

The ACTS Prayer Guide

As you pray you can use the **ACTS** acrostic (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication) to guide your prayer time. These categories are broad enough to allow for adaptation to individual contexts. This acrostic contains the major elements given by Christ in the model prayer (see Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 11:1-4).

Adoration –

Spend time praising the Lord and adoring Him for who He is.

“This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,” (Matthew 6:9 NIV)

Use Scripture to praise Him (see Ps. 103, 145, 150; Rev. 4:8; 5:12-14).

Psalm 103 (NIV)

¹ Praise the Lord, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. ² Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget not all his benefits—³ who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, ⁴ who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, ⁵ who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s. ⁶ The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed. ⁷ He made known his ways to Moses, his deeds to the people of Israel: ⁸ The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. ⁹ He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; ¹⁰ he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. ¹¹ For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; ¹² as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. ¹³ As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; ¹⁴ for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust. ¹⁵ The life of mortals is like grass, they flourish like a flower of the field; ¹⁶ the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more. ¹⁷ But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord’s love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children’s children — ¹⁸ with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts. ¹⁹ The Lord has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all. ²⁰ Praise the Lord, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word. ²¹ Praise the Lord, all his heavenly hosts, you his servants who do his will. ²² Praise the Lord, all his works everywhere in his dominion. Praise the Lord, my soul.

Psalm 145 (NIV)

¹ I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever. ² Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever. ³ Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom. ⁴ One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts. ⁵ They speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty—and I will meditate on your wonderful works. ⁶ They tell of the power of your awesome works—and I will proclaim your great deeds. ⁷ They celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness. ⁸ The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made. ¹⁰ All your works praise you, Lord; your faithful people extol you. ¹¹ They tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your might, ¹² so that all people may know of your mighty acts and the glorious splendor of your kingdom. ¹³ Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The Lord is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does. ¹⁴ The Lord upholds all who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down. ¹⁵ The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time. ¹⁶ You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing. ¹⁷ The Lord is righteous in all his ways and faithful in all he does. ¹⁸ The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. ¹⁹ He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry and saves them. ²⁰ The Lord watches over all who fear Him, but all the wicked he will destroy. ²¹ My mouth will speak in praise of the Lord. Let every creature praise his holy name for ever and ever.

Psalm 150 (NIV)

¹ Praise the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens. ² Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness.

³ Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre, ⁴ praise him with timbrel and dancing, praise him with the strings and pipe, ⁵ praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals. ⁶ Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.

Revelation 4:8 (NIV)

⁸ Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings. Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."

Revelation 5:12-14 (NIV)

¹² In a loud voice they were saying: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"

¹³ Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!"

¹⁴ The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.

Love and cherish His presence and allow Him to work in and through your life.

John 17:22-24 (NIV)

²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one — ²³ I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

²⁴ "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

Be still before Him and enjoy His presence.

Psalms 46:10 (NIV)

He says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

Use this time to allow God to speak to you through His Word and Spirit.

Psalms 40:1-3 (NIV)

¹ I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry. ² He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. ³ He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear the Lord and put their trust in him.

Psalms 90:12-17 (NIV)

¹² Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom. ¹³ Relent, Lord! How long will it be? Have compassion on your servants. ¹⁴ Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days. ¹⁵ Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us, for as many years as we have seen trouble. ¹⁶ May your deeds be shown to your servants, your splendor to their children. ¹⁷ May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work of our hands.

Praise the Lord by praying scripture or hymns back to Him

Psalms 84 (NIV)

¹ How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord Almighty! ² My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. ³ Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young—a place near your altar, Lord Almighty, my King and my God. ⁴ Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you.

⁵ Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage. ⁶ As they pass through the Valley of Baka, they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools. ⁷ They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion. ⁸ Hear my prayer, Lord God Almighty; listen to me, God of Jacob. ⁹ Look on our shield, O God; look with favor on your anointed one.

¹⁰ Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked. ¹¹ For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless.

¹² Lord Almighty, blessed is the one who trusts in you.

Revelation 4:8 (NIV)

⁸ Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings. Day and night they never stop saying: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.”

Revelation 5:9-10, 12-13 (NIV)

⁹ And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. ¹⁰ You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.”

¹² In a loud voice they were saying: “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!”

¹³ Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!”

Confession

Confession should be a part of your continual walk with Christ

Matthew 6:9-13 (NIV)

⁹ “This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, ¹⁰ your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹ Give us today our daily bread. ¹² And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.’

Spend time asking Christ to search your heart for areas that displease Him

Psalms 139:23-24 (NIV)

²³ Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. ²⁴ See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Allow God to cleanse your heart of any unconfessed sin

Psalms 51:10-13 (NIV)

¹⁰ Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. ¹¹ Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. ¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. ¹³ Then I will teach transgressors your ways, so that sinners will turn back to you.

Be sure to spend time confessing and repenting of (turning away from) specific sins

1 John 1:9 (NIV)

⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Accept His forgiveness and cleansing

Jeremiah 31:34 (NIV)

³⁴ No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the Lord. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

Thanksgiving

Giving thanks for all things should be a part of our everyday lives as God's people.

Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV)

⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

This includes thanking God for specific things such as blessings, people, open doors, guidance, etc. Also give thanks for His salvation and the privilege to serve such a wonderful Savior. Thank Him for his goodness, loving-kindness, and faithfulness

Psalm 100:4-6 (NIV)

⁴ Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. ⁵ For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

Supplication

We are called as believers to intercessory prayer

Matthew 6:9-13 (NIV)

⁹ “This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, ¹⁰ your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹ Give us today our daily bread. ¹² And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”

Luke 18:1 (NIV)

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.

Colossians 4:2 (NIV)

² Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

1 Timothy 2:1-4 (NIV)

¹ I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— ² for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. ³ This is good, and pleases God our Savior, ⁴ who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

Thus, we are to come before God on behalf of others

Hebrews 10:19-25 (NIV)

¹⁹ Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵ not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Spend time praying for specific people, events, states, countries, missionaries, etc.

Acts 12:5 (NIV)

⁵ So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.

Romans 10:1 (NIV)

Brothers and sisters, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved.

In addition, spend time praying for personal needs

Matthew 21:22 (NIV)

²² If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”

Matthew 6:33 (NIV)

³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

Make prayer lists for your time of supplication. Be sure to include a place for answers to be recorded. Recorded answers can become items for praise and thanksgiving.

