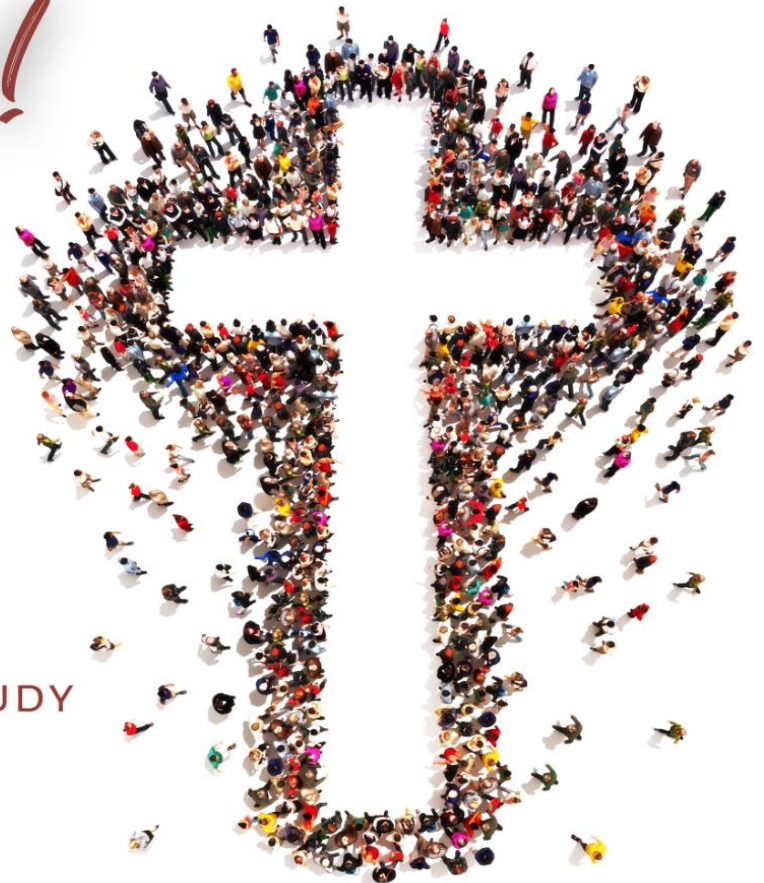


SPEAK  
TO ME:  
*An Invitation To  
Prayer!*

A SELF-GUIDED STUDY  
AND JOURNEY IN  
PRAYER



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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to **SPEAK TO ME: An Invitation to Prayer, A Self-Guided Study, and Journey In Prayer.**

With this self-guided study, we hope you will feel a sense of invitation to pray to God and learn more about what prayer is.

We hope that you will come to this study with a desire to learn about prayer and grow in your prayer life. Many people have lost their love for prayer or do not think it is essential.

Some are not praying like they want to because they do not feel confident or are unsure how to pray.

Prayer is work, prayer is intentional, and prayer is powerful! Most of the time, we do not engage in prayer because sometimes we feel it is just easier to try to fix the problem ourselves.

We do not know what has drawn you here, but the Lord has an invitation from His heart to yours concerning prayer. As you come to this study, we hope you will hear God's voice as you move through the material and allow Him to work in your heart.

You may feel many things about prayer. As you sit with the lessons, pray, and think about how God is inviting you to this extraordinary time with Him.

We will be looking at answers to these questions in this self-guided study: what prayer is, does it work, what are some hindrances to prayer, and more?

Something inside the human spirit cries out and prays to a higher being, God. But there is something even more remarkable in this. God invites you to come to prayer with Him. It is a personal invitation of love and commitment to His will, and He wants you to discover that with Him.

You will need your Bible as you go through the lessons and answer some thought-provoking questions on prayer in your own life. You will be challenged with what you think prayer means to you. Work as far into each lesson as you like. Go at your own pace. There is no time limit to the study.

Let this study ignite you again if you have fallen away from prayer. Let it breathe new life into a possible dead routine. Join Him in this personal, private place called prayer.

Let us take this personal journey together as we discover **PRAYER**.

Ready, set, let's go!

## Prayer Reflection Questions

As we begin, we want you to ponder a few questions to get you to look within your heart concerning prayer.

Have you ever thought of prayer as an invitation? 

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What would you like to gain or seek from a study on prayer? 

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If you have lost your passion for prayer, list the reason here. 

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What do you ask God for the most in your prayer time? 

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How do you feel about your confidence level in prayer? 

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How often do you engage in a private time of prayer? 

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# LESSON 1

## What Is Prayer?

What is prayer? If you ask numerous people, you will get all kinds of answers to this question.

We will give you several working definitions below because prayer is not just one thing. But for now, remember that it can be one or all of these...and more.

- **Prayer is simply talking with God. It can involve praise and adoration, thanksgiving, petition, repentance, and intercession.**
- **Prayer is an invitation to commune with God.**
- **Prayer aligns your heart, will, and emotions with God's heart.**


## THE FOUNDATION OF PRAYER

It will help if you put it on a foundation for anything you build in life. The word of God is no exception, and prayer is no different.

Let us look at some principles for the foundation of prayer.

People all over the world pray. Nearly every person has spoken a prayer, from the most affluent, influential person, to the small child.

And even though almost every person globally has prayed at some time in their life, prayer is still a very misunderstood practice for some.

**Do you believe you have a good understanding of what prayer is? If so, list it here.** 

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If you are like most people, you have questions about prayer. But if you are new to your faith in Christ, you may have more questions than most. That is okay!

People from all walks of life question prayer and how to get started praying. Many believers want to pray but may not understand what prayer is, which should be a priority in their lives.

**Does prayer have a high priority in your life?** 

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People come to the discipline of prayer for many reasons. Many come because they believe it works, while others do not.

No matter how new you are to your faith and prayer, even the simplest mumbled prayer is “a prayer.” Let me share a story about Alex.

*Alex was new to his faith, but because he had some reservations about prayer, he was not sure that it would happen if he asked for something. A situation arose in his life when he needed his car insurance money, and he did not have enough money. He began to get stressed out and afraid about the money he needed.*

*He was in college and had a lot of other debts, and his hours at work had been cut. The due date for his payment was getting closer and closer, and his stress level was getting higher and higher. He needed \$587 for his car insurance in 3 days.*

*He began to talk to his girlfriend about this, and she tried to encourage him with a prayer. She then told him jokingly, "You never know; God could just put the money in your account. Lol!"*

*Alex was so discouraged he murmured back to her, "I wish that would happen, but that stuff never happens to me." His girlfriend Bria prayed for him one more time, and then he asked God with these words, "Could you just do it, God?"*

*The following day, Alex got up and checked his bank account. He knew he had no money and had just checked it anyway. Surprisingly, the account had a deposit of \$600.*

*He could not believe that money was sitting in his account, and his girlfriend could not believe it either! They both knew God had answered her prayer and had answered his short 6-word prayer.*

*From that day forward, Alex realized that God hears him, and he does not have to be afraid. His small, short prayer was enough.*

Sometimes we are afraid or discouraged from praying, and we think we may not get the answer we are looking for. Or we do not get the answer immediately, and we get discouraged.



Have you ever become discouraged about prayer? 

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Do you believe in the power of prayer? 

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Some struggle with prayer because they do not understand some of the principles of prayer and the purpose of praying. Let us look at this.

Understanding how to pray, how it works, why it works, and more, we need to understand the foundation of God who created it.

Remember, we said prayer could be several definitions. It is not just one thing. Let me give you another meaning that will be laid out more clearly as this study continues.

**Prayer is the result of God's established authority structure between heaven and the people on earth and is a product of His faithfulness to His word.**

Prayer is built on respecting God's authority and cooperating with what He wants to be done on earth or in people.

Let us go a little deeper, unpack this thought and look at some scripture.

Prayer first began in the Garden of Eden, and it was born out of God's arrangement with humankind that they would rule and subdue the earth. God gave men the mandate to dominate the earth and to rule it.

**Read and Write: Genesis 1:26-27**



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This passage gives man the rule over the earth by God and sanctions man with the words "let them rule."

The words 'let them' are particularly important to understand how prayer works in cooperation with God in this passage of scripture.

***The words 'let them' give boundaries to what God can legally influence and interfere within the earth.***

Why is this important?

Because God is a God of His word and He is committed to His word, God is also a God of purpose. Everything that God does has a purpose, so prayer has a purpose.

Let us keep going.

There are four principles or foundations about God that we would like for you to remember and consider:

- **God's purpose is more important than our plans.**
- **God has placed His word above His very own name.**
- **God never violates or breaks His word.**
- **God's holiness is the foundation of all His integrity and faithfulness.**

These four principles are evidence of why prayer works on the earth and why it is a beautiful partnership with Him and an invitation to your life. Keep these in mind as you continue this study.

To understand this foundation some more, let us look at more scripture to help you see the nature and characteristics of God.

**Read and Write: Proverbs 19:21-22** 

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God says we have plans in our hearts, but the Lord's purpose prevails. This means that everything God does is **by** His purpose and **for** His purpose, which never changes.

Our God is committed to ***His purpose for you, not your plan.*** This may come as a surprise to you, but it is true. He is committed to what His word says, and that is unchanging.

God's commitment and dedication to His word are one of the foundations of prayer.

**Psalms 119:89-90 says His word stands firm in the heavens, and, His faithfulness continues through all generations.**

We serve a faithful God! Isn't that wonderful to know that His word stands firm in all the heavens? Take great courage and peace in that friend.

God places His word above everything, even His name. So, whenever God speaks something, He is obligated to obey even His word. Now that is powerful!

Let this thought soak in--the word God speaks as a law is also a law for Him.

Understanding this faithfulness, you can see now that the scripture in **Genesis 1:26** has even more implications when He says, ***“let them have dominion over the earth.”***

We want to give you this statement below and then elaborate on it later.

***Prayer is humankind working in cooperation with God's will through the invitation of prayer.***

To understand this statement a bit more, let me give you six laws of God that will significantly help you see your role in this invitation to pray with God. This will help you know that prayer is not something you do alone.

- **God gave legal authority to dominate the earth to humans**
- **God did not include Himself in the legal authority structure over the earth, but it is given to humans**
- **Man is the legal steward of the earth**
- **Man is a spirit; we have a soul and live in a physical body. Only physical bodies legally function in the earth realm.**
- **Any spirit that does not have a body is illegal on the earth to influence, and any interference from the supernatural realm on the earth is only legal through humanity**
- **God, who is spirit, made Himself subject to this law.**

Now, let us look at the results of these laws above:

- **Legal authority on the earth is in the control of humankind. God, the creator, will not violate the law of His word because of His integrity.**
- **Nothing happens in the earth realm without the active or passive permission of humankind.**
- **God the creator and all heavenly beings cannot interfere in the earth realm without the permission of humankind.**
- **God must have the agreement and the cooperation of a person to do whatever He desires to do on the earth.**

The knowledge of these principles above shows that prayer is with God and is not something you do alone; you do it with God so He can fulfill His will on the earth. God needs us to pray.

**Thinking about the above laws, what do you understand prayer to mean?** 

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With that said, let us expand the definition of what prayer is a bit more.

- **Prayer is man giving God the legal right and permission to get involved in the affairs on earth.**
- **Prayer is men giving heaven earthly permission to influence the earth.**
- **Prayer is an earthly license for heavenly interference.**
- **Prayer is humankind exercising legal authority on the earth to get heaven’s influence on the earth.**

When you understand this entirely as you work on this study, you will not be hindered in prayer, will not feel unworthy while in prayer, and will not be discouraged in prayer.

Prayer is not just you saying words alone; you are working, praying, and speaking in cooperation with heaven!

## HEAVEN'S CONNECTION WITH YOUR PRAYER

Let us look at these scriptures to give you an even clearer picture of man and heaven in connection with this invitation to prayer.

- ***If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. (2 Chronicles 7:14)***
- ***Be joyful always; Pray continually without ceasing; Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-19)***
- ***I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them. (Matthew 18:18-20)***
- ***Then Jesus told His disciples that parable to show them they should always pray and not give up. (Luke 18:1-2)***

These verses show man's apparent authority in prayer and how that authority determines God's will on the earth.

But why do we need to exercise this authority? Why is this so important to prayer on the earth? People even ask, “*If God is sovereign, why do we need to pray?*”

Let us look at that. You pray because...

***Humanity was created to have dominion.***

John Wesley, a famous theologian, once said, “*God does nothing but in answer to prayer.*”

Prayer is your invitation to labor with heaven, to ask God to get involved with the affairs of men on the earth through our prayer. This invitation from God to humanity will change the matters men are engaged in.

God gave us authority over the earth. We must take that authority or responsibility for the earth and determine what happens here by praying.

Prayer is an invitation to discover and walk in your power, authority, and rights on earth. It is a time for you to position yourself as a faith channel for what heaven wants to influence on the earth and in your circumstances.

You are a deliberate part of the plan of God in prayer.

**Read and Write: Deuteronomy 32:6** 

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God made you and formed you. We are (totally) dependent on God. That said, we cannot reveal God to the world apart from Him. We proclaim Him to the world through praying.

**Read and Write: John 4:16** 

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Remember this truth. God created us to conduct His purpose on the earth. This is our main reason for existing, to do God's will. We are to be His voice, hands, and image on the earth.

**What way(s) do you think you are to conduct His will on the earth?** 

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God never intended to rule the earth by Himself. Wow, now let that sink in. We are to work in cooperation with Him.

This invitation to prayer that we mentioned earlier is one that you are encouraged to take soberly. You have been given a great seat at the table with God in your prayer time. You have more power than you realize in declaring His will in the earth, your family, and life situations.

God rules the unseen realm, humankind rules the visible realm on the earth, and we enjoy communion with God through our spiritual side. Prayer is that beautiful fellowship with God that no other creature has been given.

So, to answer the question, some ask, “why do we need to pray?” Because...

***Prayer is YOU collaborating with God to bring His will to pass on the earth.***

Read and Write: 2 Corinthians 6:1



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Heaven needs our permission to impact the earth. You make that difference when you pray. You make that possible when you pray.

Okay, friend, let us go back to the definition of prayer again, and let me give you several more explanations that go with it. Remember, we said that prayer has many different meanings.

- **Prayer is an expression of mankind's relationship with the loving God and our participation with God's purposes for the earth realm.**
- **Prayer is best understood in the context of “what God's purpose” is for man.**
- **Prayer involves your entire self, your whole self with God.**

- **Prayer means to commune with God, become one with Him, and agree with His will and purpose on the earth.**
- **H. D. Bollinger said, “Prayer is a human being expressing a relationship with another being.”**

Your prayer invitation is how spiritual progress on the earth is made. It is the way we get victory in the world. This foundation and understanding of your invitation to prayer are essential for your healing, deliverance, patience, authority, freedom, confidence, assurance, peace, and boldness as a way of life.

One more definition...

- **Prayer is essentially calling forth the will of God from the spiritual realm where God has already purposed and predestine it to happen on the earth.**

Let me leave you with this quote about prayer before moving on to the next lesson....

***“True prayer is a way of life, not just for use in cases of emergency. Make it a habit, and when the need arises, you will be in practice.” - Billy Graham***



# LESSON 2

## Why Is Prayer Important?

Welcome to lesson two.

So far, we have told you what prayer is in several different ways. But let us learn why this invitation to prayer is so vital in the life of the Christian believer.

The answer to why prayer is so important comes from a question that some ask, “Why do we need to ask God to do anything when God has already determined He will do His will and purpose?”

The answer is twofold. First, God is faithful to Himself and never goes against His word.

We have learned that God will not violate His own word, and He will not interfere with whoever has the dominion on the earth unless asked.

So, why is prayer so important? Here is the second part.

Because it is the way God gets His will accomplished on the earth through humankind. It is crucial because what He wants to be done, He cannot get it done without you praying! **We have the dominion.**

Why is prayer important to you? 

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## WHAT PRAYER IS NOT!

We have been talking about what prayer is, but to give you more clarity as to why prayer is essential, we need to clarify for you what prayer is not. It is **NOT—**

- **An attention-seeking activity. It is very private to a person at certain times**
- **A way to force God to do something you want**
- **A prayer of vain repetition in your speaking**
- **Meditation or manipulation**
- **A form of witchcraft or control of people or circumstances**

Prayer is the invitation to a heartfelt, genuine conversation you have with God. You do not draw attention to yourself; it is not repeating the exact words or praying to get God to do something you want.

It is praying for His will for what He wants to happen on the earth.

Prayer is beautiful, incredible, and an amazing discipline in the life of a believer, and you get to be a part of that.

**Read and Write: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18** 

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According to this verse above, the Bible says we are to pray without ceasing.

This means that throughout the day, you can whisper things to God; you can give Him praise, thanksgiving, adoration, and more. You can have times of repentance, intercession, or petitioning Him throughout your day.

Without ceasing can mean that your day is always filled with God and speaking to God at any time. He longs to hear from you and have a conversation about anything in your heart.

***Do you have a regular time each day that you read the Bible, pray, and be with God?*** 

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Are you easily distracted in prayer and turn to other things? How can you avoid this? 

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When you can see what something **is NOT**, you can more clearly see what **it IS**. Let us look at some reasons that confirm the importance of prayer.

### Direct line of Communication

Talking to God is a direct line to Him. You can talk to God and be assured that He hears you. You do not have to go through a priest, rabbi, or pastor. You can speak to Him yourself with great confidence.

Read and Write: 1 John 5:14 

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**Prayer Makes Your Faith Stronger**

Your faith will be strengthened when you pray. You get encouraged when you pray and see answers come to pass or actually happen. Your faith and confidence in God are strengthened when you pray what seems like an impossible prayer, and God does it. Your faith is increased when that person you know needs a miracle and receives it because you prayed. Your faith soars when you are used as a vessel of change for someone else. Allow God to use you.

**You Learn Perseverance**

Another reason that it is crucial to pray is that it teaches you to persevere in a troubling circumstance or season. You learn in times of trouble to wait. You may be waiting for an answer for weeks, months, or years. Even though that can be tough, you will learn faith and patience while waiting.

**Talk about something you are waiting for God to do now?** 

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## You Learn Dependence on God

Total dependence is a rare quality in people. We do not like to depend on others. But when you are determined to be a person of prayer, you will learn to rely only on God for an answer and nothing else. You will learn that you can trust Him and Him alone.

## Deeper Fellowship with God

You also learn over time to have a deeper fellowship with God. As you pray, you will delight in Him and He in you. There will come times when you long for connection with Him, and nothing else will satisfy you.

What other ways can you consider why prayer is important to you? 

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## You Gain Confidence

Prayer gives you confidence. The Bible says this about confidence.

***“And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to His will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.” (1 John 5:14–15 ESV)***


This is powerful because your confidence can be so great that you know God heard you and when you know He heard you...you have the request you asked for.

God wants you to have so much confidence that you will not lack asking Him. When we do not ask God what His will is, this keeps us from what God would want to give us.

Let me show you examples of this from the Word of God.

***“You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask.” (James 4:2 ESV)***

***“And I tell you, 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 the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.” (Luke 11:9–10 ESV)***

Name something that you are **NOT** asking God for. 

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Now that we have looked at prayer and why it is essential, let us talk about how to pray in the next lesson. See you there!



# LESSON 3

## How to Pray?

Welcome to lesson three of our study. We hope you enjoy this and learn much about this special invitation to prayer.

So far, you have learned a few good working definitions of prayer and some reasons why it is important to pray, but how do you do it? Is there a particular way to do it? Any unique special prayer? Do you have to sound like someone else? Do you pray prayers someone else wrote?

We will look at some *biblical* ways of praying and then some *creative* ways to pray.

If you ask someone, “how do you pray?” you will get as many different answers as there are people you ask. Most people may tell you they are unsure how to pray or pray. Some are just saying words. Some may even say it does not matter, “God hears you no matter what you say.”

As you walk your Christian journey, you cannot assume that everybody knows how to pray.

Prayer is simply the Christian believer or any person talking to God. But prayer is not just about talking to God. That is one way of praying, and it is also about communion with the one true God. Before we begin...

**What does communion with God mean to you?** 

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When you ask someone how they learned to pray, some say they learned at Sunday school class, and the teacher taught them. A mom may tell you that her mom taught her how to pray at night before bed. People learn to pray in diverse ways.

How did you learn to pray? 

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Prayer is a two-way communion. It is you talking to God and then pausing and listening to what God says.

You will find many “how to pray” methods. You will not go lacking when you look for them.

We want to give you several methods in this lesson so that you can see there is no one “right way” or wrong way to pray and have communion with God.

There are great methods and books on prayer, and there are many ways God uses to teach us how to pray. But let me show you an unconventional way that Olivia learned how to pray.

*Olivia Bennet wanted to learn to pray. She was a new believer, and prayer seemed hard to her. She kept saying to her spiritual mom, Miss Carrie Wright, that she didn't understand prayer or how to pray. Olivia would say it seemed weird to talk to a being she didn't know or who controlled everything in the world. How do you*



*approach such a person? He is such a big God to be in control of everything; surely my prayers don't matter, she would say.*

*Miss Carrie asked her to come over on Sunday afternoon, and she was going to explain it to her. Olivia gets to her home and comes inside as usual. She didn't need to ring the bell. She knew it was okay to enter. Miss Carrie didn't mind. They had that kind of relationship. Olivia finds Miss Carrie sitting in her favorite chair, eyes closed and rocking slowly. She sits across from her on the sofa and waits. She looks around the room and then down at her feet, patting the ground, wondering when Miss Carrie will speak. Olivia knew she wasn't sleeping because she was rocking. She knew she had to sense her presence there. As she kept waiting for what seemed like forever, she wondered when their discussion was would. Miss Carrie was supposed to teach her how to pray today. Exactly when to teach her about prayer and what to say to this big God?*

*After some uncomfortable silence, Olivia realized that Miss Carrie seemed peaceful. It was like she was somewhere else. She didn't notice her presence. She didn't seem to see anything in the room. Olivia noticed Miss Carrie seemed to be in the presence of someone else. It finally dawned on Olivia that Miss Carrie was in the presence of God. She was still and silent, and this was the lesson. She was listening.*

*Miss Carrie didn't say a word and let Olivia learn from watching her that this was prayer. This was communing with God.*

*Olivia never forgot the lesson she learned that day and what prayer was from watching her spiritual mom sit in the presence of a being so big and powerful yet so personal and natural-- that communing with Him in silence was prayer. Nothing more was needed.*

The methods you will see below are different forms of how to pray. They work as well as the story above. God is also creative, so there will be some of those for you to choose from.

# METHOD #1

## Five Basics of Prayer

A lot of people get bogged down in the techniques of prayer. They feel if they do not do it right, God will not hear them. Again, there is no one right or wrong way to pray. There are guides on how to pray.

The Bible contains scripture that tells us to pray and where, how, when, and for whom we should pray. Let us look at them.

### Where to Pray

***"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."  
– Matthew 6:6***

This verse tells you that Jesus said to pray in a dedicated place. It does not necessarily have to be a closet, but it can be. It means that your prayer happens in a secluded area away from others, where you can focus on the Lord. It is an intimate time where only God sees and hears your prayers.

Do you have a private place to pray? If so, where? 

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## How to Pray

***"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen."***  
**- Matthew 6:9-15**

This famous passage of scripture is the pattern of prayer that the Lord gave to the disciples. It is a model prayer for believers to pray called the Lord's prayer. The model for prayer that Jesus gave is an invitation to a way to pray and will help you have a great prayer life that will be full of confidence. This prayer is broken down for you more in the bonus lesson in this study. It contains ...

- **praise,**
- **submission to His Will,**
- **petition for daily needs,**
- **request for forgiveness and protection.**

## When to Pray

When to pray is one that people have varying opinions over. Some say that you must pray in the morning to start your day with prayer. Others say to pray in the evening. It is not as important for the timing of prayer as it is your heart's position of prayer. God is not looking at the time. He is looking at you coming to Him from the invitation He gives to you.

***1 Thessalonians says, "pray continually."***

When do you usually do most of your praying? 

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**Read and Write: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18** 

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### **Who Should Pray?**

Who should pray? You should pray. The Sermon on the Mount says this three times. Prayer is for you. It is not a guessing game, and you need not wonder. God wants you to pray.

Jesus repeats at least three times in **Matthew 6**, “**when you pray.**” He was not giving the listeners an option. He was encouraging them that when they would pray, things would happen. When you pray, something will happen!

### Who Do You Pray For?

The word of God tells us who we are to pray for. So, if you are confused about who you should pray for (*besides yourself*), you need not be.

You are to pray for-- your enemies, saints, and everyone else.

Read and Write: Ephesians 6:18 

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Read and Write: Matthew 5:44 

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Read and Write: 1 Timothy 2:1-2 

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List the people you are praying for here. 

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6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

Now let us look at some creative ways to pray. Your prayer time does not need to be a boring or a dry time you spend with God. It can be fun. There are creative aids you can use to help you remember specific methods in prayer.

## METHOD #2

### Creative Ways to Pray

There are several acronym prayers that you may have seen that people have used to guide them in their prayer time. If you are a beginner in prayer and developing a solid prayer life, you may enjoy one of these.

Below are guided ways to show you *how* to pray and help you start talking to God. Some people need a little guidance to get started; these are easy and unique to remember.

- **TSP**            **Teaspoon Prayers – Thanks, Sorry, Please**
- **P.R.A.Y.**      **Pray, Repent, Ask, Yield**
- **P.U.S.H.**      **Pray Until Something Happens**
- **A.C.T.S.**      **Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication**

## **METHOD #3**

### **The Five-Finger Prayer**

This prayer involves using your hand and connecting your fingers to specific prayer points.

1. **Your thumb is nearest to you. So, begin your prayer by praying for those closest to you. They are the easiest people to remember. This can be a spouse, mother, father, children, etc.**
2. **The next finger is the pointing finger. Pray for those who teach, instruct, and heal. This may include teachers, doctors, ministers, instructors, etc. These individuals need support and wisdom as they point people in the right direction in life.**
3. **The next finger is the tallest. This finger reminds us of our leaders. It helps you to remember to pray for the President, leaders in business and industry, government leaders and administrators, leaders of cities and states, and local leaders. These people help shape our nation and put a lot of pressure on them to be moral and upstanding. They need many prayers, which is an excellent way not to forget them.**
4. **The fourth finger is the ring finger. This is the weakest finger on your hand. So, it should remind you to pray for those who are the weakest in our society or those in trouble or pain. This could be the lost, the homeless, abandoned children, etc. They need much prayer and help from the Lord.**



5. The last finger is the little finger. It is the smallest finger. This finger reminds you that the least shall be the most significant s, scripture, so pray for yourself after you have finished praying for the other groups of people, then pray for yourself.

Which of these creative methods of prayer might you use? 

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The following method includes elementary steps for how to pray. A simple four-step method is contained in prayer. This method will help you remember when you pray, not a particular formula to follow.

## FOUR-STEP METHOD

This is a method that has four steps to follow in your prayer time:

1. Address God the Father
2. Thank God for His blessings to you
3. Ask the Father for blessings
4. Close or finish the prayer with “in Jesus’ name.”

Let us look at these four steps a little closer if you are a beginner in prayer.

### **Step 1: Address God the Father**

When you begin to pray, you can open your prayer by addressing God because He is the one you are praying to. Start by saying "Father in Heaven" or "Heavenly Father."

You address Him as your Heavenly Father because He is the Father of your spirit. He is the creator and the one to whom we owe everything we have, including our lives. He is the all-knowing One and One true God.

### **Step 2: Thank God for His blessings To You.**

After opening the prayer, you will begin to tell the Father in Heaven what you are thankful for and why. Just begin to thank Him for all you have and all He has done for you. You can start by saying, "I thank you for..." or "I am grateful for...." We show our gratitude to our Father by telling Him in our prayer what we are thankful for our home, family, health, the earth, and other blessings of life.

Be sure to include general blessings like safety guidelines and specific blessings like divine protection while traveling.

### **Step 3: Ask the Father for blessings**

After thanking our Father in Heaven, we can ask Him for help. Some of the ways you can do this are to say:

- "I ask you for..."
- "I need..."
- "Please help me, Father God, with..."
- and various other ways


You can begin to ask God to bless you with things that you need in life, to help you bless another person. You can ask for knowledge, comfort, guidance, peace, direction, wisdom, etc.

Remember, God wants to answer you. He wants to bless you.

### **Step 4: Close or finish the prayer with "in Jesus' name."**

You usually end a prayer by saying, "In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen." We do this because Jesus is our Savior, our mediator between death (physical and spiritual) and eternal life. We also close out our prayer by saying Amen, which means we accept or agree with what has been spoken.

Let us practice a prayer...

**Write out a practice prayer. Make it personal from your heart. Start your prayer with "Dear heavenly Father,"** 

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# LESSON 4

## Does Prayer *Really* Work?

Welcome to lesson four of our study.

An important question that many ask at some point in their lives is, “does prayer *really* work?”

My excellent answer to you is YES! Prayer works.

At the beginning of your Christian journey, you may have noticed that almost anything you brought before the Lord in this invitation to prayer seemed to get answered very quickly.

Then as you progress in your walk, things did not seem to get answered so quickly. Sometimes because of the delay, you may have gotten discouraged and asked, “does prayer *really* work for me?”

There are times when the discipline of prayer can be misunderstood because of delay. We start to feel that prayer is work and that our words do not flow easily.

Sometimes, this delay can cause a person to give up the practice of prayer in their daily lives. We do not want that to be you.

**Have you ever been frustrated with your praying? If so, describe.** 

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Does God hear me when I pray? Why do I not get my prayers answered? Why is prayer boring? Should I even expect my prayer to be answered? Am I doing something to keep God from answering me?

These are all questions we sometimes wonder about in our prayer life.

Unanswered prayer is one of the main reasons many people do not pray like they should or engage in prayer very often.

**Do you believe that you get answers to your prayers?** 

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Let me share a true story about how God answered a little boy's prayer. Let this story give you hope that God sees you and hears your prayers and that prayer does work.

*I want you to meet Virgil. Virgil and his mom Kesha had almost nothing. They lived in the back of a house down a dark country road. Virgil was only eight years old but had suffered (almost) more than any other child. He had several health conditions, not to mention learning difficulties. When you met Virgil, you noticed how dirty his clothes were and how nearly the entire top row of his teeth was rotted out. It was Christmas 1995 when Barbara and Daniel met Virgil and his mom. Barbara and Daniel were looking for someone in need to help. The county had given them a name, and off they went.*

*Kesha had fallen on tough times and could only afford to stay in the back part of her uncle's abandoned home. This home had no heat and no actual furnishings to make it a home. It was unlivable and a rat trap. Barbara and Daniel went home and were completely heartbroken at the site and Virgil's condition.*

*As Barbara and Daniel talked to the two unsuspecting recipients of help, Barbara began to feel such a pain in her soul for the little boy who had rotted out teeth because his eyes were filled with joy and hope despite his surroundings screaming something different. She asked him what he wanted for Christmas, knowing she could only give so much in her heart. Her heart was broken for this little boy standing before her. Virgil stated that he was hungry and wanted food.*

*Barbara and Daniel told their two new friends that they would be back with food and not to worry. As they drove off, they both knew what they had to do. They knew they were an answer to prayer for this tiny little family. They immediately went and bought a few groceries and brought them back to them. After leaving, they returned home and gathered friends to help people contribute. On Christmas Day 1995, when they went back to visit Virgil and his mom Kesha, not only did they bring them presents, but they had nearly an entire community with them that had helped them furnish their home, fix things, bring beds, clothes, shoes, a Christmas tree and cook a full Christmas dinner along with more presents than they could have ever opened. Virgil and Kesha were speechless.*

*Twenty years later, Barbara found that same little boy on social media. As they were catching up, he told her the day that she and her husband Daniel came to their house was the day he knew God was real, how she asked. Because that was the day, he said, he asked God if you are honest, please bring me Christmas.*

Prayer does work, and it worked for a little boy, and it will work for you.

God is truly a faithful God to answer prayer.

Why do you think many either do not pray or believe they will not get an answer to prayer? 

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When you are beginning to develop your prayer life, you may wonder how long you should pray, if you are supposed to ask for what you want, and what you should ask for in prayer. These are typical questions.

This may be where you are right now. If so, believe in God and your faith in God. God will show you how to grow in prayer mechanics.

As you are walking out your invitation to prayer with God, a few things will help.

When these times come, try NOT to--

- 1. Feel abandoned by God**
- 2. Come to some conclusion about yourself and the prayer you prayed.**
- 3. Question the character or integrity of God**
- 4. Feel that you cannot depend on God and begin to rely on yourself in life.**

People usually go to these four things when they feel their prayer is not answered. We want to encourage you that God has not abandoned you at all. His love for you and invitation to prayer is about communion with you, His child. Try not to question the integrity of His character in those seasons of doubt. God is who He says He is.



**What thoughts have you had about unanswered prayer in your own life?** 

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Remember, prayer is not just a duty, obligation, or activity like working a job. But it is communion and heartfelt communication with God that touches His heart.

Prayer is not begging God or pleading your case like a pauper; it is at the heart of a deep relationship with Him.

You begin at your level, and as you understand the foundations and principles of prayer, you will start to communicate with Him in power and confidence.

**Have you ever felt God may have abandoned you in your prayer life?** 

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This personal invitation to prayer is one of the most exciting and thrilling experiences with God and your faith. Much happens in prayer that you cannot see.

Prayer will transform lives, change circumstances, give us peace, and helps people persevere in the world. Prayer can change the course of nations and the lives and careers of people every day.

Your prayers help bring people to the saving knowledge of Christ. T and they've hope to the hopeless like Virgil.

**Describe a time you knew that your prayer changed someone for whom you were praying.** 

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Your prayers are essential.

Let us read more scripture about God answering prayer to build your confidence.

**Read and Write: Matthew 11:24** 

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This verse is unique in that the Lord gives us great assurance that He hears and answers our prayer so much that He wants us to believe it before it happens.

God wants you to believe that your prayers will be answered. Prayer will build intimacy with God, cause you to trust Him more and His love, and bring honor to His nature and character.

God desires that you pray with understanding and pray with effectiveness.

Think about this. Prayer is meant to be answered, or God would not ask you to pray and pray without ceasing, never giving up.

Jesus knew that God always answered Him and heard him.

**John 11:41-42 says, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me.”**

How would an answer to a prayer affect your life right now? 

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Remember, prayer is NOT getting God to do what we want but about knowing Him, being in a relationship with Him to know and do His will.

Prayer reminds you that you are not in control, but God is in control. It helps keep you close to Him and His heart.

Let us move to the next lesson.



# LESSON 5

## Hindrances to Prayer

Welcome to lesson five of the study.

We have looked at what prayer is, how you pray, why it is crucial, and does prayer work.

In this lesson, we will look at the hindrances to prayer. We know we do not like them, but some things hinder prayer, according to the Bible.

Before we begin, we want to ask you a question.

What do you think hinders prayer? 

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Let us look at what the Bible says are reasons to hinder prayer.

**Not asking according to the scriptures or the will of God.**

**Read and Write: 1 John 5:14-15** 

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God is clear about asking according to His will. This wonderful scripture above should give you confidence in your asking and knowing He heard you.

**Read and Write: Matthew 6:10** 

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This verse is a part of the Lord's prayer. The will of God on the earth is the same as the will of God in heaven. You can be assured that God will hear and answer your prayer according to these promises.

When you get discouraged because an answer seems to be delayed, go back to these anchor promises.

Meditating in the scripture is key to knowing the promises of God for your life when discouragement and delay seem to come. Let us look at a few more hindrances.

**Not Praying in Faith**

**Read and Write: Mark 11:24** 

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Whatever you pray, God wants you to pray and believe it. Do not doubt it. Have a deep resolve that He will answer that request. He is a God who wants you to take Him at His word. Do not doubt when you ask Him anything.

**Read and Write: James 1:6** 

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## Obedience

This is the most significant hindrance. The Lord loves obedience, which is the key to your walk with God. Learn early to obey God even if it costs you. Do not compromise things in your life so that your confidence in asking is weak. Be obedient at all costs in your personal life and spiritual life.

Read and Write: Psalms 66:18 

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Remember, you have learned that prayer is a relationship with God. When sin or anything else hinders the relationship or displeases the Lord, it will be hard for prayer to be answered.

God delights in the upright heart.



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We also want to caution you that sometimes there will be unanswered prayers for reasons we do not know or will not know.

This happens because God does not always reveal His entire will to us about situations and circumstances. We learn to trust that His way is perfect and that He is good. No matter what happens.

Continue to trust God and believe that all things work together for your good and that things will work out as they should. God will never leave you or abandon you, and his promises are true for you even if prayer seems to go unanswered.

**Read and Write: Romans 8:28** 

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## Confession of Sin

In this life, you will not live a perfectly sinless life. That is not a condition of answered prayer. God knows this. That is why we need Jesus and need His blood to cleanse us from sin. But confession of sin is necessary for God to forgive us of our sins. Always take the time in prayer to confess any sin and be cleansed by the sacrifice of Jesus' blood.

Read and Write: 1 John 1:9 

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Obedience to Him in our lives is crucial, but it will never be perfect throughout our life, so confession must be made. God is faithful and just, and He will forgive you.

**Read and Write: 1 John 3:21-22** 

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### Forgiving Others

A great hindrance to prayer is unforgiveness, and forgiveness is at the heart of the Bible. In the Lord’s prayer, there is a specific part about your sins being forgiven in connection to forgiving others.

When you do not forgive, your sins are not forgiven.

**Read and Write: Matthew 6:14-15** 

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Sin separates us from God, and forgiveness of that sin restores it. Until that happens, it can be challenging to pray until we forgive others.

So, take some more time to look at these areas of hindrance and see if you need to address anything in your personal life.

Let us continue to the next lesson.





# LESSON 6

## Bonus Lesson - The Model Prayer

You made it to lesson six. Congratulations!

As some call it, the Lord's prayer is a prayer that Jesus instructed His disciples to pray. It is a beautiful prayer of how to pray to the Father God. They say it takes 21 seconds to pray this prayer. Here it is...

***Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.***  
**- Matthew 6:9-13**

This is a passage of scripture that most children learn early in life, and they learn it in Sunday school or were taught by their parents.

The prayer is a format prayer or a guided way of praying. You do not have to pray the exact words, but people do, and you are welcome to pray it.

We want to give you the breakdown of the prayer as a guide to help you pray. Once you see the guideline, you can pray within it using your own words, and we will put the words in red so you can see them more clearly.

### 1. Adoration and praise

**Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be your name.**

First, as you begin to pray, you start praising God for who He is. If you are unsure what to say, read some scriptures in the book of Psalms. There are countless praises you can use in your prayer. You can start with a song if you like, and you can even sing your praise to Him if you want. Be sure to express thanksgiving to God as well.

## **2. Recognize God's will and sovereignty**

**Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven.**

Next, recognize God's will. His will on the earth is the same as in heaven. This is the part of the prayer where you do not pray for what you want but for what He wants. Acknowledge God's will so that as you pray for your needs and desires to be met, He guides your heart to pray for His will to be done instead of yours. You surrender and allow God to speak to your heart about His will. Your desire is for His Kingdom to come to the earth and His Will be to do on earth just like in heaven.

## **3. Express your needs, and do not forget to pray for others**

**Give us this day our daily bread**

This is the part where you can ask for what you need. Your daily needs can be brought before God here. Be open before God listening to His heart for you. He knows the desires of your heart already. He knows what you need, so there is no shame in asking. There is nothing He cannot answer or that is too hard for Him to do. Do not forget to pray for others' needs to be met in this step.

## **4. Repent and ask for forgiveness**

**And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.**

Repentance does not just happen once; we should live repentant lives daily. Repent for any sin you have committed. Ask God to forgive you. Forgive those that have done you wrong or sinned against you. Let them go free of their offenses against you. Allow the conviction of the Holy Spirit to take place in your heart.

## **5. Ask God to keep you from temptation**

**And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil.**

In this step, ask God to keep you from temptation and protect you from enemy plans. Ask Him to keep you from sinning or being tempted to sin against Him. We do not keep ourselves from falling into the methods and traps of the enemy. We need the help and strength of God. God is the one who keeps us from falling. If we ask Him, He will deliver us.

## **6. Close with praise and adoration**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

The English Standard Version of the Bible does not include this last line of the Lord's prayer, but the King James Version does. End your prayer time with God in praise and thanksgiving for what God will do for you. Let your praise for God be your focus throughout the prayer. Start in praise and end in praise. Let the Lord's Prayer be a model of how you pray.



## CONCLUSION

As this study ends, if you like to pray a prayer of salvation or rededicate your life to God, we welcome you to do that here. You may be reading this study and realize that you want to begin a new relationship with God, and you may desire a stronger relationship with Him through prayer and need to rededicate your life. Here is a prayer that you can pray to do just that.

*Heavenly Father,*

*I choose this day to rededicate my life to You. I choose to receive you as my Lord and Savior. I believe that Jesus Christ is your son and that You raised Him from the dead. I believe this with all my heart. I commit my heart, my mind, my words, my actions, everything I have, and everything I am to You. I purposely draw close to You, and I thank You that you draw near to me. I repent of all known sin in my life and ask that You forgive me of any unrepented sin. Likewise, I release and forgive anyone that has sinned against me. I set them free and let the offenses go. I now receive Your love, Your instruction, comfort, and guidance. Thank You for welcoming me and this new fresh start and new life with You.*

*In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

## REFERENCES

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- **Bible Web App** (<https://biblewebapp.com>)  
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YouVersion is a free app that offers 600 translations of the Bible in 400 languages.
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Bible.org is an evangelical, “nondenominational Bible-based site that freely shares the good news from God to the entire world so you can KNOW the Truth about life and eternity.
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Biblia is an online Bible study tool with dozens of Bibles for your Bible Study needs.
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Blue Letter Bible provides powerful tools for an in-depth study of God's Word through our free online reference library, with study tools grounded in the historical, conservative Christian faith.
- **e-Sword** (<https://www.e-sword.net>)  
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- **EasyEnglish Bible** (<https://www.easyenglish.bible>)  
EasyEnglish Bible is to help people from every country to read and understand the Bible and apply it to their lives.
- **Lumina/Net Bible.org** (<https://netbible.org>)  
Lumina is a powerful web-based application that lets you dig into God's Word.
- **StudyLight.org** (<https://www.studylight.org>)  
StudyLight.org provides the most extensive list of quality online Bible commentaries freely available on the Internet.