

*...hoffe mit dem Hefenag laut p...*  
*...trotz mir in aufw...*  
*...sich mir durch mein...*

# Prayer PATHWAY

*Journeying in a Life of Prayer*

KATHI LAMBRIDES WESTLUND

*...sich...*  
*...sich...*  
*...sich...*

*Prayer PathWay* is original in its conception and brilliantly structured—and it does just what it promises! This beautiful book rides on the vast sea of God’s Word and draws its life from its depths. The wisdom of the praying saints of the centuries provides inspirational sidebars that are a joy to read in themselves. Here is a volume that will ignite the prayers and fire the devotion of every reader/sojourner. There is nothing quite like *Prayer PathWay*.

—**R. Kent Hughes**, Senior Pastor Emeritus, College Church, Wheaton; Visiting Professor, Practical Theology, Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia

Prayer is a profound privilege and yet such a mystery. Kathi will help you to learn to pray in such a way as to appreciate both. Her acrostic provides a helpful, insightful concept, and the historical quotes about prayer are a great addition to the book.

—**Susan Hunt**, Author, *Prayers of the Bible*; former Director of Women’s Ministries, Presbyterian Church in America

Kathi Westlund has given the church the fruit of twenty years of prayer labor. Forged in the realities of everyday life, this journal is not an academic treatise on prayer; it is a peek into the lessons learned by a seasoned prayer-warrior. Kathi has refined her understanding of prayer through countless prayer burdens, and this has given us a powerful tool to bring us into a deeper relationship with God and a deeper joy in participating in His work in this world. Through instruction, encouragement, and admonition, *Prayer PathWay* is a guide to lead us to the throne of grace, focus our prayers, and challenge our hearts. Laden with Scripture, this volume is inspirational, educational, and intensely practical. What might God do through the prayers of His people fueled by this extensive guide? I highly commend this outstanding resource to you as you consider your part in the great work and blessing of prayer.

—**Sally Michael**, Cofounder, Children Desiring God; Author, *God’s Names*

*Prayer PathWay* will help you to organize your prayer life. Its purpose is that simple. But it’s more than just a prayer organizer. This tool is also

the fruit of countless hours both in prayer and thinking about prayer by Kathi Westlund. Some may find her pathway too structured for their personality; others will find it orderly and clarifying. Some may hesitate at a few of the sources of the inspirational quotations in the margins; others will happily glean what they can from them. But every Christian can benefit from the Scriptures the author has collected for each topic, as well as the suggestions of how to pray for others, such as one's spouse. In short, there's something here for just about every Christian looking for help in prayer.

—**Donald S. Whitney**, Professor of Biblical Spirituality, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; Author, *Praying the Bible*

*Prayer*  
PATHWAY

*Journeying in a Life of Prayer*

KATHI LAMBRIDES WESTLUND

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Additional, printable forms and instructions for creating a customizable Prayer PathWay notebook are available at [www.prpbooks.com](http://www.prpbooks.com) and [www.prayerpathway.com](http://www.prayerpathway.com).

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For  
Gabriella, Abraham,  
Salem, Samuel, and Jacob

God gave you to us to teach us how to pray.

Our day begins with prayer:  
*Christ be beside me; Christ be before me;  
Christ be behind me; King of my heart.  
Christ be within me; Christ be below me;  
Christ be above me, Never to part.*

Our day ends with prayer:  
*Good-night! Good-night!  
Far flies the light;  
But still God's love  
Shall flame above,  
Making all bright.  
Good-night! Good-night!*

And in between: more prayer with you and for you . . .

*"For this child I [have] prayed."  
1 Samuel 1:27*





*Christ is the path and  
Christ the prize.*

JOHN S. B. MONSELL



# CONTENTS

## PART 1: PREPARATIONS

Introduction	11
The Guide: A Brief Overview	15
The Map: A Suggested Itinerary	17
The Path of Redemption	21

## PART 2: PRAYERS

P: Praise	31
R: Repent	61
A: Ask	99
Y: Yield	119
E: Express Thanks	145
R: Rejoice	165
S: Shalom.	189

## PART 3: RESOURCES

Prayer Themes: A Month of Daily Prayers	209
Prayer Planning: Making a Prayer Notebook	241
Index of Quotations	277



# **PART 1**

## PREPARATIONS

# INTRODUCTION

WE ARE SOJOURNERS IN THIS LIFE. Each day, we travel an unfamiliar path toward a sure destination. God is our ever-present companion—guiding and protecting, comforting and convicting us, but we are often unaware of Him.

Prayer is our means of acknowledging God’s presence and seeking His help on our daily journey. It is God’s way of giving us access to Him. He commands us to pray because He knows that we need Him. We need His redemption, His guidance, His courage, His forgiveness, His sustenance, His peace. He knows that we need what He has—that we have no where else to turn! C. S. Lewis expressed it: “To what will you look for help if you will not look to that which is stronger than yourself?” Simon Peter admitted it: “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life” (John 6:68). And God Himself says: “Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known” (Jeremiah 33:3).

In heeding God’s command to pray, we become part of a humbling and powerful collaboration:

- ♦ *God* hears us and answers us. (Jeremiah 33:3)
- ♦ *Jesus* prays for us. (Romans 8:34)
- ♦ The *Holy Spirit* helps us pray. (Romans 8:26)

*My steps have held  
fast to your paths;  
my feet have not  
slipped. I call upon  
you, for you will  
answer me, O God;  
incline your ear to  
me; hear my words.*

PSALM 17:5–6

In prayer we:

- ♦ **praise** God with the adoration and respect that only a King deserves.
- ♦ run to our Judge for the relief of **repenting** and the **resolve** to obey.
- ♦ **ask** the Father for things only His children dare ask.
- ♦ **yield** to His greater wisdom and mysterious providences.
- ♦ **give thanks** to the Giver for His unmerited goodness to us.
- ♦ **find refuge** and **rejoice** in the fact that the Almighty God has heard us.
- ♦ take rest in His peace: the great *shalom*.

## MY PATH

The method of prayer, Prayer PathWay, found in this book is one result of more than thirty years of my own prayer journey. As I walked life's path of joy and pain, I longed for a guide that would help me to pray when I couldn't find refrains to reflect my happiness or laments to echo my sorrow. So I read book after book after book searching for prayer guidance. But it was all there in my own Bible: words breathed by God, through men; words that have strengthened and awed God's people throughout the centuries since Christ walked His own earthly path of joy and pain toward the cross. As I opened my eyes to behold the wonders in the Word, I was strengthened for the journey. And my desire for the Word was ignited by seeing what God had for me there.

As I started using my Bible as a prayer book, I saw a path of prayer emerge. I saw that God's people were praising, repenting, asking, yielding, thanking, and rejoicing—over and over, in all situations, through all generations.

*Open my eyes, that I may  
behold wondrous things out  
of your law. I am a sojourner  
on the earth; hide not your  
commandments from me!*

PSALM 119:18–19

In my other reading, I saw that since Bible times God's wise ones have attempted to put their journeys into words. Those words have left a trail to strengthen the hearts and fuel the prayers of subsequent sojourners like me. I saw the timeless truth of the Bible underscored but not replaced, echoing down the centuries—pointing me to Christ.

Using the Bible in prayer gave me a prayer voice that was more sure and settled than my own. I began to tread a path of prayer that has helped me to pray through my days.

I was able to rejoice in hope, to be patient in trials, to be constant in prayer, humbled by the knowledge that Jesus walked this way before and encouraged by the fact that He walks with me now!

## GOD IS CALLING US TO PRAY

When God calls us to pray, He isn't calling us to do something *for* Him. He's calling us to receive something *from* Him—something we need: His light for our daily journey.

God knows that we need His light for the uncertain terrain we encounter every day. He has promised: "I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground . . ." (Isaiah 42:16b).

The Bible is rich with the imagery of walking and of light. We moderns have a hard time appreciating what it would be like to have our feet be our main mode of transport—we use fast cars on smooth highways. And we can't imagine navigating in the dark—we flick a switch to flood our surroundings in light. Imagine walking at night on a rocky trail. The flickering light from a lantern doesn't reveal much of the path, just enough for the next few steps. Truthfully, if we knew what was ahead of us on the path, we might be too frightened to go on! God shows us just enough.

The psalmist said: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105). God has the light we need. We can't create light for our path by rubbing sticks together! But God has provided a steady light through His Word.

Jesus is the Word of God in human form (John 1:1–18). He was sent "to give light to those who sit in darkness . . . to guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke 1:79). He said of Himself: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). With Jesus we walk in light.

God has given us the Holy Spirit as our much-needed teacher. He said: "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules" (Ezekiel 36:27). Again, the walking motif! We are enabled to walk in the truth because of the guidance of the

*Lead thou me on.  
The night is dark,  
and I am far from home,  
Lead thou me on.  
Keep thou my feet;  
I do not ask to see  
the distant scene;  
one step enough for me.*

JOHN HENRY  
NEWMAN

Helper: “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth” (John 16:13).

We, sojourners, have Jesus as our light and the Holy Spirit as our guide as we seek to “walk humbly with [our] God” (Micah 6:8). We are not traveling alone. The presence and the power of the Triune God are ours.

## THE BEAUTY OF A WELL-WORN PATH

We’ve all had the experience of carefully relying on a map or GPS to navigate a complicated route to a new place. Then, gradually, with repeated trips on the same road, we don’t need to rely on navigational tools. We have internalized the map. It has become part of us. We know the way.

The same thing happens with prayer.

This guide is not meant to be a formula but a pattern—not a chain but a path—to help you as you make your way. God uses well-established spiritual disciplines to guide us when our emotions run thin and our motivations are weak. Every Christian is prayerless in some, perhaps many, seasons of life. Like any frequently traveled path, a path of prayer allows our faltering steps to progress, even if our hearts are not fully engaged. Often, the heart is sparked by the comforting routine of prayer, courage is restored, joy eventually returns.

We are all, gradually, moving toward hard times in life, if we haven’t gone through them already. You won’t learn to pray in the emergency room—that’s where you’ll speechlessly lean into Jesus. You won’t learn to pray in your overturned car—that’s where you’ll just cry out His name. You won’t learn to pray in your living room while reeling from a loved one’s bad decisions—that’s when you’ll just weep to God. Learning the way when life is somewhat stable makes us familiar with the path so that we can run straight to Him in the dark, like a nightmare-scared child instinctively making his way to his parents’ bed.

*Just because your heart  
is cold and prayerless,  
get you into the presence  
of the loving Father. . . .  
Just tell Him how sinful  
and cold and dark all is:  
it is the Father’s loving  
heart will give light and  
warmth to yours.*

ANDREW MURRAY

We are with God all the way; He is the route, and He is the destination.

# THE GUIDE

## A Brief Overview

PRAYER PATHWAY is a tool designed to help you pray through your days and through your life. It can be used in many different ways as your prayer needs change. I give some suggestions in the next section and in “Prayer Planning” on page 243.

The heart of this book is PRAYERS, an acrostic for seven areas of prayer (Praise, Repent, Ask, Yield, Express thanks, Rejoice, Shalom). Each section is a portion of a daily prayer journey with Bible passages to guide your praying and inspiring quotes to encourage you with the thoughts of sages who have traveled this way before you. There is an extra page at the end of each section for you to record additional verses, quotations, and notes.

Proceed through the sections, praying. Linger as your heart requires or hurry as your schedule dictates. Or you may turn right to the section you know you need and pray there. You might use sticky tabs to mark your stopping place in each section. Please don't allow yourself to get trapped in rigid routines! Following a form doesn't please God. He wants us to come to Him to be unburdened

*This Christian way  
whereon I walk is no  
untried and uncharted  
road, but a road beaten  
hard by the footsteps  
of saints, apostles,  
prophets, and martyrs.*

JOHN BAILLIE

(Matthew 11:28–30) not to be crushed by greater burdens (Matthew 23:4–12). Conversely, don't confuse spiritual discipline with legalism. Developing strong patterns of spiritual disciplines when our hearts are inclined helps us to press on when our hearts are not.

*In every journey  
there must be a  
first step.*

J. C. RYLE

My experience has also shown that ingrained habits of prayer serve as a beacon when my to-do list threatens to snuff out my prayer time.

Many people find their prayer lives are more focused and disciplined when they have prayer lists and schedules. Also, having a record of God's past faithfulnesses to look back on can do much to bolster faith in Him. So as well as the seven prayer sections, I've provided some forms and resources:

- ♦ Prayer Themes: Prayer guides with daily themes for praying for your spouse, your children, or other loved ones.
- ♦ Prayer Plan: Reproducible forms for creating a weekly prayer planner and prayer lists for each day of the week.
- ♦ Index of Quotations: An alphabetized list of those quoted within this book, along with the source and any notes or comments. I've marked my favorite sources (recommended reading) with 🍷.

You may want to fill out the forms right in this book, or you may prefer to print them out to create your own customizable prayer notebook.

# THE MAP

## A Suggested Itinerary

### PRAYERS

*Start with Praise*, because: “Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised!” (1 Chronicles 16:25a). Read a passage or a quote. If it expresses your heart, pray it. If not, continue reading until you find a portion that is what you would like to say or feel. Worship God!

*Then Repent*. Repenting has four components—*relenting*, *repenting*, *receiving*, and *resolving*:

- ♦ Pause to relent of any grudges or offenses that have separated you from others. We’re told that if we withhold forgiveness, God won’t forgive us (Mark 11:25).
- ♦ Prayerfully think about areas of sin that you’re aware of and ask God to show you sin you might be overlooking. Repent—ask forgiveness with a heart to not repeat the sin—so that “though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool” (Isaiah 1:18).
- ♦ Gratefully accept God’s forgiveness for your repented sin. We have His assurance that “if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).



- ♦ With repentance comes resolving: accepting God’s forgiveness and heeding Jesus’ admonition to: “Go, and from now on sin no more” (John 8:11).

*Now Ask!* As a loving father, God gives good gifts to those who ask (Matthew 7:11). As you ask, endeavor to align your will to His—is what you’re asking for His glory and your good? Ask.

*Yield is the next step.* Yielding is saying “Yes!” to God: “Yes” to what you want, “Yes” (or, “I am willing . . .”) to what you don’t want. In that way, you are saying “Yes” to His greater wisdom. As Jesus subjected His will to His Father, so must we. “Not my will, but yours, be done” (Luke 22:42b).

*Pause to Express Thanks.* We “give thanks to the LORD, for he is good” (Psalm 136:1a). You may want to start a gratitude journal to keep an on-going list of God’s goodness toward you.

*Next, Rejoice.* As you reach the end of your prayer time, the verses in this section provide assurance that God is your refuge. And there you can “Rejoice, always” (1 Thessalonians 5:16).

*And, finally, Shalom.* *Shalom* means peace. Close your prayer time in God’s peace with a trusting “Amen.” “Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen” (Revelation 7:12).

## RESOURCES

Each day, pray for the people you’ve listed on that day’s prayer list. You might find it helpful to leave this book or your own prayer notebook open in a convenient place to remind you to pray throughout your day. Record specific prayer requests or answers on the sheets provided, if you’d like.

If you’d prefer, consult one of the prayer theme guides. Each contains a month’s list of daily topics to pray for a spouse, family, or for others.

*Let people pray—  
earnestly, fervently, not  
simply morning and night,  
but the whole day long,  
making their lives one  
continued prayer.*

ELIZABETH PRENTISS

## SOME ALTERNATE ROUTES:

### Seven Prayers

Psalm 119:164 says: “Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous rules.” There is a sweet cadence in dividing our days into seven portions (as many religious orders have done for centuries). Instead of praying through the PathWay in one daily prayer time, consider dividing your day into seven prayer pauses. I’ve found it helpful to set the alarm on my phone to call me to prayer at seven points in my day. I either pray through one section of PRAYERS when the alarm rings, or I pray for a certain person or need.

Or you might benefit from focusing on one section of the PathWay for each day of the week.

### Praying for Others

Prayer PathWay is helpful when praying in a focused way for a specific need or for a specific person; your prayer time can become a mini prayer retreat. Follow PRAYERS as you pray for that person or need. It works this way: Start

by praising God for that person, then repent of any way you may have wronged that person, then make requests of God in relation to that person or need, and so on, continuing through each section of the path.

Train yourself to pray for a certain need or person while doing a specific daily task: when making the bed, pray for your spouse; when driving by your neighbors’ house, pray for them; when brushing your teeth, pray for control of your mouth; when cooking, pray for spiritual sustenance for your relatives, and so on. As you weave your prayer time into your daily routines, and as you open your eyes and heart, you will be amazed to see how God inspires you to pray. It’s humbling to realize that you might be the only one praying for a specific person or need. Soon, praying becomes an integral and effortless part of your daily tasks—the *main* thing!

*I always feel it well  
just to put a few words  
of prayer between  
everything I do.*

CHARLES HADDON  
SPURGEON

### Praying with Others

As you become familiar with Prayer PathWay, use it to pray *with* others, too. Family or small group worship times can become prayer excursions as you make a trip together through the path.

We are exhorted to: “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17), because God knows how much we need Him on this joyful, bewildering, sometimes dangerous, frequently arduous path of life.

*Until you believe  
that life is war,  
you cannot know  
what prayer is for.*

JOHN PIPER

You make known to me the path of life;  
in your presence there is fullness of joy;  
at your right hand are pleasures forevermore. (Psalm 16:11)

Each day represents a day trip—the accumulation of these fleeting days is our life’s journey. Today is all I have! Either I will walk through this day in prayer, or I won’t. I can’t pray yesterday. I can’t pray tomorrow. Today is all I have.

O LORD, make me know my end  
and what is the measure of my days;  
let me know how fleeting I am! (Psalm 39:4)

My hope and prayer for you, fellow sojourner, is that this guide will help you to tread a well-worn pathway of prayer, which God will use to guide you, to comfort you, to keep you from sin, to forgive you, to be your refuge, to give you peace; to give you Himself.

*“The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which  
shines brighter and brighter until full day.”*

*Proverbs 4:18*

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A GENTLE REMINDER

Please don’t try to do all of *Prayer PathWay* at once. It’s simply meant to be used as a guide in whatever way would be helpful now and to be adjusted for your future prayer needs.

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# THE PATH OF REDEMPTION

THE FACT THAT you're opening a book on prayer could mean that you already pray and are looking for some fresh encouragement; or that you want to pray and are seeking motivation; or that you want to want to pray (which, in itself, reveals a desire to pray!) and are searching for inspiration. Or it could mean that someone who loves you gave you this book because he or she wants you to pray, so you're giving it a try. In any case, welcome! I hope you'll join me on the path of prayer.

From an earthly perspective, a life of faith begins with prayer—and is sustained by prayer. Some Christians can remember the exact date of their first authentic prayer of faith—the day of their conversion. Others don't remember but have heard people (usually their parents) recount those first steps of faith. Others don't remember not being in faith; their memory is of always being in Christ. Any of those stories can reflect saving and authentic conversion, because our conversion is simply our seeing our need and God's meeting it.

Of course, none of us knows when his or her redemption really began because none of us was there! Our redemption began in the mind of God before creation. He made a plan. His Son was born to make it happen. Jesus walked our path of

*This debt was so great that, while none but man must solve the debt, none but God was able to do it.*

ANSELM

redemption right to the cross and has gone ahead of us into eternity. He is the Way and the destination. He is the path—and He is the prize!

*Christ is the path and  
Christ the prize.*

JOHN S. B. MONSELL

My plea to you is this: consider whether you've been redeemed by Christ, redeemed from your self-reliance and your self-made plans, saved from your sins, secured for eternity.

If you're a Christian, you'll often run to God for needful repentance (we'll talk about that later in this book). But if you aren't redeemed, that's the first thing to address. You may not know much about God, but you know about yourself. You know—deep down—that something is wrong. That sense is God drawing you. Listen.

You need what God has. He is what you need.

Your prayer of redemption needs no perfect words, just your acknowledgement of your sin, your awareness of God's solution, and your desire to surrender to Him.

Ponder these passages and pray your heart out to Him. Confess your sin and ask for forgiveness—and ask for the faith to believe all that God is and the strength to obey all that He asks.

### **All people are sinners. Sin separates us from God.**

Your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.

**Isaiah 59:2**

### **God's love made a plan.**

God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

**Romans 5:8**

For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.

**Luke 19:10**

In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the [perfect sacrifice] for our sins.

**1 John 4:10**

*Redemption became  
necessary not because  
of what men were  
doing only, but because  
of what they were. . . .  
Fallen men acted in  
accord with what they  
were. Their hearts  
dictated their deeds.*

A. W. TOZER

**God promises to hear you when you call out to Him.**

[Jesus says] Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life.

**John 6:47**

If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

**Romans 10:9–10**

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

**Romans 10:13**

**His response to you will be your redemption.**

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

**Colossians 1:13–14**

**You will be new.**

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

**2 Corinthians 5:17**

**The result: you will have a new heart and the power of the Holy Spirit to cause you to walk in obedience. You will glorify God as you grow in Christ.**

I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

**Ezekiel 36:26–27**

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity.

Amen.

**2 Peter 3:18**

*Praying and sinning will never live together in the same heart. Prayer will consume sin, or sin will choke prayer.*

J. C. RYLE

**This is redemption:**

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

**Ephesians 2:4–10**

Your salvation means that God's great love has redeemed you *from* your own wandering way and *for* His higher, holy way. You will have *His* peace and *His* purpose.

The Christian's journey is not on a smooth, flat highway—there are high mountains and deep valleys, bright mornings and dark nights of the soul. This is God's way to keep us praying—to keep us leaning on Him instead of darting off on our own. It's His way! It's the way of glory.

The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day.

**Proverbs 4:18**

So now, fellow traveler,  
join me on a pathway of prayer.

# PRAYER OF INVOCATION

DEAR FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT:

We know that *You hear us, Father; You stand interceding for us, Christ; You groan for us, Holy Spirit.* You know us better than we know ourselves. Sometimes we are eager and expectant in prayer—and sometimes we are reluctant and skeptical. But we know this: we have nowhere else to go! You *have* what we need; You *are* what we need. You *know* our path; You *are* our way. So we say with the disciples, humbly and desperately, “Lord, teach us to pray!”

I am longing to pray.

Amen.

*“You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”*

*Psalm 16:11*







# **PART 2**

## PRAYERS



PRAISE

REPENT

ASK

YIELD

EXPRESS THANKS

REJOICE

SHALOM.





The LORD reigns

.....

Yes, the world is established;  
it shall never be moved.

Your throne is established from of old;  
you are from everlasting.

PSALM 93:1-2

Keep me at all times  
from robbing thee,  
and from depriving my soul  
of thy due worship.

THE VALLEY OF VISION



# PRAISE

## God Is Enthroned

WE WERE CREATED TO WORSHIP. We will either worship God or we'll worship His creation, which is idolatry. All of God's creation was made to praise Him. Psalm 148 describes this beautifully:

Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD from the heavens;

praise him in the heights!

Praise him, all his angels;

praise him, all his hosts!

*A soul redeemed demands  
a life of praise.*

WILLIAM COWPER

Praise him, sun and moon,

praise him, all you shining stars!

Praise him, you highest heavens,

and you waters above the heavens! (vv. 1-4)

Praise the LORD from the earth,

you great sea creatures and all deeps,

fire and hail, snow and mist,

stormy wind fulfilling his word!

Mountains and all hills,

fruit trees and all cedars!

Beasts and all livestock,  
creeping things and flying birds!

Kings of the earth and all peoples,  
princes and all rulers of the earth!

Young men and maidens together,  
old men and children! (vv. 7–12)

*Let everything that has  
breath praise the LORD!*

PSALM 150:6a

Praise the LORD! (v. 14b)

All that God created is mentioned: angels, the heavens, sun and moon and stars, animals, the elements, earth and plants and trees, people both young and old. In praising God, we are joining His people who have, over the centuries, lifted their hearts and voices in worship. Children, young people, old people, mystics, pragmatics—in days of ease or years of suffering, free or imprisoned, healthy or ill, rich or poor. God’s people have praised Him everywhere: in homes and in catacombs, in prisons and in hospitals, in caves and in meadows, in airplanes and in taxis, in synagogues and in church buildings.

The condition of our life, the location of our body, or the mood of our spirit doesn’t determine our praise—our being does. We were created to praise.

*In commanding  
us to glorify Him,  
God is inviting us  
to enjoy Him.*

To praise God is to proclaim my admiration of Him. It is to take my focus off of myself to think about Him: His attributes, His works, His steadfastness.

*Praise is pushing back my daily worries and impending tasks to acknowledge my always present, never-changing God.* Setting my mind’s attention and my heart’s affection Godward leads to praise.

C.S. LEWIS

## ASSUMING A POSTURE OF PRAISE

We are a casual culture. We have little experience with the formality that is due a king. As His children, there are times when we can race into the throne room and implore our Father about a pressing need but, for the most part, our posture in worship should be one of reverence. In the Bible, God is always approached in prayer with humility. The posture

of our physical body helps focus our worship, but it is the posture of the heart that is crucial. In worship, we are approaching the Almighty God!

- ♦ God said to Moses: “Take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground” (Exodus 3:5).
- ♦ The angels in Isaiah covered their faces in praise: “Each [seraphim] had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew” (Isaiah 6:2).
- ♦ Paul reminds us “that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth” (Philippians 2:10).

At times, our praise comes effortlessly; at times praise is a decision, an act of the will, an obedient response to God’s surpassing worthiness. God does not require us to praise Him in a formulaic fashion. We can praise Him just as honestly in despair as in joy.

- ♦ We can praise God in simple, overflowing awe, as Mary did: “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior” (Luke 1:46–47).
- ♦ We can praise God in suffering, as Paul and Silas did in jail: “About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God” (Acts 16:25a).
- ♦ We can praise as we ponder a passage such as: “Ah, Lord GOD! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you” (Jeremiah 32:17).
- ♦ We can praise by whispering a phrase: “Blessed be the name of God forever and ever” (Daniel 2:20b).
- ♦ We can praise by uttering a name of God: El Shaddai (Almighty One), El Elyon (The Most High God), Adonai (Master). See page 34. *God said: “I am the LORD your God.”*  
LEVITICUS 18:4B
- ♦ We can praise by meditating on an attribute of God: “The LORD is merciful” (Psalm 103:8a). See pages 36–37. *This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.*
- ♦ We can praise by musing over the “I am” statements of Christ: “I am the Bread of Life,” “I am the Light of the world,” and so on. See page 34. *MATTHEW 3:17*



Table 1. Some Names of God

<b>Elohim</b>	He is Creator	Genesis 1:1
<b>El-Elyon</b>	He is God Most High	Genesis 14:19b
<b>El-Olam</b>	He is the Everlasting God	Isaiah 40:28
<b>El-Roi</b>	He is the One Who Sees	Genesis 16:13
<b>El-Shaddai</b>	He is God Almighty	Genesis 17:1
<b>Adonai</b>	He is Lord Almighty	Deuteronomy 10:17
<b>Jehovah-Jireh</b>	He is the Provider	Genesis 22:14
<b>Jehovah-Maccaddeshem</b>	He is the Sanctifier	Exodus 31:13
<b>Jehovah-Nissi</b>	He is our Banner	Exodus 17:15
<b>Jehovah-Rapha</b>	He is the Healer	Exodus 15:26
<b>Jehovah-Sabaoth</b>	He is the Lord of Hosts	Psalms 23:1
<b>Jehovah-Rohi</b>	He is the Shepherd	Isaiah 6:1-3
<b>Jehovah-Shalom</b>	He is Peace	Judges 6:24
<b>Jehovah-Shammah</b>	He is the Lord Who is Present	Ezekiel 48:35
<b>Jehovah-Azar</b>	He is my Helper	Psalms 54:4

Table 2. The “I AM” Statements of Christ

Jesus said: “I am <b>the bread of life.</b> ”	John 6:48
Jesus said: “I am <b>the light of the world.</b> ”	John 9:5b
Jesus said: “I am <b>the door.</b> ”	John 10:7b
Jesus said: “I am <b>the good shepherd.</b> ”	John 10:11a
Jesus said: “I am <b>the resurrection and the life.</b> ”	John 11:25a
Jesus said: “I am <b>the way, the truth and the life.</b> ”	John 14:6a
Jesus said: “I am <b>the vine.</b> ”	John 15:5a

- ♦ We can praise in song, as the Israelites did: “Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the LORD, saying, ‘I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea. The LORD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father’s God, and I will exalt him’” (Exodus 15:1–2).
- ♦ We can praise God by crying out His greatness: “For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised” (Psalm 96:4a).
- ♦ We can praise God by reminding ourselves to praise Him: “I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised” (2 Samuel 22:4a).

*Great are You, O Lord, and greatly to be praised; great is Your power, and Your wisdom is infinite. And You would man praise; man, that is but a particle of Your creation; man, that bears about him his mortality.*

AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

Starting my prayer time with praise helps me to adjust my focus; to catch a glimpse of the eternal instead of being mired in the temporal. It reminds me that God is God, and I am not.

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PATH MARKER

Read through the *Praise* verses until you feel your heart say: “Yes—that’s what I’m trying to say!” and echo those words of praise. If you’re able, don’t rush away—let your heart wander to worship.

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# GOD IS . . .

## **GOD IS HOLY**

It is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

1 Peter 1:16

*God said: “I  
AM WHO I AM.”*

## **GOD IS UNCHANGING**

EXODUS 3:14

For I the LORD do not change.

Malachi 3:6a

## **GOD IS COMPASSIONATE**

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

Psalm 103:13

## **GOD IS STEADFAST**

Give thanks to the God of heaven, for his steadfast love endures forever.

Psalm 136:26

## **GOD IS PATIENT**

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

2 Peter 3:9

## **GOD IS LOVING**

God is love.

1 John 4:8b

## **GOD IS FORGIVING**

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

**Psalm 103:12**

## **GOD IS FAITHFUL**

Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.

**Deuteronomy 7:9**

## **GOD IS SOVEREIGN**

I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose."

**Isaiah 46:9b-10**

## **GOD IS OMNISCIENT**

You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar.

**Psalm 139:2**

## **GOD IS OMNIPRESENT**

Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!

**Psalm 139:7**

## **GOD IS OMNIPOTENT**

Is anything too hard for the LORD?

**Genesis 18:14**

*“Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation,  
be constant in prayer.” Romans 12:12*

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**SALLY MICHAEL**, *Cofounder, Children Desiring God*

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