



'Worship at home'

Sunday September 29th 2024

We come to worship to pray
and praise God, to listen and learn,
to hear God's Word, as we seek God's ways.
You might bring with you a **blank piece of paper**
and **several coloured pencils** or markers
to aid your prayer time.



Opening

Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray.

Are any of you happy? You should sing praises. James 5:13 NLT

Prayer of Thanks and Praise

You are a God of love and grace, who hears our prayers;
we give you thanks and praise.

You are beyond our comprehension, yet you care for each of us
intimately; **we give you thanks and praise.**

Your love was shown in Christ Jesus, who lived and died and
rose again in mercy and love; **we give you thanks and praise.**

You are revealed in our world through the Holy Spirit, making
known the one God and guiding our ways; **we give you thanks
and praise.**

We know we can trust in you in all situations of our lives, and
you are with us, in all our ups and downs, giving courage and
strength; **we give you thanks and praise.**

We give you thanks and praise, O God, in all things. **Amen!**

Prayerfully reflect on the following questions...



**How would you describe prayer
to someone who has never prayed?**

When and how often do you pray?

Do you expect your prayers to be answered? How?

**Think of a time when you felt your prayers were answered.
Were they answered in the way you expected,
or in a different way?**

**Are you more likely to pray when you are struggling
with difficulties, or when things are going well?
Why?**



We each pray in different ways. Bowing our heads, closing our eyes and folding our hands stops the external distractions, if not the internal ones! You might pray before you get out of bed, or as you lie down to sleep.

Many of us say grace before a meal or pray at certain times throughout the day. Some people pray each time they are stopped at traffic lights – it saves feeling frustrated at waiting! Prayer is conversation with God. It can be out loud or silent. It may not use words at all, some people pray in images or colours. You may colour in, or write, or dance, or sing, as a prayer.

Thanks and praise

A cry for help

Confession of fear or failings

Pleas for healing

Prayers for your loved ones/your community/our world

Use your paper and coloured pencils to pray. You might write words, draw pictures, doodle or scribble. Try not to think about it too much, but allow your drawing to express your thoughts, feelings and longings, perhaps in a new or different way. Reflect on how this makes you feel, and what God might be saying in this.

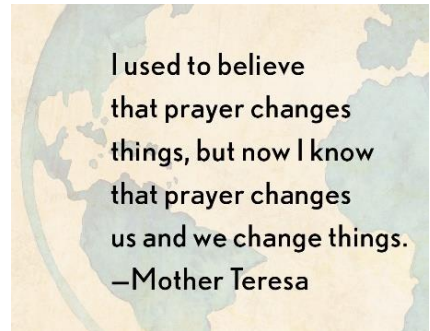


Prayer can express our deepest emotions, our hopes and dreams, our fears and frustrations. Like any conversation, prayer involves listening, as much as it does talking or thinking. Prayer is about being in right relationship with God. Prayer brings us closer to God, and allows us to hear and commit to God's ways.

Prayer changes us. It has been said: prayer is not about changing God's mind but rather changing our lives.

James 5:13-16

Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray. Are any of you happy? You should sing praises. Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you



have committed any sins, you will be forgiven. Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.

New Living Translation

The author of James emphasises the importance of prayer, in all aspects of our lives. It can take courage to pray, and then stop and listen to God's response. Sometimes when we pray we ask God for what we think we want. We just want God to give us what we ask for, and we want the answer to be easy, comfortable and safe.

- *Just change my circumstances.*
- *Just fix my problems like anger, pride, anxiety, stress, and selfishness.*
- *Just let me wake up in the morning and be different.*
- *Just give me the solution, please.*

God doesn't just give us what we want when we want it. God calls us into relationship, and that involves an ongoing process of change, of growth, of transformation and renewal.

Be careful what you ask for. You might just get it only to find out it wasn't what you wanted at all.

If we ask for patience, then get ready to face circumstances that will test your patience. Ask for courage, and then get ready to face circumstances

beyond your capabilities that may bring fear, anxiety and worry. Ask for love, and then get ready to express love in challenging times. When we pray, we can expect a response. However, it might not always be the response we expect.

This passage is often used as a prompt for prayers for healing. The healing referred to here is restoration and wholeness. This may or may not mean physical healing occurs. Healing can occur in many ways. Ultimately our desire is spiritual healing: restoration into relationship with God and experiencing God's forgiveness and love. In this way, we are made whole.



*What a friend we have
in Jesus, all our sins
and griefs to bear; what a
privilege to carry everything
to God in prayer:*

*O what peace we often
forfeit, O what needless pain
we bear, all because we do
not carry everything to God
in prayer.*

*Are we weak and heavy
laden, cumbered with a load
of care? Jesus is our only
refuge: take it to the Lord in
prayer.*

*Do your friends despise,
forsake you? Take it to the
Lord in prayer; in his arms
he'll take and shield you, you
will find a solace there.*

Together in Song 590

Joseph Medlicott Scriven 1819-86

Prayer

Spend some time praying for those you love, for your community, for the needs of those around you, for our world. You might write or draw again on your piece of prayer paper.



Closing

Go from here to pray and to praise;
Go from here to listen and to learn.
Go from here to live out God's Word;
Go from here to seek God's ways.
Go with open hearts and minds
Go with courage, and with faith.
And may our God of love and grace
go with you. **Amen!**