



St. Joseph's  
Episcopal Church

# How to Pray Effectively: A Biblical Way to Pray for Results

**Week 4 | Using Scripture in Prayer**

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# Prayer Before Bible Study

Blessed Lord, who has caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant that we may hear them, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which You have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

— Collect for Proper 28:  
Book of Common Prayer, p. 236)



# Week 1: Keys for Effective Prayer

- We pray because prayer is our communication with God and He delights in our prayers.
- Effective Prayer is to pray and receive results: that God will reveal Himself, God will answer, God will change you, or God will change your circumstances.
- Keys for Effective Prayer
  1. Pray in the Name of Jesus;
  2. Pray to God with praise and thanksgiving;
  3. Confess your sins and repent;
  4. Approach God with the right motives;
  5. Be in the right relationship with God and with others;
  6. Prayer must be directed by the Holy Spirit;
  7. Pray in accordance with the Word of God.

# Week 2: Components of Prayer

- There are 4 key components of prayers that you should follow. Each component can be its own prayer and put into different orders. The acronym ACTS (or CATS and CAST) helps us to remember these four areas.
  1. A | Adoration  
Adoration is giving praise and worship to God, who is worthy of our praise.
  2. C | Confession  
We must confess our sins to God as the first step in cleansing our soul.
  3. T | Thanksgiving  
We must thank God in all our circumstances, high and low, as he has blessed us with life and continues to bless us.
  4. S | Supplication  
We can never be too proud to beg God for ourselves and for all who surround us.

# Week 3: Praying in the Name of Jesus

Praying in the Name of Jesus is a powerful way of aligning ourselves with God's will.

1. Jesus has authority over demons, illness, and all circumstances;
2. We must be aware of the presence of Jesus, maintain a personal relationship with Jesus, and know the will of Jesus for us;
3. We can claim God's promises of salvation, healing, and victory over evil in Jesus' Name;
4. We must be wary of false prophets and cults using Jesus' Name as a talisman or magic formula.

# For the Answering of Prayer

Almighty God, who hast promised to hear the petitions of those who seek to ask in thy Son's Name: We beseech thee mercifully to incline thine ear to us who have now made our prayers and supplications unto thee; and grant that those things which we have faithfully asked according to thy will, may effectually be obtained, to the relief of our necessity, and to the setting forth of thy glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

—Book of Common Prayer, page 834

A pair of hands is shown clasped together in a prayer position, with fingers pointing upwards. The hands are rendered in a soft, ethereal style with a light purple and pink color palette. Behind the hands, there is a faint, glowing circular halo effect, suggesting a divine or spiritual presence. The background is a light, warm gradient.

# Using Scripture in Prayer



# Using Scripture in Prayer

All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

— 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Therefore, scripture is the number one resource in praying effectively. There are seven ways that scripture may guide us in effective prayer.



# Using Scripture in Prayer

## 1. Scripture reveals that God's will is the basis of prayer.

In an earlier discussion, we said that one of the keys to effective prayer is to pray according to God's will. How do we know God's will? Through his revealed Word, the Word of God, the Bible.

*And this is the boldness we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. — 1 John 5:14*

Can anything be more understandable? If we know God's will in regards to our prayer, that prayer will be answered.



# Using Scripture in Prayer

## 2. Scripture provides a guide to prayer.

Jesus gave his disciples a template, a model of prayer which we call *The Lord's Prayer* because it instructs us on how we should pray. It addresses God as *Our Father* not just My Father, which immediately contextualizes our relationship with God and the way in which we should operate in prayer.

Pray, then, in this way: Our Father in heaven, may your name be revered as holy. May your kingdom come. May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one. — Matthew 6:9-13



# Using Scripture in Prayer

## 2. Scripture provides a guide to prayer.

St. Paul made special mention to his mentee Timothy, that his desire is for men to pray. He noticed that at their time, prayer had been wrongly understood to be a woman's activity.

*I desire, then, that in every place the men should pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument. — 1 Timothy 2:8*

We learn from this that prayer is for every Christian woman and man. The need for prayer cannot be confined to one gender, race, or other identifier we place upon ourselves.



# Using Scripture in Prayer

## 3. Scripture teaches us how not to pray.

Jesus taught us the ways in which we should not pray.

“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words.” — Matthew 6:5-7



# Using Scripture in Prayer

## 3. Scripture teaches us how not to pray.

This passage requires some hermeneutical, or Biblical interpretation. Put simply, it means that one should not pray to show off. We do not pray to or for others; we pray to God.

## 4. Scripture describes God's promises that we can claim in prayer, such as the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”— in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. — Galatians 3:13-14





# Using Scripture in Prayer

4. Scripture describes God's promises that we can claim in prayer, such as the gift of the Holy Spirit.

“Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, “Brothers, what should we do?” Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.” — Acts 2:37-39

Therefore, when we pray for the Holy Spirit to come, we can claim these promises from the Scriptures.

# Using Scripture in Prayer

5. Scripture shows us the conditions for effective prayer.

Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father in heaven may also forgive your trespasses. — Mark 11:25

6. Scripture gives us many examples of prayer.

King David was *a man after God's heart* because he was a man of prayer. Of the 150 psalms recorded in the Bible, 75 of them were attributed directly to David. Who cannot admire the beauty of Psalm 23 or the profundity of Psalm 51?



# Using Scripture in Prayer

## 6. Scripture gives us many examples of prayer.

Consider this passage, King David's personal prayer of thanksgiving:

Then King David went in and sat before the Lord and said, "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far? And yet this was a small thing in your eyes, O Lord God; you have spoken also of your servant's house into the distant future... Because of your promise and according to your own heart, you have wrought all this greatness so that your servant may know it. Therefore you are great, O Lord God, for there is no one like you, and there is no God besides you, according to all that we have heard with





# Using Scripture in Prayer

## 6. Scripture gives us many examples of prayer.

our ears. And now, O Lord God, you are God, and your words are true, and you have promised this good thing to your servant; now, therefore, may it please you to bless the house of your servant so that it may continue forever before you, for you, O Lord God, have spoken, and with your blessing shall the house of your servant be blessed forever.”

— 2 Samuel 18-19, 21-22, 28-29



# Using Scripture in Prayer

## 6. Scripture gives us many examples of prayer.

Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of the whole assembly of Israel and spread out his hands to heaven. He said, “O Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and steadfast love with your servants who walk before you with all their heart, the covenant that you kept for your servant my father David as you declared to him; you promised with your mouth and have this day fulfilled with your hand. Therefore, O Lord, God of Israel, keep for your servant my father David that which you promised him, saying, ‘There shall never fail you a successor before me to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your children look to their way, to walk before me as you have walked before me.’ Therefore, O God of Israel, let your word be confirmed that you promised to your servant my father David. — 1 Kings 8:22-26



# Using Scripture in Prayer

6. Scripture gives us many examples of prayer.

Consider also, Jesus' high priestly prayer:

Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you, and these know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them and I in them. — John 17:24-26



# Using Scripture in Prayer

## 7. Scripture gives us examples of answered prayers.

Elijah praying for rain after a drought of over three years:

At the time of the offering of the oblation, the prophet Elijah came near and said, “O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your bidding. Answer me, O Lord, answer me, so that this people may know that you, O Lord, are God and that you have turned their hearts back.” Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt offering, the wood, the stones, and the dust and even licked up the water that was in the trench. In a little while the heavens grew black with clouds and wind; there was a heavy rain. Ahab rode off and went to Jezreel.

— 1 Kings 18:36-38, 45



# Using Scripture in Prayer

7. Scripture gives us examples of answered prayers.  
Jesus' prayer by Lazarus' tomb after three days:

So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me." When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

— John 11:41-44



# Using Scripture in Prayer

7. Scripture gives us examples of answered prayers.  
Peter praying for his salvation from drowning:

But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and, beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!”

— Matthew 14:30



# Using Scripture in Prayer

## 3. Scripture teaches us how not to pray.

This passage requires some hermeneutical, or Biblical interpretation. Put simply, it means that one should not pray to show off. We do not pray to or for others; we pray to God.





# Why Use Scripture in Prayer?



# Why Use Scripture in Prayer?

1. God's Word is our spiritual weapon against evil.

Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

— Ephesians 6:17

2. God's Word cleanses us spiritually.

Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word.

— Ephesians 5:25-26



# Why Use Scripture in Prayer?

3. God's Word prepares our hearts in righteousness for effective prayer.

All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that the person of God may be proficient, equipped for every good work. — 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Therefore confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.

— James 5:16





# How to Use Scripture in Prayer

# How to Use Scripture in Prayer

A. Jesus' apostles used memorized Scripture in the composition of their prayers.

After they were released, they went to their own people and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. When they heard it, they raised their voices together to God and said, “Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and everything in them, it is you who said by the Holy Spirit through our ancestor David, your servant: ‘Why did the gentiles rage and the peoples imagine vain things? The kings of the earth took their stand, and the rulers have gathered together against the Lord and against his Messiah.’ — Acts 4:23-26



# How to Use Scripture in Prayer

A. Jesus' apostles used memorized Scripture in the composition of their prayers.

This prayer is taken from Psalm 2:1-3 where it is written, “why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and his anointed, saying, “Let us burst their bonds apart and cast their cords from us.”



# How to Use Scripture in Prayer

B. The Epistle to the Hebrews uses scripture in prayer and admonition.

Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have, for he himself has said, “I will never leave you or forsake you.” So we can say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me? — Hebrews 13:5-6

This admonition uses Joshua 1:9 which says, “Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go,” and Psalm 118:6 which says, “With the Lord on my side I do not fear. What can mortals do to me?”



# How to Use Scripture in Prayer

## C. Jesus used scripture in prayer, especially on the cross.

*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest. — Psalm 22:1-2*

*Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God. — Psalm 31:5*

These passages were the basis of Jesus' prayers on the cross of: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" in Matthew 27:46 and "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" in Luke 23:46.





# Practical Guidelines



# Practical Guidelines in Praying with Scripture

1. When in prayer, allow the Holy Spirit to remind you of verses relevant to your prayer needs.
2. Pray according to the promises and conditions laid out in the Word of God.
3. Be careful not to repeat Bible prayers without first understanding their meaning. Be careful not to leaf through scripture and quote them out of context or intent.





# Summary

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The use of scripture is the number one resource for effective prayer.

1. Scripture reveals God's will as the bases of prayer, provides instructions for how to pray; show us how not to pray; give us God's promises that we can claim in prayer; show us the condition for effective prayer; give us examples of prayer; and give us examples of answered prayers.
2. We use scripture in prayer because: God's Word is our spiritual weapon against evil; God's Word cleanses us spiritually; God's Word prepares our hearts in righteousness for effective prayer.
3. The apostles used scriptures to compose prayers; the epistle to the Hebrews uses scripture in prayer and admonition; Jesus used scripture in His prayer.
4. In prayer, allow the Holy Spirit to remind you of verses relevant to your prayer needs; pray according to the promises and conditions laid out in the Word of God; be careful not to use scripture without understanding the meaning.

A background image showing a pair of hands clasped in prayer, with fingers interlaced and palms facing each other. The hands are rendered in a soft, semi-transparent purple and pink color, set against a light, warm-toned background that suggests a sunrise or sunset. The overall mood is peaceful and spiritual.

# Assignment

Find out from the following verses: what are God's promises for us? Compose your prayer claiming these promises for yourself and for others. You may pick any or all of these scriptures. Look for them in your Bible or google them on the internet.

1. Isaiah 40:29-31
2. Jeremiah 33:3
3. Matthew 6:33
4. John 10:10
5. John 16:33