How to Pray: A 6-Step Guide to Prayer

“Prayer.” When you see that word, what thoughts or images come to mind? Does talking to God come easy to you? Or do you struggle to pray?

Knowing what to say to God doesn’t always feel easy, and sometimes, prayer gets weighed down by our misconceptions about what a conversation with God should look like.

**“Pray then like this…”**

2,000 years ago, Jesus taught His disciples to pray like this:

[Our Father in heaven, **may your name be kept holy**. **May your Kingdom** come soon. **May your will be done** on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us today the food we **need**, and **forgive us** our sins, **as we have forgiven** those who sin against us. And **don’t let us yield to temptation**, but **rescue us** from the evil one.](https://www.bible.com/116/MAT.6.9-13)

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**Prayer is, and always will be, a dynamic conversation with God.**When we realize this, the Lord’s Prayer becomes [a freeing framework that helps us talk to God every day](https://blog.youversion.com/?p=33346).

**Here’s a 6-step guide to prayer that can help:**

1. Refocus on God.

*“Our Father in heaven, holy is Your Name …”*

Inhale deeply and focus on these words: *“Our Father in heaven.”*

Slowly exhale as you say: *“Holy is Your name.”*

Repeat this several times, and pay attention to any aspects of God’s character that come to mind. Spend this time focusing on how great God is.

1. Realign your will.

*“Your kingdom come …”*

God has always been in the process of carrying out His will on earth. So right now, reflect on this: [when you align your will with God’s will, you are actively seeking His Kingdom](https://www.bible.com/bible/59/ROM.14.16-18).

Quiet any noise around you, and ask God to show you how you can take part in doing His will today.

1. Release your concerns.

*“Give us today the food we need …”*

Imagine holding your hands out in front of you, as if you want God to put something in them. As you give God your concerns, what does He give you in return?

List your concerns, and say them one at a time. Each time you voice a concern, try asking God to, “give us this day our daily bread.”

Sit with this exercise for as long as you need.

1. Repent and respond.

*“And forgive us … as we forgive …”*

What are you holding onto that you need to lay down? Is there anything you need to confess right now? Maybe it’s a hurt you can’t let go of, a behavior you’re struggling to change, an addiction you haven’t conquered, or a mistake you keep making.

God invites you to come as you are, and respond to Him. Tell him whatever is on your mind, then create space to hear from Him.

1. Request God’s protection.

*“… deliver us from evil …”*

We’ve all been rescued from something. What has God rescued you from?

Thank Him for His faithfulness, and let Him know where you need help. Consider praying on behalf of other people who may also need protection. Remember that even when situations seem hopeless, [there is nothing God cannot do](https://www.bible.com/bible/59/LUK.1.37).

1. Rejoice and reflect.

Celebrate what God has done in your life, and look for ways to worship Him throughout your day.

Then, spend a few minutes reflecting on this time with God. What has He shown you?