reminding ourselves that it's all about Him and the praise of His glory. Meditation and **adoration**.

The Father's Kingdom (your kingdom come, your will be done earth on as it is in heaven): Praying for God's rule to break in to the world: for justice, peace, love, reconciliation, the spread of the gospel. For God to rule in our own lives. Remembering it's about the extension of his rule and not our personal wants. **Intercession**.

The Father's Provision (Give us today our daily bread): Remembering our needs for the day and asking God to provide. Remembering he is our provider and repenting of our tendency to grab things for ourselves. **Petition**.

The Father's Forgiveness (Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors): Restoring our relationships with God and with each other. Avoiding the bitterness that grows through our unforgiveness. Thanking God for his grace and mercy and praying that we would show the same to the people around us. **Penitence**.

The Father's Guidance (And lead us not into temptation): As we prepare to move out to serve Jesus in the wider world, praying for guidance, and for strength in avoiding sinful behavior. Listening to God fits in here. Contemplation. And spiritual warfare, since it reminds us that there is an evil one, the devil, who is trying to "take us down" and get us off track by tempting us into sin. **Guidance**. Which brings us to...

The Father's Protection (but deliver us from the evil one): Remembering that God is our security and protection, and praying for courage to live out our faith wholeheartedly despite possible persecution, attack or risk. Abandonment to God. **Protection**.

Small Topical Index of Prayers:

Evening

“Lord Jesus, stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past; be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts, and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.”

Purity of Heart

“Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

For Stillness of Heart

*“Encircle me, O God, keep faith within, keep pride without.
Encircle me, O God, keep hope within, keep despair out.
Encircle me, O God, keep love within, keep fear without. Amen.”*

Peace

“O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, we pray thee to set thy passion, cross, and death, between thy judgment and our souls, now and in the hour of our death. Give mercy and grace to the living, pardon and rest to the dead, to thy holy Church peace and concord, and to us sinners everlasting life and glory; who with the Father and the Holy Spirit livest and reignest, one God, now and for ever. Amen.”

Mission

“Everliving God, whose will it is that all should come to you through your Son Jesus Christ: Inspire our witness to him, that all may know the power of his forgiveness and the hope of his resurrection; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.”

Scriptures to use in Prayer:

Confession: Psalm 32, 51, 139

Praise: 1 Chron. 29:10-13, Psalm 41, 72, 106, 145, 146, 150, Eph. 3:20-21,

1Tim. 1:17, Rev. 5:12-13

Daily Prayers

Several confessions and prayers merit memorization and regular use. Our intent in this is to recite them with such a frequency that they become automatic responses in our hearts and minds to the situations we face each day. This is not meant to be “vain repetitions” like those condemned in Matthew 6. Specifically, this means that repeating prayers over and over is not a means to earn God’s favor. God hears our prayer the first time and every time through the grace already granted by Christ’s death and resurrection to those who believe. No prayer can expand that grace – it is already full, complete and sufficient. We repeat prayers in order to get the meaning into our own hearts and minds. In repetition, we are calling our souls into the truth we confess and by saying it over and over it is we who begin to finally hear, not God. This is why repeated prayers should be carefully selected – they will begin to shape our hearts and the nature of our conversations with our Heavenly Father. Just as it is good for a family to grow in the habits of saying, “thank you,” and “I love you,” because they become baselines of healthy thoughts and feelings towards each other, so too with God, these “default” prayers and confessions nurture our hearts toward heaven.

1. **The Apostles' Creed** (*this is our baptismal vow; we repeat as an act of perpetual rededication*)

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Amen

2. **Our Lord’s Model Prayer** (*see p. 6 for further explanation*) (Mt. 6)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. Amen.

3. **The “Jesus Prayer”** (Lk. 18)

Lord Jesus Christ, Thou Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.

4. The Doxology

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Or

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

5. Confession

A regular part of the Christian prayer life should be confession of sin. In John's first epistle, he states the following about confession: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." (1 John 1:8-10, ESV). There are two extremes that need to be avoided in our relationship with God. The first is to think we are not sinning, because we are and to deny it is to lie about ourselves and God. We need to daily recognize our brokenness and guilt. The second extreme, however, goes the other way and admits sin but does not believe in forgiveness. The passage is clear that if we confess our sins, God will forgive them. It goes so far as to remind us that it is in God's character to do so (He "is faithful") and it is appropriate for Him to do so ("and just"). When we come to confession we are admitting both truths: that I am a sinner and, in Christ, I am forgiven.

Longer prayer of repentance:

Almighty and most merciful Father; We have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; And we have done those things which we ought not to have done; and there is no health in us. [A pause can be added here for those present to pray silently their particular confessions. Optionally, the line "Specifically, we confess these sins that we raise in our hearts." Then continue as written.] But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us. Spare us, O God, who confess our faults. Restore us who are remorseful; according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake; That we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, To the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.

Alternatively, the Jesus prayer (p. 2) may be used as a prayer of confession with specific sins confessed aloud or silently after the initial line:

Lord Jesus Christ, Thou Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner for I have... [confess your sins to the Lord]. Amen.

Orders for Morning and Evening Prayers:

Simple Morning:

1. Our Lord's Prayer prayed alone, followed by our own requests or with them interspersed throughout (see p.6)
2. Scripture reading from the Psalms or a reading plan.
3. Doxology

Simple Evening:

1. Our Lord's Prayer prayed alone, followed by our own requests or with them interspersed throughout (see p.6)
2. Prayer of Confession
3. Special Prayers for the day. This may be your own spontaneous prayer or those from the topic index in the next section.
4. Doxology

For longer, more flexible times of prayer, the above prayers can be adapted into the following format with personal, spontaneous prayer along this thematic structure based on 1 Thes. 5:

1. Adoration: the worship of God (doxologies, psalms of praise, etc.)
2. Confession: the acknowledgement of sin.
3. Petition: faith's claim to our personal need.
4. Intercession: the soul's ministry at the throne of grace on behalf of others.
5. Thanksgiving: the heart's expression of joy in God.