

Breath Prayer

The breath prayer is usually said silently within. But some people sing it; others chant it. It's your prayer; use it your way.

Choose what to pray. Take some time to discern what to pray as you breathe, pause, and breathe out. – Traditional breath prayer – (Breathing in) “Lord Jesus Christ,” (pause) “Son of God,” (breathing out) “have mercy on me.”

Sample Breath Prayers

- Peace/ Mercy
- Abide/ in love
- Abba/ Show me your way.
- Holy one/ heal me.
- Jesus/ Alleluia/ have mercy.
- Holy Wisdom/ Guide me.
- Father/Mother (Abba/Amma), meet me.
- The Lord is my shepherd/ I shall not want (Ps. 23:1)
- Speak Lord/ your servant is listening (1 Sam. 3:10)
- Come/ Lord Jesus/ Come (Rev. 22:20)
- Yah/weh
- Love,/ Compassion
- Freedom/ in Christ
- God/ grant us peace
- Lord/ hear my prayer
- Heal me/ Loving God
- Grace/ gratitude
- Be still and know/I am God (Ps 46)
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Plan to begin doing breath prayer for 5 minutes and gradually increase the time to 15 or 20 minutes as you become disciplined with the prayer. You may want to use a timer to free yourself from watching the clock. Some find it useful to write in a journal of their experience with the prayer.

If your mind drifts, do not judge yourself, just notice it and reorient yourself to the words attached to your breath. If you get distracted by external sounds you can notice these sounds and then just draw your mind back to the practice – breathing in, breathing out. Part of the practice is just letting things be and letting go of compulsions to change things. The practice focusses on breath as God's gift of life (Genesis 1) such that every breath becomes a prayer back to God that through our breath we might pray without ceasing (1 Thess.)

Sit comfortably, feel the weight of your feet on the ground, your seat on the chair (floor), place your hands in a comfortable position – perhaps open on your lap in a posture of receptivity, or gently by our side or in prayer holding posture. Close your eyes.

As you prepare, recall the line “Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10). Be still, calm, peaceful, open to the presence of God.

Become mindful of your breath – God is the breath of life. Notice the rhythm of your breath. Is it deep and steady? Is it shallow and staggered? Breathe gently into your belly, gradually opening up your breathing, allowing your prayer to move more deeply into and out of your body through your breath. Your breathing may become like a wave moving - in and out, in and out.

Ask the Spirit to be present, through the practice. Wait silently until you feel ready to begin praying. When you are ready, pray in your breathing rhythm.

Close with a song or “Amen” or the Lord's Prayer.