A TRINFINITY MINI BOOK

Praying Every Day

The kinds of prayer and how to pray

Andrew Dominguez

TRINFINITY
Enterprises

2026-10-29 | Version 1.1



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About this book

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Introduction

Prayer is talking with God. It is expressing my heart to Him and spending time in His presence. It is not a one way activity. God listens to me, and I need to learn to listen to Him. Prayer can be exciting and powerful, but for many of us it is also the first thing that slips when life gets busy.

This book is a practical look at daily prayer. It covers the kinds of prayer we see in Scripture, why prayer matters, how to pray, what can hinder our prayers, and how to build a simple daily habit.

1 Four kinds of prayer

Thanksgiving is the first. First Thessalonians 5:18 (NASB) says, in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. I can thank Him for His protection, His provision, His blessings, and most of all for His Son.

Petition is asking God for what I need. Jesus taught us to pray, give us this day our daily bread (Matthew 6:11, NASB). When Jabez asked God to bless him and keep him from harm, Scripture says God granted him what he requested (1 Chronicles 4:10, NASB). There is nothing selfish about bringing real needs to a Father who cares.

Prevailing prayer keeps asking. Jesus told a parable about a widow who kept coming to an unjust judge to show that at all times we ought to pray and not to lose heart (Luke 18:1, NASB). Some breakthroughs come after a long season of asking.

Intercession is praying for others. When Nehemiah heard that the wall of Jerusalem was broken down, he wept, fasted, and prayed, and he confessed the sins of his people as his own (Nehemiah 1:3-6, NASB). Intercession is love on its knees.

2 Why I pray

Most people pray to change their circumstances. The greater benefit of prayer is that it changes me. It draws me closer to God and reminds me of things I easily forget.

Prayer reminds me of my need for the Father. Jesus taught us to begin, Our Father who is in heaven (Matthew 6:9, NASB). No matter how

mature I become, I never outgrow my need for Him. Jesus said, apart from Me you can do nothing (John 15:5, NASB).

Prayer reminds me of my position in Christ. Jesus said, if you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it (John 14:14, NASB). I come to God not on my own merit but because I belong to Jesus. God made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21, NASB).

Prayer also reminds me of the goal of obedience. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much (James 5:16, NASB). To pray in the Spirit is to pray while walking with Him.

3 How I pray

I start by asking the Holy Spirit for help. Romans 8:26 (NASB) admits that we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us. I ask Him to help me pray and to help me stay focused.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9 (NASB)

Then I confess. The word confess in 1 John 1:9 (NASB) carries the idea of agreeing with God. I am not telling Him anything new. I am agreeing with Him about my sin. If I need to make something right with another person, I do that too (Matthew 5:23-24, NASB). Then by faith I accept His forgiveness.

Next comes adoration, praising God for who He is. Then thanksgiving, praising Him for what He has done. Psalm 100:4 (NASB) says to enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise. After that I bring my requests and the needs of others.

4 What can hinder prayer

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7 (NASB)

Philippians 4:6-7 (NASB) promises peace when I bring my requests to God. When the answer is not what I wanted, that peace can carry me through in a way others may not understand.

Scripture also warns that some things block prayer. Psalm 66:18 (NASB) says, if I regard wickedness in my heart, the Lord will not hear. When I hold on to sin I have no intention of giving up, my fellowship with God is broken. Ask any teenager who has just been grounded how well his requests are received.

Relationships matter too. Peter told husbands to live with their wives in an understanding way and to show them honor, so that their prayers will not be hindered (1 Peter 3:7, NASB). How I treat the people closest to me affects my prayer life.

Ignoring God's Word is another hindrance. If I will not listen to Him, I have little reason to expect that He will act on my requests the way I want. Prayer and the Bible belong together.

5 Building a daily habit

Prayer grows with practice. I find it helps to have a set time and a set place, even if it is only a few minutes at first. A quiet morning before the house wakes up works well for many people. Others pray on the drive to work.

A simple pattern can keep me from wandering. I can move from praise, to confession, to thanksgiving, to my own needs, and then to the needs of others. Some people keep a list of names and requests and note when God answers. Looking back over that list is a great faith builder.

I also want to remember to pray for others beyond my own circle: for church leaders (Romans 15:30, NASB), for those in authority (1 Timothy 2:1-2, NASB), for other believers (Ephesians 6:18, NASB), and for people who do not yet know Christ. Jesus prayed for those who would believe in Him through the disciples' word (John 17:20, NASB). That includes us.

Most of all, I want prayer to be a conversation with someone I love, not a chore I check off. God is not waiting for perfect words. He is waiting for me.

Praying Every Day

Prayer is talking with God, and for many of us it is the first thing to slip when life gets busy. This book looks at the kinds of prayer in Scripture, why prayer matters, a simple way to pray, what can hinder prayer, and how to build a daily habit.

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Philippians 4:6 (NASB)

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