

Matthew 6:5

“And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

I’m not someone who can instruct others on how to pray; however, I can share my personal prayer practices—they worked for me. I connected with God when I bared my soul to Him; prayer is the only way your petition for forgiveness can be heard. Developing a personal relationship with God was the beginning of my Christian faith; when you call out to the Lord through prayer, He becomes your closest friend. This friendship is the most life-changing, personal, and loving relationship you will have with anyone. God wants you to come to Him out of love and not fear; I sought Him in fear. You would rather not be among those who delay becoming a Christian while hoping that the prophecy in the Bible isn’t real; Jesus said that we can trust the prophets. Many prophecies in the Bible have come to pass, and there are nearly 500 remaining for fulfillment. I’m confident and willing to bet that God will grant me eternal life in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus doesn’t like people who fake pray to our Father; he knows every single wicked person that pretends to pray. When you pray or lie, the truth is always held within your heart and mind; your spoken words and prayers should match your true feelings about God. False prayers are also grave sins that will be weighed at judgment. Christians know that God reads our heart, mind, and soul. Bowing your head and reciting prayer in public can be a blessed event, but we know that this is also used by the wicked to disguise who they are. Even if your prayers are heard out loud by others, no one knows what you’re really thinking or believing in your heart. I know when my mother or sister prays, their heart and soul are behind every word that’s heard by others; they both walk with Christ like I do. My approach to prayer is simple; I promise that you will connect with God.

It’s important to understand what Jesus says about prayer. As our high priest, Jesus offers guidance, and the Gospel serves as our foundational law. This is where I will start. To begin, it’s necessary to pray in a quiet room alone.

Matthew 6:6-7

But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.

The first prayer of repentance can often feel the hardest and longest, but over time, these prayers will become shorter as you learn to obey God. Eventually, my prayers shifted from repentance to thanksgiving and praise, and my sins became fewer. It’s important for Christians to avoid sin, which separates us from nonbelievers and other religions; otherwise, we will be judged with them by God.

Jeremiah 29:11-13

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.

When I first knelt before God in shame, I felt uncertain about whether He would hear my prayers, despite my belief in Him. Embracing the faith of a child, who will believe anything their parents tell them, like Santa, overcomes this doubt. Hope will help nurture that tiny mustard seed of faith, allowing it to grow into a strong and sturdy tree. Everyone who has accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior came as a sinner with doubts. Some of us sought Him out of fear and others out of love; I learned to love the Lord. The size of your sin doesn't matter to God; all unrepentant sin will lead to spiritual death and judgment. Jesus emphasizes in several scriptures that He wants us to pray to His Father in His name. God is the only entity we should pray to; this is a foundational belief of my Christianity. I recognize that many may disagree, and praying to Jesus is also a practice I remember. Still, I learned from the Bible to pray only to Father God in the name of the Son. Jesus is the gateway; He is our ONLY mediator with God.

1 Timothy 2:5

For *there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,*

The way that I begin every prayer is my own personal creation and preference. *"Father God, King of the Universe, and my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, thank you for hearing my prayer."*

This is how I choose to begin my prayers every day. I express my gratitude to God, knowing that He hears me before I ask Him for anything. He's my God, King, and Creator of the Universe; I know my righteous prayers will always be answered. However, I encourage you to pray to God in whatever manner feels right to you. I've shared my personal greeting, which opened His ear to my pleas and petitions. If your prayers seem unanswered, you may not be sincere, or you're asking for the wrong things in the wrong way. The cross of Christ, which symbolizes our faith, was made from a tree that grew from the earth; the bare cross represents the essence of my Christianity. We don't recognize images of a "White Jesus" or God. My Christian belief prevents me from bowing down, kneeling, or praying to anything apart from the One God and the cross of Christ.

Exodus 20:4-5

"You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them."

I don't pray or bow to statues or saints; God is the only one I worship and need.

John 16:25-27

“These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but I will tell you plainly about the Father. In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I shall pray the Father for you; for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.

While praying to Jesus is not necessarily wrong, it's not the way He desires us to pray. Think of our prayer as a letter that is addressed to God, with Jesus Christ as the intermediary. God doesn't open His own mail; that's Jesus' role, as He is the way, the truth, and our mediator. To reach God, our petitions must be properly addressed; letters directed to Jesus will never reach God's ear. This simple metaphor illustrates why we pray to the Father in the name of the Son so our petitions can be heard and answered by God. Even with Jesus seated at the right hand of God, God remains our King and ultimate authority in Heaven. We pray to our Creator because God loves us, and Jesus instructed us to do so.

Philippians 4:6-7

Be anxious for nothing, 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 minds through Christ Jesus.

It's important to begin your prayer with thanksgiving; that's why I created my personal greeting and use it every day. Some scripture can mislead you into believing something it doesn't. The wicked one uses false interpretations of scripture to undermine the faith; unbelievers use them as a reason to not believe. God knows what you need and what you should be asking for; learn this lesson.

Matthew 7:7-8

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

This scripture can be dangerous and powerful by itself; it can either glorify or be used to undermine Christianity. **Matthew 7:7-8** illustrates the importance of reading the surrounding text for context. I encourage you to read the Beatitudes in NKJV **Matthew 5, 6, and 7**; it is truly beautiful scripture. Additionally, **Matthew 7:12** outlines a requirement for receiving anything from God. Those who follow the "golden rule" and obey the law can expect their prayers to be answered if they ask for things that align with God's will. We have to examine ourselves.

I have never prayed and asked for silver, gold, wealth, or riches. I haven't even prayed for God to heal and cure my afflictions. I pray for my family, friends, and dog and occasionally myself. When I needed dental work I couldn't afford, I prayed hard! God answered these prayers, and I was able to get my teeth taken care of. I call on God for anything I know I won't be able to do alone. I speak to Him daily as if I'm talking to an invisible friend when I'm alone.

1 John 5:14-15

Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

God does not answer all of His children's prayers; they have to be in line with His will. But to have any prayer answered, you must be His child. I'm not talking about those who simply claim to be "children of God"; we are all children of God by virtue of our creation. The child of God I am referring to is either a believer on a path to salvation or an individual with the Holy Spirit of Christ. God hears those who follow the golden rule and obey His laws; He ignores those who don't.

Mark 11:24

Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

True believers have their prayers answered if they ask in righteousness; God hears those who love Him and obey His law. I believe He hears every sinner's prayer of repentance even if they pray with only hope and no faith the first time.

John 14:15-18 - "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you."

If you love God, you will keep His commandments. If you do this, Christ will pray to the Father, endorsing you to receive the Holy Spirit. Don't overlook the promise of having the Helper with you forever; He is truly a helper you will come to love!

Thine Universal Church teaches that the Holy Spirit can unite with a Christian spirit anytime after baptism when they're approved by Jesus Christ. I also teach that access to the Helper begins when you pray with faith, even if it's small. This is my personal experience, but I didn't understand that it was the Spirit that was impacting my daily life. It was like having an assistant helping me with small and insignificant problems while also helping me clean my temple of sin. When I needed to locate something, I was led right to it. I began to trust my conscience and made better choices. After I was married and baptized, my life seemed to become better; in hindsight I now know that I was pursuing the wrong things. I prayed every day, but that was all I did; I assumed my blessings were rewards for praying and being good. However, God was using them to expose the corruption within my soul. He gave me several blessings and watched how I would react; regrettably, I did not respond well. I lost my garden of Eden and my home; I embarrassed and alienated my family and lost friends. I allowed anger and an unruly tongue to control me; these were the sins that were delaying my salvation. God humbled and chastised me for my arrogance, hubris, and selfish pride; then the Holy Spirit began teaching me the Word of God in 2024.

Jesus knows when you're ready to receive His Holy Spirit and no longer sin!

Acts 17:30-31

Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."

Prophets have falsely claimed Christ's return for over 200 years, with some believing they were God's chosen ones or the real Messiah. I'm unsure which Bible they were interpreting that led them to these misguided conclusions. It is also unclear whether these individuals genuinely believed everything they preached to their congregations or if they were intentionally deceiving them; only God knows. Ultimately, all false prophets reach their expiration date when their prophecies fail, which is a common occurrence among those who attempt to predict the coming Kingdom and the Day of the Lord.

I'm unsure what anyone could possibly predict today; all fulfilled prophecy is already documented in the Bible, and there are many future prophecies that remain unfulfilled. No one knows when Jesus will return—no one; Christ wasn't told by God either! This uncertainty should inspire individuals to embrace Christianity; I merely desire for no one to be unprepared and lost! God desires that every individual repent for their sins and turn to Him now, in this time. He urges us to have the faith of Noah before the Great Flood and to prepare accordingly. For Christians, the ultimate goal is to receive the Holy Spirit while still alive; the Bible does not mention sanctification after death. The Spirit seals our eternal life in the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Most importantly, the Holy Spirit serves as the primary means by which Jesus Christ communicates with His followers, the chosen members of His Church; you don't want to miss this call.

Thine Universal Church teaches that the rapture will occur at the seventh trumpet, right after the righteous dead have been resurrected. Please note that this means the Church will be on earth during the first seven seals and six trumpets. Additionally, I teach that His Church will be under God's protection until they are raptured, prior to the arrival of the antichrist. We will have everything we need and will not suffer like the wicked or those who reject God. Jesus Christ is the Head of His Church, our King and High Priest; it's crucial that you hear His call when the time comes. The worst-case scenario is that you die with the Spirit before He comes; you'll still enter the Kingdom like all members of His body.

John 10:27-30

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

**And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish;
neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.**

**My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all;
and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.**

I and My Father are one."

Acts 3:19-20

Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before,

You must remember your sins when you repent; this was a lesson I learned. God wants to hear you speak of the sin you're asking Him to forgive. My first prayer of repentance was mainly for my worst and most serious sins; like I've said, it was the longest prayer of my life. I haven't spoken to other Christians about their experience, and I can only speak my testimony. Another revelation for me was that I started to recall old sins I had forgotten; this process continued for many months. I began to understand all of the wickedness I've done in my life and how it impacted or hurt other people; I violated the Golden Rule of God. Even when my actions and words were against wicked folk, I was mistreating my enemy.

I'd like to list what I've learned about prayer as I continue talking about repentance. We know that when we pray, it's important to address God properly.

1. I only pray to the One True God in the name of Jesus Christ.
2. I pray alone, in private, in a quiet room with the door closed.
3. When I pray to God, I pray aloud, as if He's standing before me.

This is what I understand about praying based on my reading of scripture and what feels right for me. I've always felt closer to God in nature, and I like to talk with Him there as well. Please keep in mind that this is my personal preference and not any doctrine. My method of prayer has helped me connect with God, and I believe it can be beneficial for others if they choose to duplicate my pattern.

How often should you pray? As much as you want, but pray each and every day. You can pray as often as little as you wish, provided that your prayers come from the heart. King David is one of the most devoted prayer warriors in the Bible; he had many sins to repent for; **Psalms 51** is King David's prayer of repentance.

Is kneeling and bowing your head a requirement for prayer? No

Psalms 95:6

Oh come, let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.

This psalm serves as a call to worship rather than as a mandate to kneel and bow before the Lord. I kneel and bow my head in prayers of thanksgiving each morning and whenever I seek God's guidance and help. Ultimately, your heart and physical capacity should determine whether you choose to kneel or not; God understands your reasons for either sitting or standing. I walk and talk with my Lord daily, confident that He hears me. I pray in a manner that feels right for me.

4. You can pray in any way you desire; kneeling and bowing your head are welcomed as gestures of humility, respect, and reverence by God.

Public prayer can edify or deceive; praying alone reveals your true nature to God. Whatever you do for yourself or others in the name of God, do it from your heart!

2 Corinthians 7:9-11

Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

There are different types of sorrow, remorse, guilt, and shame. I shamefully admit I was the person who felt sorry only when caught; I was in a lot of trouble as a youth before joining the military. I would always say I was sorry for what I did, but I was lying in my heart most of the time. I was occasionally an opportunist thief who got caught, but I got away with much more. When I was facing actual jail time for felony theft as a 20-year-old, fear drove me to tears before the judge, not remorse; I planned to never be caught if I stole again. My father was Chief of Police; because of his position, I was given the choice to join the military or go to jail. This incident was the last straw; my dad would no longer bail me out of trouble as he often did, so I joined the Marines in 1981. I couldn't join the Air Force or Navy; the Army was the only other option.

I've never truly felt remorse for most of my past crimes; especially as a younger man. I was skilled at lying and pretended to feel sorry, which is why it took me many years to stop sinning. I feared God, but I was ignoring Him; it was easier to avoid praying and to make vague promises to myself to walk the righteous path in the future. I know that lying to God is foolish, so I didn't pray. I only attempted to repent when I faced certain incarceration; my fear and shame overwhelmed me. God was my only source of hope and salvation; this is when I committed my heart to Him the first time. As I repented, tears streamed down my face, I cried fiercely, and I began confessing; I was convicting myself before the Lord. You need to see yourself as God sees you; this process was difficult for me

If you can't feel genuine sorrow for your sins, you can't repent. A lack of remorse and shame will hinder believers from obtaining forgiveness; often, they may not understand their wrongdoing. You can pray and ask God to help reveal your sin and how it impacted others; you'll be led to scripture in the Bible for your answers or receive a life lesson. Cognitive empathy serves as a valuable tool for believers; this ability can be developed by reading the Gospel and learning to love one another. By seeing yourself through the eyes of others, you can understand and even feel the pain you cause them. When you're a thief and another thief steals from you, how would you feel? So why would you steal? Understanding that all unrepentant sin leads to spiritual death is important. If you repent, you may still be punished for your crimes and face condemnation of people, but God forgives you, and Christ justifies you. Salvation begins in a heart with love.

Matthew 7:12 - Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

This passage conveys Jesus' message to uphold the golden rule as a fundamental law and to heed the prophets. I once believed that this rule was the only law necessary, but I now recognize that this was a misguided belief. It does not encompass every possible sin, even when considered alongside the Ten Commandments. However, remember what God has said about the crafty sinner.

1 Corinthians 3:19-20

For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their own craftiness"; and again, "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile."

God gave us a conscience to help us know what is sin; it's that feeling of guilt, shame, or regret we experience when we know that we did something wrong. People will always seek loopholes, workarounds, and shortcuts around any law; that's our nature. If we're able to act and do the right thing, God expects us to make the righteous choice. When wealthy people turn their backs on the poor, the immigrant, or anyone in need, that's considered sin.

James 4:17

Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.

If you punched someone in the face because they insulted you with a derogatory term, it might be difficult to feel sorry or remorseful, as you believe they deserved it for being racist; your reaction stems from anger rather than fear. Typically, sinners don't experience true sorrow until the reality of punishment looms over them. It's impossible to truly know how someone feels unless you can read their heart and mind like God does. Individuals have the right to defend themselves when threatened; if the same person threatened you and you felt genuine fear, then punching them in the face wouldn't be considered a sin, as your motivation would be rooted in fear rather than anger and hate.

God judges our sins based on what we really harbor in our heart and mind.

It may take you awhile to understand how God views your thoughts, actions, and words. On that note, I'd like to remind every Christian believer that God also judges our thoughts; sin is birthed and brought to life by wicked thoughts. I love looking at women that appreciate fashion. I can appreciate the beauty of God's creations without lusting and having sexual fantasies about them; I know it's a sin. The Holy Spirit and daily prayer help me keep my thoughts clean and focused on the God that watches all that I do. It's helpful if you can imagine your life is being recorded and observed 24/7 like the reality shows on TV. Knowing that God is monitoring your every thought, listening to every word, and watching every deed tends to improve your behavior. He doesn't need any witnesses of your sin.

1 Chronicles 4:10

And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, “Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!” So God granted him what he requested.

My mother would send me tiny pamphlets that contained lessons about the Bible and a sermon. When I wasn't going to church, her prayers kept me from falling completely in the pit. I've always felt like I had an angel or spirit watching over me; I was always able to escape danger, and I've had a few close calls with death. I always read these mini-sermons; one about the prayer of Jabez really stuck with me because of the way it was presented and broken down. The prayer above is small but immensely powerful and necessary for me. This prayer is the second most important one that I recite every day; the first is the Lord's Prayer. These two prayers serve as the rock and foundation of my prayer life.

5. I recite the Prayer of Jabez every morning with my prayers of thanksgiving.

I plan to write a small blog about this prayer in the future. Bruce H. Wilkinson is the author of “The Prayer of Jabez: Breaking Through to the Blessed Life,” a book I thoroughly enjoyed reading. I recite this prayer each morning, as it serves as a reminder to avoid sin and not cause pain to others daily. When you repent, you must also cease from committing the same sin again. If you truly felt genuine sorrow the first time you repented, there shouldn't be a need to repent for the same sin again. However, I'm not the one who determines whether you are forgiven or not. I know that guilt and shame make it harder to repent for the same sin every time you come to God; are you really sorry? As a result, many people may choose to stop praying altogether and distance themselves from God.

My morning prayers are filled with gratitude, and I seek God's help for anything I may need. I thank Him for blessing me with another day and pray for the safety, security, and health of my family. I ask God to heal those who are in need of it. I request that He grant me the gifts of His servants and strengthen me in mind, body, and soul. I prioritize praying for others; I desire to be the last person to eat and want others to be fed first. I haven't always been this way, and I am still learning how to better represent Christ; He is the example I strive to follow.

6. I recite my personal version of the Lords Prayer every evening before I sleep.

My Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.

Thy kingdom will come. Thy will be done.

On earth as it is in heaven. Give me this new day my daily bread.

And forgive me my trespasses, As I forgive those who trespass against me.

Help keep me from temptation, And deliver me from the evil one.

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.

Amen

Psalm 145:17-20

The Lord is righteous in all His ways, Gracious in all His works. The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, To all who call upon Him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He also will hear their cry and save them. The Lord preserves all who love Him

I chose to use **the Lord's Prayer** as my evening prayer because it feels right to me; I have my own logic and reasoning, which I'll share. My sins occur during the day; therefore, asking for forgiveness at night, after a day that may have included transgressions, seems appropriate. I thank God for the new day in advance since I will be asleep when it arrives. I pray to Him for my daily bread, which is scripture, so that I can read it in the morning. If I happen to die in my sleep, **the Lord's Prayer** is my prayer of repentance, ensuring that I'm free of sin. Furthermore, Jesus recommends **the Lord's Prayer** as our model prayer.

The **Prayer of Jabez** is a prayer to begin the day with the right spirit. It's a prayer affirming your blessing from God, but it has conditions; you have to walk with Christ. For His hand to be upon you, God has to be near you. The territory you're asking God to enlarge is not land, but responsibility, fellowship, and love within the Body of Christ, a promotion to greater works in the name of the Lord. The most important section is asking God to keep you from evil and not allowing you to hurt or harm another person. My three other favorite prayers are recited based on how I feel: **Proverbs 3:5-10, Psalm 23, and Isaiah 50:5-9**. I've included them at the end of this discourse. There is truly no wrong way to pray as long as you are sincere and speaking from your heart. Repenting with godly sorrow is difficult; the Word of God and the ability to feel empathy and love for others will help you see how your words and actions can affect or harm others.

Scripture List

Exodus 20:4-5
1 Chronicles 4:10
Psalm 23
Proverbs 3:5-10
Psalm 95:6
Psalm 145:17-20
Isaiah 50:5-9
Jeremiah 29:11-13
Matthew 6:5
Matthew 6:6-7
Matthew 7:7-8
Matthew 7:12

Mark 11:24
John 10:27-30
John 14:15-18
John 16:25-27
1 Corinthians 3:19-20
2 Corinthians 7:9-11
Acts 3:19-20
Acts 17:30-31
Philippians 4:6-7
1 Timothy 2:5
James 4:17
1 John 5:14-15

Written by a servant of the Lord of Thine Universal Church, October 7, 2025

My Favorite Prayers

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside the still waters.
He restores my soul;
He leads me in the paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil; For You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Proverbs 3:5-10

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;
In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.
Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and depart from evil.
It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones.
Honor the Lord with your possessions, And with the firstfruits of all your increase;
So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine.

Isaiah 50:5-9

The Lord God has opened My ear; And I was not rebellious,
Nor did I turn away. I gave My back to those who struck Me,
And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard;
I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.
“For the Lord God will help Me; Therefore I will not be disgraced;
Therefore I have set My face like a flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed.
He is near who justifies Me;
Who will contend with Me? Let us stand together.
Who is My adversary? Let him come near Me.
Surely the Lord God will help Me;
Who is he who will condemn Me? Indeed they will all grow old like a garment;
The moth will eat them up.
Amen