

# THE ACTS OF PRAYER

How do you get to know someone? When it comes down to it, it's simple: you talk with that person and spend time with them. Your relationship with God is no different. If you want to get to know God, what he loves and what his desires and passions are, you need to spend time with him. Prayer is one of the ways you can do this.

*I love the Lord because he hears my prayers and answers them. Because he bends down and listens, I will pray as long as I breathe (Psalm 116:1-2, TLB)!*

Learning to pray can often be overwhelming, especially if you're new to it or if you haven't done it in a while. It can help to remember that praying is simply having a conversation with God. It's telling him what's going on in your life. It's trusting him with your needs. It's also a time to praise and worship him for who he is and what he has done. He wants to be first in your life, and he wants you to worship him in the good times and in the bad so that your trust in him will deepen and grow and your heart will be encouraged.

*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God (Philippians 4:6).*

God speaks through his Word, the Bible. So the more [read his Word](#) and learn to pray it, the deeper your relationship with him will be. And you are not alone in this process, because God lives in you by his Spirit. Before beginning your time with God, invite the Spirit to direct your life and your thoughts. He is the best teacher you could ever have.

A simple guide to help shape your prayers follows the acrostic ACTS.

## **A: ADORATION**

To adore God is to worship him for who he is and not only for what he does. In adoration you verbalize your worship, praise, honor, and exaltation of God. Many of the psalms can help us to focus on the attributes of God, such as his loving kindness, his mercy, and his majesty. Adoration is an expression of love and trust.

## **C: CONFESSION**

As you begin your prayer by worshipfully adoring God, the Holy Spirit will often reveal any sin in your life that needs to be confessed. To confess means to “agree with.” In other words, you agree with God concerning your sin — that it is, in fact, sin; that Jesus’ death on the cross has paid for that sin, and that you are fully forgiven as a result of that perfect sacrifice. This leads you to ask God for forgiveness and thank him for doing so ([1 John 1:9](#)).

## **T: THANKSGIVING**

Giving thanks to God is an expression of faith, and faith pleases God. In saying, “Thank you,” you are expressing your gratefulness and appreciation for what God does. Thanksgiving is also saying, “God, I trust you.” It is the opposite of whining and becoming bitter when things don’t work out the way you want them to. The Bible tells us that God’s will is that we give thanks to him in all circumstances ([1 Thessalonians 5.16-18](#)).

## **S: SUPPLICATION**

Supplication means entrusting all your needs and desires to God. He is the Creator of the universe, and he wants you to tell him what’s on your heart, however minor it might seem. Anything that concerns you concerns God. That includes difficult areas in your personal life, or the needs of others.

When you pray, don’t forget that listening to God is just as important as speaking to him. Listen to him as the Holy Spirit speaks to you through the Bible or even in the quiet stillness of your heart.

Remember that a clear answer might not come right away or in the way you’d expect, but God is always listening, and he does respond. The more you pray and spend time with him in his Word, the more you will get to know who he is and see him at work.

*Ask and you will receive, that your joy may be made full* (John 16:24).