

STRUCTURED PRAYERS

When it comes to prayer, sometimes it's hard to know where to start. Or, if you've made prayer part of your life, sometimes you wonder whether you're praying for the right things with the right motivations.

In my life, common prayers and structured prayers have helped navigate some of these spiritual struggles.

The Lord's Prayer

The starting point for structured prayers in my life is the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray in [Matthew 6:9-13](#), commonly referred to as "The Lord's Prayer." You may have grown up repetitively regurgitating this prayer in church or school, or maybe you've never seen it before. But in my experience, when you tap into the heartbeat behind it, it can help you discover a rich prayer life.

If it's new to you, try praying it every day for a week to familiarize yourself with its ideas and rhythm. If it's "old hat," try praying different biblical translations of the prayer for a fresh experience.

For a deep look at Jesus' intentions and purposes for this prayer, check out our series called [The Prayer Revolution](#) where we spent five messages diving into it.

Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals

"Common prayer" is a phrase referring to written prayer books, often associated with the Anglican church. The spirit behind common prayer is about providing a framework for communicating with God and aligning our hearts to his purposes through a vast spectrum of prayers for different situations, seasons of life, emotions, decisions, and challenges.

In experimenting with this more "traditional" approach to prayer, a book by [Shane Claiborne](#) called ["Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals"](#) has been really useful for me.

In particular, ["St. Francis' Prayer"](#) and ["A Prayer for Deliverance From False Desires and Fears"](#) on pages 72-73 have been go-to's for me amidst challenging situations in work and relationships.

The Psalms

When you're not sure what, how or where to pray, praying through scripture is never a bad idea, and [the Psalms](#) are the prayer book of the Bible. From celebration to complaint; to fears, questions, and doubts, the Psalms express a wide range of thoughts and emotions that help us articulate our own thoughts and emotions to God.

Try, not just reading, but *praying through* one Psalm each day for a month to see whether it sparks a renewed experience of God.

A fresh translation I've enjoyed, that also includes occasional reflections and devotionals on specific Psalms, is a version called ["The Voice of Psalms"](#).

Other Recommendations:

[Daily Office by Peter Scazzero](#)

[The Divine Hours by Phyllis Tickle](#)

[A New Liturgy by Aaron Niequist](#)