

-WEEK1/-

ALIVE WESLEYAN CHURCH | 2023



"But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not let them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

This, then, is how you should Pray:
'Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
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 lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one'."

- Matthew 6:6-18 -

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- O4. | TABLE OF CONTENTS
- O5. PARTS OF THE LORD'S PRAYER
- 06. AN INVITATION
- O7. HOW TO USE
- 08. FASTING INSTRUCTIONS
- 10. DAY ONE
- 14. DAYTWO
- 18. DAY THREE
- 22. DAY FOUR
- 26. DAY FIVE
- 30. DAYSIX
- 34. DAY SEVEN

SEVEN PARTS OF THE LORD'S PRAYER

PRESENCE | OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN

PRAISE | HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME

PURPOSE YOUR KINGDOM COME, YOUR WILL

BE DONE

PROVISION | GIVE US TODAY OUR DAILY BREAD

PARDON | AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS AS

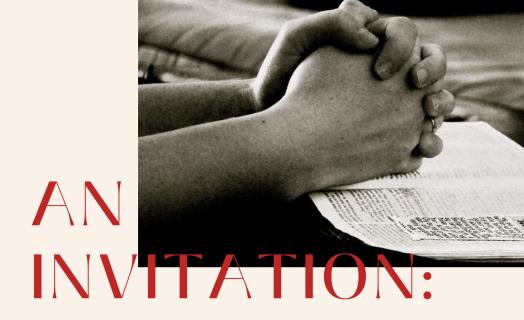
WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS

PROTECTION | AND LEAD US NOT INTO

TEMPTATION BUT DELIVER US FROM

THE EVIL ONE

PRACTICE | LIVE IT OUT



Many of us have mixed emotions when it comes to prayer. Maybe we had to memorize prayers when we were kids or maybe we have never been around someone who prays. Maybe we sat through long boring prayer meetings, or maybe we overheard a grandparent praying sincere, and moving prayers.

Maybe we love to pray, or maybe we don't know where or how to start a payer. Prayer can be confusing. It can seem both mysterious and boring all at once.

Jesus confronted the religious leaders of His day because prayer had become overcomplicated. He taught that pray doesn't have to be difficult. It doesn't have to be long.

When Jesus taught his disciples about prayer He explained that God isn't looking for an eloquent speech or a public performance. And God doesn't even need us to give him a list. He knows what we need before we even ask.

So how can we experience prayer like that?

What if prayer could be simple and meaningful, creative and fun? What if prayer could help us know the Creator of the Universe?

Join us as we journey through prayer over the next 21 days. We'll take a look at the prayer Jesus taught to his disciples. And from Jesus' prayer we'll look at 7 themes that can guide us to connect with God in creative and fresh ways. And maybe by the end of it, we'll each know God a little bit more!

How to use these readings:

Each day includes a section of scripture, a short explanation of the day's prayer theme, and a prayer step to help you pray that day. The prayer steps are designed to be simple and practical. Feel free to adapt or add your own ideas to the prayer time.

Consider reading these and then discussing with a friend, roommate, family member, or small group.



HOW TO BEGIN YOUR FAST

How you begin and conduct your fast will largely determine your success. By following these five basic steps to fasting, you will make your time with the Lord more meaningful and spiritually rewarding.

STEP 1: SET YOUR OBJECTIVE

Why are you fasting? Is it for spiritual renewal, for guidance, for healing, for the resolution of problems, for special grace to handle a difficult situation? Ask the Holy Spirit to clarify His leading and objectives for your prayer fast. This will enable you to pray more specifically and strategically.

STEP 2: MAKE YOUR COMMITMENT

Pray about the kind of fast you should undertake. Consider the following:

- Soul Fast: this is a break from things such as social media, TV, secular music, spending, etc.
- Selective Fast: removing certain foods from your diet such as sweets, caffeine, or only eating certain things such as fruits and vegetables.
- Partial Fast: this is fasting during certain times of the day such as morning, noon, or evening, giving up one meal a day.
- Complete Fast: giving up food for the entire 21 days, having only water and/or juice.

Jesus implied that all of His followers should fast (Matthew 6:16-18; 9:14,15). For him, it was a matter of when believers would fast, not if they would do it. Making these commitments ahead of time will help sustain your fast when physical temptations and life's pressures tempt you to abandon it.

STEP 3: PREPARE YOURSELF SPIRITUALLY

The very foundation of fasting and prayer is repentance. Unconfessed sin will hinder your prayers. Confess every sin that the Holy Spirit reminds you of and accept God's forgiveness. Make restitution as the Holy Spirit leads you. Meditate on the attributes of God, His love, sovereignty, power, wisdom, faithfulness, grace, compassion, and others.

Begin your time of fasting and prayer with an expectant heart (Hebrews 11:6) and do not underestimate spiritual opposition.

STEP 4: PREPARE YOURSELF PHYSICALLY

Fasting requires reasonable precautions. Consult your physician first, especially if you take prescription medication or have a chronic ailment. Some persons should never fast without professional supervision. Do not rush into your fast. Prepare your body. Eat smaller meals before starting a fast. Avoid high-fat and sugary foods. Eat raw fruit and vegetables for two days before starting a fast.

STEP 5: PUT YOURSELF ON A SCHEDULE

For maximum spiritual benefit, set aside ample time to be alone with the Lord. Listen for His leading. The more time you spend with Him, the more meaningful your fast will be.

DAY ONE PRESENCE

-READ -

"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
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 lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one."

- Matthew 6:9-13 -

"The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth."

- Psalm 145:18 -



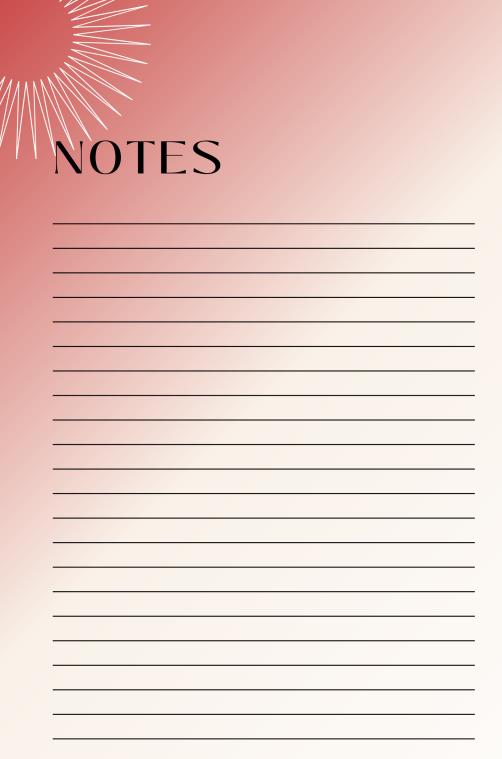
When Jesus taught His disciples and the crowds around Him to pray, He began by acknowledging God's presence by calling on "Our Father in heaven." Jesus wasn't engaging in a formality here, but making a statement of faith and trust. God exists, and God is present.

Jesus' prayer here aligns with what we learn about God all throughout Scripture. Over and over again, God promises His presence to His people. And in verses like Psalm 145:18 He even promises to be near to anyone who calls on Him. That is great news for us. The God of the Universe, our Father who is in heaven is present with us!

- PRAY -

Today, start your time of prayer calling on God. Thank Him for being near to you. You may even want to consider looking through this short list of the names of God and praying to God thanking Him for being (fill in the blank—healer, redeemer etc.) for you or for someone you love.

Names of God: Our Father, Redeemer, Restorer, Healer, Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, I Am, Holy One, Deliverer, Commander, Rock, Word, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace, Everlasting Father.



7/11/1
7777
7777
(1/1/1/
11/1/12
7.77
7/11/11

DAY TWO PRAISE

-READ -

"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
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 lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.

- Matthew 6:9-13 -

"Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD!"

- Psalm 150:6 -

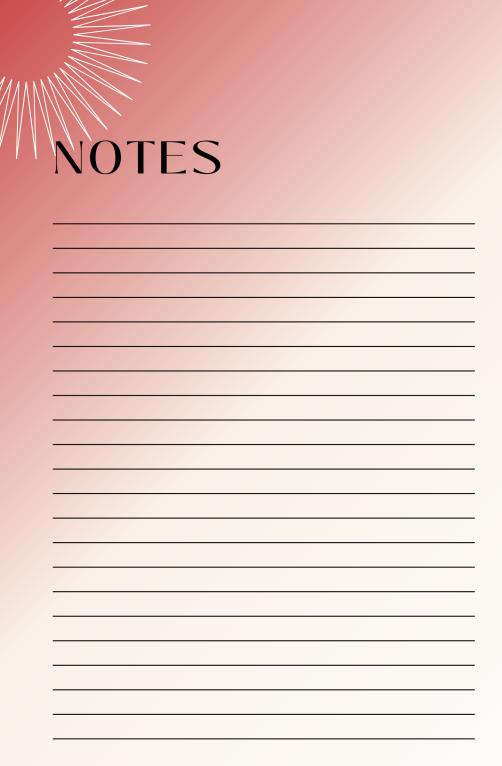


Oftentimes when we pray, we naturally focus on our needs and ourselves. We go to God to get rather than to give. Now, there's nothing wrong with sharing our needs. In fact, Philippians 4:6 tells us to "let our requests be made known to God." But it's important to share not just our needs but to offer God our praise in the process, even prioritizing the praising.

Jesus models this in the Lord's Prayer by praising God. He refers to Him as Holy, and even makes this claim before he thanks God for His grace. He praises God before he thanks Him. We "praise him for his mighty deeds" (Psalm 150: 2) and show the admiration we have for our Father. As the band Housefire says, our Lord is "worthy of all the praise we could ever bring," so praise the Lord and praise Him with your whole being!

- PRAY -

Reflect on your life over the past year and all that God has done for you and the people around you. God and His work are worthy of our praise. Through prayer, praise God for all that He's brought you through, and name specifics. Make a list of character traits that you see in God based on all he has brought you through. (For example – He is powerful. He is good. He is close. He is loving.)



DAY THREE PURPOSE

-READ -

"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
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 lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one."

- Matthew 6:9-13 -

"But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations."





It is comforting to know that God did not spin the Earth into motion and then just leave it. He has a plan for everything and everyone, and because His Kingdom is here and now we get to walk alongside God in His purpose. We get to be a part of God's plan for our lives, the lives of those around us, and the plan for the whole Earth.

Continue to reflect on the purpose that God has given you. He has given you gifts and abilities and placed you in a specific spot to fulfill both His and your purpose.

-PRAY-

As you reflect on the purpose God has given you, ask Him to reveal more of that to you. Whether that be in a small way through a certain task or conversation or a great way by entering into a new phase of life, God is there for us and will reveal it to us. "Your kingdom come, your will be done..."



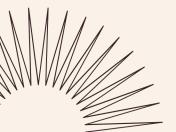
_
_
_
-
Т
_
_

DAY FOUR PROVISION

-READ -

"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
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 lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one."

- Matthew 6:9-13 -



What is Daily Bread? I thought we weren't supposed to eat that many carbs? Daily bread represents what we need to survive. It's the bare essentials to make it through the day. Jesus was reminding people of a couple of things. First, whatever is stocked in your kitchen, no matter how it got there, how many times it was shipped, or how it's packaged, it has come from God. Jesus is claiming that if you trace it back long enough, God is the source of whatever sustains you.

I'm not sure where Doritos come from. Maybe not from God, actually.

Bread is a few less steps - grain, water, oil, salt. Elements of nature, processed into useful ingredients, combined to form a miracle of food that sustains your life. And, God is the source of rain and sun, the originator of minerals and trees that bear olives that give oil when pressed, and the force of fire that bakes.

Yes, human hands put it all together, harnessed and processed, kneaded and watched it. But, make no mistake, without God's hand at work, there is no bread. Second, in this prayer, Jesus is reminding you to ask God for what you need, but to trust that He'll provide as well.

Right before this prayer begins, Jesus gives us insight into how NOT to pray (and how not to see God).

"And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him." – Matthew 6:7-8

It's not your begging, pleading, or repetition that gives you bread - that would rely on your efforts. In fact, Jesus tells us that it's not that only good, praying people get bread. It's that a good God provides the conditions for all the ingredients we need for bread (Matt 5:45). We are taught to remember where it comes from. Our good Father is at the source of our lives, and we are grateful!

-PRAY-

As you pray, thank God for providing all that you need! Thank Him for providing the conditions - sun, rain, plants - for our daily bread. Thank God that He doesn't only provide those things for good people, because at one time or another, we wouldn't have been on the sun or rain list.

Is there anything you really need to sustain you that you don't have? Ask God for it!



1//

DAY FIVE PARDON

-READ -

"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
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 lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one."

- Matthew 6:9-13 -

- 1 John 1:9 -

Asking forgiveness usually does not come naturally. To admit we have messed up takes humility and often courage, and offering forgiveness can be even more difficult. Maybe that is why Jesus builds forgiveness into His teaching on prayer. He knew we would need a lot of practice.

Every time we spend time with God, it's a chance for us to honestly share the things we are struggling with just like we would with a good friend. If there are areas in our lives where we need to ask for forgiveness, we can admit those. If there are people in our lives we need to forgive, we can talk to God about that, too. And as we do this, it's a great time to remember the incredible forgiveness that Jesus has already offered to us. He has granted us a pardon. When we confess, He is faithful and just and He will forgive.

-PRAY-

Spend a few minutes writing out a short list of any areas in your life where you have messed up. Now draw a line through each of your confessions. Write the words "thank you" beside each item on your list—thanking Jesus that He has forgiven you and trusting Him to continue to change your life this week.

If you have kids, consider writing your list on individual slips of paper and tearing them up as you talk about God's forgiveness.



DAY SIX PROTECTION

- READ -

"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
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 lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one."

- Matthew 6:9-13 -

"Be strong and courageous.

Do not fear or be in dread of them,
for it is the LORD your God who goes

with you. He will not leave you

or forsake you."

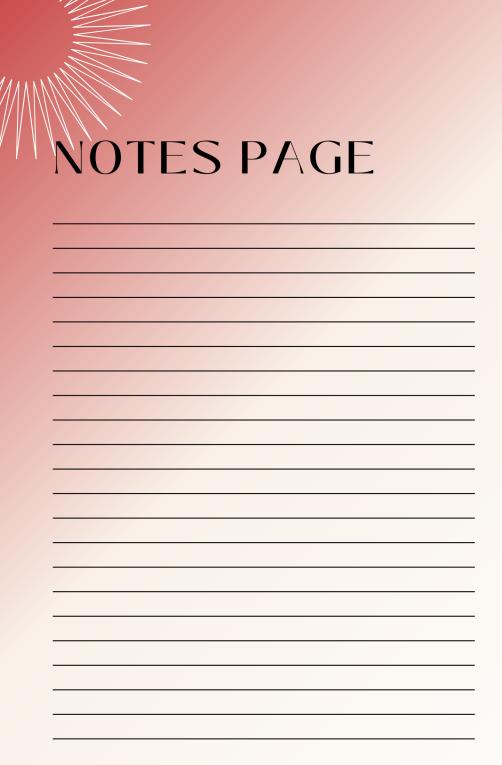
- Deuteronomy 31:6 -

We tend to try to take on the world as if we are alone. Our pride gets in the way of letting people help us out, and it even gets in the way of letting our God help us out in times of need. Pride can be a harmful thing to us at times. Fortunately, we serve a God willing to protect us and even help us overcome our own pride.

In all areas of our life, even physically, God is our protector. God speaks through Moses to the Israelites in Deuteronomy about crossing the Jordan and facing enemies, letting them know that they have nothing to fear. As children of God, we don't have to live in fear, or dread, or doubt, or nervousness; we have someone with us to protect us. He will keep us from temptation and deliver us from the evil one (Matthew 6:13).

-PRAY-

Start this time of prayer thinking about the schedule that you will be facing over the next couple of days. Ask God to extend a hand of protection over you against stress, the enemy, and whatever may interfere with your relationship with Him during this time. Pray confidently knowing that God will be there for you and see you through any situation.



DAY SEVEN PRACTICE

- READ -

"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
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 lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one."

- Matthew 6:9-13 -

"If you love me, keep my commands.
And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever- the Spirit of truth."

- John 14:15-17 -

Praise the Lord that we have the Holy Spirit working in us. The Holy Spirit helps us keep Jesus' commands and guides us through our days. So as you reflect on God's Kingdom "on earth as it is in Heaven," think about the ways that the Holy Spirit has guided you in life.

Also, a good thing to think about is how we can act more like Jesus. We don't have to be ashamed that we're not perfect like Jesus, but we can be hopeful for growth because of the Holy Spirit guiding us.

-PRAY-

As you pray, ask God to allow the Holy Spirit to work both in and through you. The Holy Spirit is our guide and admonisher. He helps us become more like Jesus and works through us to share the love of God to those around us. So think of all of the places you will go throughout your day. Imagine the faces of people you will run into. Pray that the Holy Spirit would show you one of those people that you can love today and look for an opportunity to show them that love.





OF PRAYER & STING

ALIVE WESLEYAN CHURCH

ALIVEWESLEYAN.COM









