



St. Joseph's  
Episcopal Church

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

**Week 2 | Components of Prayer**

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## A Note About Bible Verses

Unless otherwise noted, all Bible verses are taken from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) of the Bible. The NRSV is authorized by the Episcopal Church for use in worship. It was published in 1989 under the authority of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCCCUSA). It was the work of committees of scholars drawn mainly from Protestant churches, but also including Roman Catholic and Orthodox scholars, and a Jewish representative for the Old Testament.

– An Episcopal Dictionary of the Church

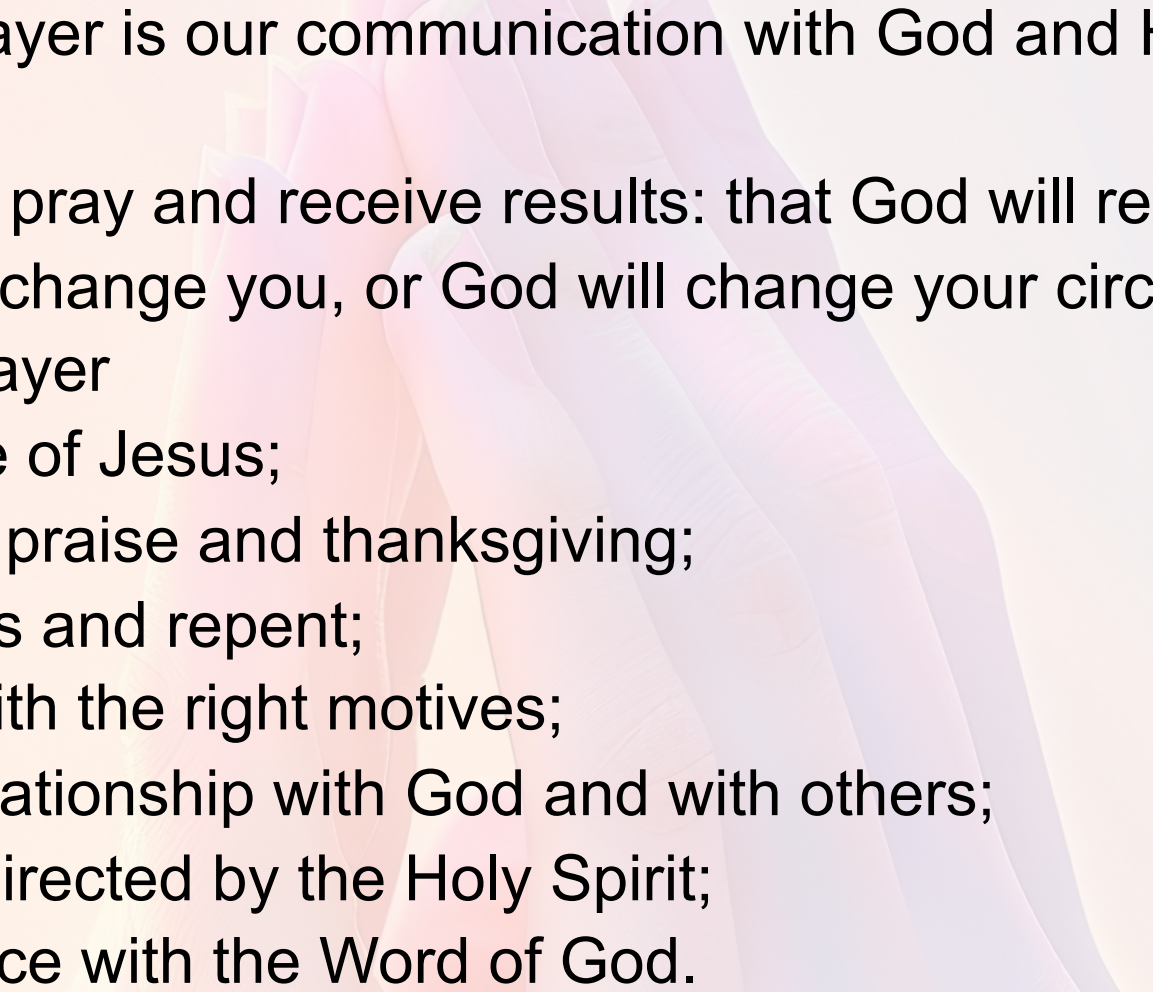
# Prayer Before Bible Study

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

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- 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.

# Components of Prayer

Last week, we discussed the [Seven Keys for Effective Prayer](#), among which were:

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;

These keys summarize the primary components of prayer, which can be used in different orders or as different prayers.



# Components of Prayer

Three acronyms can help you remember the components of prayer. Each one contains four components of effective prayer: Adoration, Confession, Supplication, and Thanksgiving.



ACTS

Adoration  
Confession  
Thanksgiving  
Supplication

CATS

Confession  
Adoration  
Thanksgiving  
Supplication

CAST

Confession  
Adoration  
Supplication  
Thanksgiving

# Components of Prayer

Prayer in the sense of petition, asking for things, is a small part of it; confession and penitence are its threshold, adoration its sanctuary, the presence and vision and enjoyment of God its bread and wine.

— C.S. Lewis, *How to Pray: Reflections and Essays*





# Adoration

Adore

*: to worship or honor as a deity or as divine*

Worship

*: to honor or show reverence for as a divine being or supernatural power*

Praise

*: to glorify (a God or saint) especially by the attribution of perfections*



# A | Adoration

What is adoration?

Adoration is praise, worship, thanksgiving, and veneration.

**Praise is thanking God for what God has done.** Praise is the key that opens the door towards God's throne of grace. God lives within the praises of His people and he loves to hear when we praise Him and give glory to his name.

*Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise in the assembly of the faithful. Let them praise his name with dancing, making melody to him with tambourine and lyre. For the Lord takes pleasure in his people; he adorns the humble with victory.*

—Psalm 149:1, 3-4





## A | Adoration

Psalm 149, as we just read, outlines praise. It is an outpouring of joy and gladness in His works, in our creation, and every blessing that he has put upon us.

In Exodus, Miriam led the people in praising God following their deliverance from Egypt. She explains exactly what God has done to save them.

Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing. And Miriam sang to them: "Sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; horse and rider he has thrown into the sea." —Exodus 15:20-21



## A | Adoration

**Worship is thanking God for who God is.** God is God and worthy of our praise, whether you feel you received blessings or not.

The basis of worship is best illustrated in the story of Job, an upright man who was blessed beyond measure and then had his faith tested.

Job suffered a tremendous reversal of fortune which became a litmus test for his faithfulness. He lost practically everything including his children. Then he suffered from an illness so badly that even his wife said that he should “curse God and die!”

But what did Job do?



## A | Adoration

Then Job arose, tore his robe, shaved his head, and fell on the ground and worshiped. He said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there; the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrongdoing.

—Job 1:20-22

Derived from an Old English word meaning **worth** and **ship**, worship is an acknowledgement of worth. Worshipping God means understanding that God deserves our veneration.

Worship is blessing the Lord with our whole being. While our prayer opens the door, worship sustains God’s presence. Worship is what we do daily, at the end of time, and into eternity.

# A | Adoration

The Revelation to John explains *why* God is to be worshipped.

“You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

—Revelation 4:11





# Confession

Confession

*: an act of confessing*

*especially : a disclosure of one's sins in the sacrament of reconciliation*

*: an open declaration of something (as a fault or the commission of an offense) about oneself*

Merriam-Webster Dictionary



## C | Confession

Confession is an acknowledgement of our sins and our sinfulness. It is necessary for our souls so that we may attain forgiveness, healing, and absolution.

We are all sinners, and as Jesus pointed out in the Lord's Prayer, we must ask forgiveness for those sins.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

—1 John 1:8-9



## C | Confession

The Letter of James instructs us to confess our sins to God, but also to each other.

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

This teaching echoes the Lord's Prayer in which we pray, "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us." We are compelled with confession to then be forgiven and to forgive.



## C | Confession

The goal of confession is for us to be transparent before the Lord, although to Him, “all hearts are open, all desires known, and no secrets are hid,” according to the Prayer of Purity in the Book of Common Prayer, page 355.

Psalm 139 tells of the omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent One from whom we cannot escape. Even if we take our wings and fly to the uttermost part of the earth, God is there. If we go up to the highest heaven, God is there and even if we go down to the deepest depths of the earth, God is also there.

*Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. —Psalm 139:23-24*



## C | Confession

With confession, our souls are cleansed and our bodies renewed, so that we may carry out our mission.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

—Psalm 51:7-13





## C | Confession

Confession may be its own prayer, as when we recite the Confession of Sin (BCP p. 360).

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.



# Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving

*: the act of giving thanks*

*: a prayer expressing gratitude*

as in gratitude

*: the act or an instance of expressing gratitude*

Merriam-Webster Dictionary

# T | Thanksgiving

The Bible tells us to give thanks *in* all circumstances.

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. —1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

The choice of words is deliberate. There are circumstances in our lives for which we are not thankful: think of the tragedies in the world: gun violence in schools; wars where civilians are *collateral damage*; man's inhumanity to others; natural disasters that claim the lives of those whose dreams are not yet fulfilled.



# T | Thanksgiving

How do we thank God *for* tragedies? We do not; we give thanks to the Creator despite these circumstances; we give thanks as we rejoice and as we mourn. We can give thanks to God in all circumstances because we know God has a plan for his people.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

—Romans 8:28

Our connection with God never ceases, no matter the situation. The triune God remains the same yesterday, today, and forever.



# T | Thanksgiving

We give thanks to the Lord in times of trouble, in depression, even when things don't seem to go in our favor. Giving thanks as a part of prayer is a sacrifice to God. As Psalm 50 says:

Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and pay your vows to the Most High. Call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.

—Psalm 50:14-15

It is in those times where prayers are calls for help. It is also then when God becomes ever more present in our lives.



# T | Thanksgiving

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

—Philippians 4:4-8





A background image showing several hands clasped together in a prayerful gesture, rendered in a soft, semi-transparent purple and pink color scheme. The hands are positioned in the center and right side of the frame, with fingers pointing upwards.

# Supplication

Supplicate

*: to make a humble entreaty  
especially : to pray to God*

*Synonyms: Beg, Entreat, Beseech, Implore*

Petition

*as in to beg*

*: to make a request in an earnest or urgent manner*



## S | Supplication

Supplication is another word for petition. It is asking earnestly, humbly, and with perseverance, that God will supply our needs and the needs of our family or those we love. It is also asking earnestly, humbly, and with perseverance, for the needs of others. We should not be proud to not beg God. God promises us abundant life in our scarcity, strength in our weakness, and comfort in our afflictions.

*Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints.*

*—Ephesians 6:18*



## S | Supplication

We are supposed to pray for all people, not just ourselves. In our Sunday Eucharists, we intercede for all people in all sorts of conditions during the Prayers of the People. In Paul's First Letter to Timothy, he instructs Timothy to make supplications and prayers on behalf of all people:

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity.

—1 Timothy 2:1-2

## S | Supplication

An example of supplication as prayer is the Prayers of the People, where according to the Book of Common Prayer (page 383), “Prayer is offered with intercession for

- The Universal Church, its members, and its mission
- The Nation and all in authority
- The welfare of the world
- The concerns of the local community
- Those who suffer and those in any kind of trouble
- The departed (with commemoration of a saint when appropriate).”



## S | Supplication

When we plead for something or someone in prayer, we must believe that our petition will be granted by God in a manner that is good for us. We must have faith in our petition and in God.

“So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child asked for a fish, would give a snake instead of a fish? Or if the child asked for an egg, would give a scorpion? If you, then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

—Luke 11:9-13



## S | Supplication

One of the best models of a supplication is Jesus' prayer for his disciples in John 17, which is also called the **high priestly prayer**:

I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

—John 17:15-19



## S | Supplication

Jesus then continues to pray for believers who had faith because of apostolic witness:

I ask not only on behalf of these but also on behalf of those who believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. —John 17:20-23



## S | Supplication

In this supplication:

1. Jesus petitions God for his disciples' safety from evil;
2. He begs God to consecrate them in truth giving praise to God whose Word is truth;
3. He then pleads with God to also protect true believers, who came to Jesus through the Apostles, so that both groups will be together in God's protection united by their belief;





# Conclusion



# Conclusion | ACTS

ACTS may be four kinds of prayer, or four components of one prayer.

1. Adoration uses the words Almighty God, Everlasting Father, Immortal God and any other words of praise and worship.
2. Confession is the act of baring your sins of commission or omission before God.
3. Thanksgiving is the expression of gratitude for God, His mercy, and His Grace.
4. Supplication is asking for your needs, the needs of the Church, and the needs of the world.



## Conclusion | ACTS

Below is an example of an ACTS prayer:

Almighty God, I praise You for all the blessings You've given me and I worship You for who You are; You are my God, my Savior and my deliverer. I confess my sins and the many times I have strayed from your way and transgressed your commandments and disobeyed Your will. I thank You for your mercy and grace. Thank you for healing my disease and forgiving my sins. Now, I ask for Your mercy and grace for my family, my church and those who are near and dear to me (mention their names and their needs). Lord, I believe nothing is impossible for You and so I receive the answers by faith; through Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



# Outline for an Hour Long Prayer

In your prayer habit, set aside a quiet space or spaces—it can be indoors or outside—that will be dedicated to prayer. You may keep your Bible and Book of Common Prayer there, or look up the Bible and the BCP [bcponline.org](http://bcponline.org) online.

## I. Adoration | 14 Minutes

- a. Sing or read psalms of praise. You may also adapt the outline for morning or evening prayer.
- b. Use worship songs from memory, a hymnbook, or the internet.

## II. Confession | 14 Minutes

- a. Recall three categories of sin: commission, things you have done; omission, things you have not done; and things which your conscience wants you to confess.
- b. Meditate on Psalm 51

# Outline for an Hour Long Prayer

## III. Thanksgiving | 14 Minutes

- a. Count your blessings and you will be surprised at what the Lord has done.
- b. Thank God for every blessing, and for trials you are undergoing. These trials may lead you to have a better character and deeper faith.

## IV. Supplication | 14 Minutes

Pray for everyone. You may order your intercessions by the following:

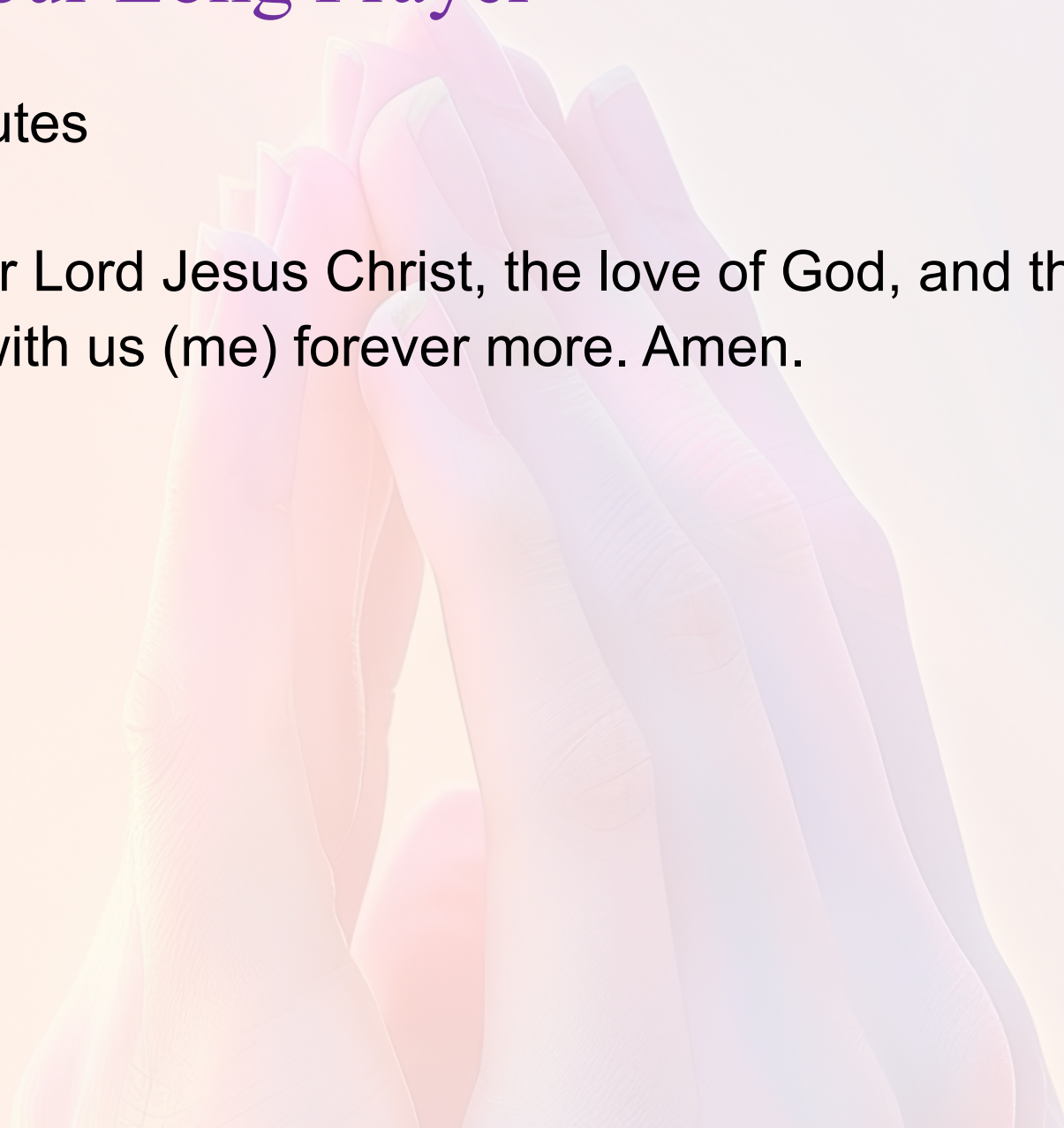
- a. Family | pray for yourself, your spouse, parents and siblings, relatives, and friends;
- b. Church | pray for clergy, church workers, ministries, and the needs of your church;
- c. Society | pray for government leaders, community needs, and current events both local and global.

# Outline for an Hour Long Prayer

## V. Conclusion | 4 Minutes

a. Lord's Prayer

b. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us (me) forever more. Amen.



# Summary

- 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.