

Using these Scripture prayers—

Pray Scripture verses like you normally speak.

Putting verses into today's conversational words makes them easy to read. Write them out as you find verses to pray and remember, or simply pray them direct from the Bible.

Pray them as they appear in the Bible.

For example, if you pray the Scriptures just as they appear in the Bible, you can personalize them by inserting one or more names: Let's use the prayer from Ephesians 3:14-19 as an example—

“...out of Your glorious unlimited resources I ask You to give (John, Betty, Josh and myself) the mighty inner strengthening of Your Holy Spirit.” (Ephesians 3:16)

Use them as an outline for personal prayer.

Or, read a verse or two, enough to present a complete thought, and then add your own thoughts in prayer. After the verse above, you might add:

How wonderful that Your resources are unlimited! I'm grateful that we're Your children, that we've been given Your Holy Spirit. May He make us strong in Christ.

Pray verses that are not specifically prayers.

This works just as effectively with verses from the Bible that were not initially written as prayers—

“Father, help us never to be weary in prayer, to keep at it...” (Colossians 4:2a, TLB)—

Lord, this is so hard sometimes, especially when we don't see Your answers soon. Help us not to give up, to trust that You are working in ways we can't see. “...and watch for your answers...”

(Colossians 4:2b, TLB)—

Teach us to pray specifically, so we'll be able to recognize Your answers. Help us to pray expecting Your answers. Help us to live in anticipation of Your faithfulness.

Praying through God's Word—

As you read through the Bible devotionally in your quiet time, personalize the Word as if it has been written just for you, and respond in prayer.

The epistles—

“I always thank God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus.” (1 Corinthians 1:4)

Thank You for the grace that brought me into Your kingdom, for the grace You give me for daily life. Strengthen me with grace, that I may live to please You.

History, people and events—

“In the second year of Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel, Jotham son of Uzziah king of Judah began to reign. ...He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord.... The high places, however, were not removed; the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense there.” (2 Kings 15:32-35)

Are there any “high places” in my life—anything like an idol? Anything more important to me than You?

Psalms—

“Arise, O Lord, in your anger; rise up against the rage of my enemies.” (Psalm 7:6)

I don't have any enemies for You to rise up against—except maybe evil spirits. Rise up against them!

Proverbs—

“A cheerful look brings joy to the heart...” (Proverbs 15:30a)

Lord, when I'm around others, do I have a cheerful outlook? Do I bring them joy?

Parables—

Parable of the Lost Son (Luke 15:11-32)

Father, thank You for showing us that You are ready to welcome us back when we stray.



Praying Scripture Empowers Intercession

As we mature in our faith and knowledge of God's Word, we often find ourselves praying familiar verses and promises of Scripture in our personal prayers. This helps us pray God's will, and that strengthens our prayers. That's what PowerLines are about—Scripture prayers that God promises to hear.

When we pray God's Word— our prayers become ...

Swords in our hands that defeat the powers of darkness (Ephesians 6:17-18; Matthew 4:1-11)...

Living power, sharper than double-edged swords that reveal the thoughts and attitudes of the heart (Hebrews 4:12)...

Words that do not return empty, but accomplish God's desire and purpose (Isaiah 55:11)...

A lamp to the feet and light for the path of those needing guidance (Psalm 119:105)...

The means to pray God's will and receive what we ask (1 John 5:14-15)...

The presence and power of the Lord Jesus Christ released into the lives and situations we cover with prayer (John 1:1-2; Revelation 19:13).

PrayerPower

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Why is it important to include Scriptures in our prayers?

Jesus taught the basics of prayer.

When Jesus taught His disciples to pray, He taught them to ask for their “daily bread” (Matthew 6:11)—physical, material needs. He was teaching His followers the basics of prayer, the foundation for a prayer life (Matthew 6:9-13).

What did Jesus and the Apostle Paul pray?

But if we look at the prayers that Jesus and the Apostle Paul prayed (John 17; Ephesians 1:15-23; 3:14-19; Philippians 1:9-11; Colossians 1:9-12), we see they weren’t prayers for daily bread, but for spiritual growth and maturity, unity, and protection.

Praying God’s will is important.

These prayers are important examples for us. We often pray for people we don’t know, and we can’t be sure of God’s will for their daily needs. But when we add Scriptures, adding the spiritual concerns Jesus and Paul prayed for, we can know we’re praying God’s will. His Word is His will. When we pray it, He hears our prayer:

“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.” (1 John 5:14)

If God answers our prayers for spiritual needs—prayers that lead to seeking Him and living according to His will—we have His promise to meet our practical, material needs (Matthew 6:25-33).

Balanced prayers.

This doesn’t mean we shouldn’t pray for practical, material needs. Jesus said we should, and some can be quite urgent. But it’s a good idea to balance our intercessions, including both physical and spiritual needs, keeping in perspective which ones are more important..

Encouraging testimony regarding Scripture prayers—

A sense of God’s pleasure.

The first Scripture prayers we (Jim and Kaye Johns) began to use were paraphrases of Paul’s prayers and teaching. We were leading a *Disciple’s Prayer Life* group, and prayed at the close of each session.

The night we introduced the prayers, we asked the group to form a circle, and gave each one a prayer to pray for the person on his left. As we prayed, each prayer seemed especially written for the person we were praying for. God seemed to affirm His pleasure that we prayed His Word.

Friends prayed Paul’s prayers for their family.

Another time we shared our PowerLine resource Praying with Paul with another couple. They chose to pray them for their family.

After a while one of their sons called home. He was away at college, and he had begun to drift away from the Lord. He told his dad that he couldn’t understand what was happening to him that week, but that he had prayed with friends and had rededicated his life to the Lord!

His mom read him the prayer they had been praying for him every day that week. There was a moment of stunned silence, then he said, “Mom, those are the very thoughts I couldn’t get out of my mind!”

God’s Word does not return void (Isaiah 55:10-11)—especially when we pray it.

Several years have gone by, and their son is now married. Our friends began praying another of Paul’s prayers for him and his wife—asking that they would, among other things, “be encouraged and knit together with others in the body of Christ by strong ties of love.” (Colossians 2:2)

Sure enough, the son called within a few weeks to say he and his wife had been asked to join other couples in forming a new Sunday school class at their church.

Learning to pray with others using Scripture prayers—

Why learn to pray together?

The rewards are tremendous. Start with Jesus’ promise that if two agree about anything we ask, it will be done by our Father in heaven (Matthew 18:19)! There is a holy synergy involved in praying with others that can’t be explained, only experienced.

Let God help.

The good news is that if we are willing to ask God to help us learn to pray with others, He will. Some of us just have to be willing to go through our initial discomfort. When we do, we discover it’s like riding a bicycle—we only have to learn once.

We learn from others.

Praying together is important because it’s one of the ways we learn to pray. As we pray silently along with someone praying aloud, we often pray things we might not think to pray on our own. The Holy Spirit helps us remember them, so that we can include them later in our private prayers.

Praying together adds a new dimension to a marriage, a family, a friendship, a small group, or a church congregation. Corporate prayer binds hearts together as nothing else does.

An easy way to begin.

Ask someone to pray with you. Each select a number from 1 to 5 to describe your feelings about praying together (5 being the most comfortable). Share your numbers and why you feel that way. Discussing it helps diffuse discomfort!

How can Scripture prayers help?

Easy—just take turns reading them! They help you get used to hearing your own voice, and they give you something meaningful to ask. Having something in hand to use makes it easier to begin.