

From Prayer Slacker

to

Prayer Warrior

A 7 Day Challenge

by Lynnae McCoy

Welcome to Day 1 of the Prayer Slacker to Prayer Warrior Challenge.

I'm so glad you're here!

If you're anything like me, you signed up for this course because you long to be a prayer warrior. You want to make prayer a priority, but you have run into obstacles.

- You can't seem to find the time to pray.
- You get distracted while praying.
- You are overwhelmed by the sheer number of things you feel you need to pray for.
- You just don't feel like you're connecting to God.

I've been there, and I've spent the last few months really studying the subject of prayer. **I've learned a lot of helpful information during that study time, and I'm so excited to share what I've learned with you.**

In the next seven days, if you do your homework, you will:

- Make a consistent time for prayer.
- Create a personal prayer space {even if your house is small}
- Learn how to prepare your heart for prayer.
- Break down the barriers between you and God.
- Create a system for covering the people you love in prayer.
- Learn how to remember to pray for requests you get throughout the day.
- Guard your heart against legalism in prayer.

I believe every person is a prayer warrior, waiting to be unleashed. Are you ready?

Day 1: Make a Time for Prayer

Dear friend, Satan doesn't want you to pray. He will always try to convince you that you are too busy. He will throw obstacles to prayer in your way: a baby waking up as you begin your prayer time, a bad night's sleep, a good book that you can't put down.

There's always an excuse not to pray.

To be consistent in prayer, you're going to have to make time. The time won't magically appear.

I read a quote from Jim George that said, "It's not your schedule that keeps you from praying, it's your failure to realize the importance of prayer."

And it's true. **When we realize that God is capable of handling our problems and that he is the provider of all our blessings, we will make prayer a priority.**

Let's say a quick prayer before we tackle today's assignment.

Heavenly Father,

I confess that I have not made prayer a priority in my life. Please forgive me. Help me to desire to spend time with you. Motivate me when I don't feel motivated. Draw my eyes toward you, and help me to see the blessings you provide for me. I desire to be a prayer warrior. I know that's what you want from me, too, and I trust you to help me make the changes in my life that need to be made. Help me to put you in first place in my life.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

Assignment 1: Make a Daily Prayer Date with God

Look over your daily schedule. Where can you create time to pray?

Personally, I like to start each day with prayer, but if first thing in the morning doesn't work for you, any time is a great time for prayer.

If you're having trouble coming up with a consistent time to pray, think through the following questions:

Can I get up earlier to pray?

Can I stay up later after everyone else is in bed?

Can I use my lunch hour to pray? My children's nap time? (Maybe send older kids to their rooms for afternoon quiet time.)

Is there something I could give up to make time to pray? An hour of television? Facebook? Time spent reading novels?

Start small. Set aside 15 minutes. **I am convinced that once you start consistently praying, you will want to add more time.** But don't overwhelm yourself by trying to start too big.

When you've found a time, put it on your calendar. Make a commitment to stick to your prayer time for a month. **It takes 21 days to develop a new habit, so by the end of the month, prayer will be a routine part of your life.**

That's all for today! I'll meet you back here tomorrow!

Blessings,

Lynnae

Day 2 of the Prayer Slacker to Prayer Warrior Challenge

Yesterday you made a commitment to prioritize prayer in your life, and you set aside a daily time for prayer. If you haven't done that yet, go back and do it now.

Today we're going to make a space for prayer.

Matthew 6:6 (ESV) says, "But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

The first thing you are going to look for in a prayer space is a place where you can be alone. It's hard to pour out your heart to Jesus when you feel like the world is watching. Don't you agree?

The second thing you're going to want for your prayer space is [a basket containing everything you think you might need for your prayer time](#). That might include your Bible, [a prayer journal](#) or blank notebook, pens, Kleenex, chapstick...anything that you might need.

Let me tell you a little bit about my prayer space. I don't live in a big home, and I don't have a room or closet that I can turn into a prayer room. What I do is keep a basket of supplies in my living room. I set my prayer time for early in the morning before my family wakes up, so I can be alone.

Even though my prayer space is a public room in our house, I created a personal prayer space by using time to gain some privacy. During the summer, sometimes I even go out on my deck to pray, because the weather is nice. I just take my prayer basket with me.

One more word on creating a prayer space. I don't know about you, but when I try to pray in bed, I fall asleep. **Make your prayer space somewhere other than your bed.** And if you need to make a cup of coffee before you pray or take a brisk walk to wake up, do that. Sometimes I even start my prayer time while I'm walking and then finish up at home. Do what works for you.

Let's pray before we talk about some of the prayer supplies you might want in your prayer basket.

Heavenly Father,

Spending time with you daily is so important. I confess that I haven't been doing that. I pray now as I make prayer a priority in my life that you will help me realize what has been standing

in my way. Help me to get rid of distractions. Quiet my mind during my prayer time, so I can focus completely on you.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Assignment 2: Create a Personal Prayer Space

Decide where you will meet God daily for prayer. Of course, you can pray anywhere, and you should. However, **making a personal prayer space with your Bible and journal will encourage you to develop the habit of daily prayer.**

Once you decide where you will pray (remember to make it a place other than your bed), put together a box or basket of things you might find useful during your prayer and devotional time.

Prayer/Devotional Basket Suggestions:

- Your Bible
- A Prayer Journal (more about this tomorrow - I use a binder with tabs and binder paper)
- Pens
- Highlighters (I use Crayola Twistable colored pencils)
- Tissues
- Lip Balm (I get distracted by dry lips)
- Once you assemble your box or basket, place it near your personal prayer space. It will be waiting for you every time you pray.

And as you begin building a routine of praying, if you find yourself consistently having to leave your prayer space to get something (like tissue or lip balm), add it to your prayer basket.

See you tomorrow!

Blessings,

Lynnae

Day 3 of the Prayer Slacker to Prayer Warrior Challenge

So far this week you have picked a time and place to meet God in prayer. Today, we're going to get right down to praying.

Psalm 1:2 (ESV) says, "...his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night."

The key to growing in prayer is to know God better. Think about it. It's easier to talk with people you know than people you don't know, right? So the better you know God, the easier it is to talk with him.

And the best way to get to know God better is through the Bible. That's how he speaks to us.

In [*Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*](#), Timothy Keller suggests scripture meditation as a way to get to know God better and prepare your heart to meet with him in prayer.

By focusing on a small portion of scripture and going over it until it pierces your heart, you gain a proper perspective of who God is and who you are in relationship to God. **Meditation on the Word naturally leads into thanksgiving, repentance, and acknowledging that God can handle all of our problems.**

Don't know how to meditate on scripture? We'll get to that in the assignment below. But first, let's pray.

Heavenly Father,

I desire to know you better. I confess that I haven't always taken the time to get to know you. As I read the Bible and meditate on it, I pray that you would teach me things about yourself. Make yourself real to me. Show me what I need to know. Prepare my heart for prayer each day. Thank you, Lord, for delighting in me. Help me to delight in you.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Assignment 3: Meditate on the Word

Each day as you begin your prayer time, meditate on a small portion of scripture. Pick a verse or passage that you understand (that's really important, or you may take away a wrong meaning of the passage).

If you don't know where to begin, the Psalms are a good place to start. The meanings of the Psalms are pretty straightforward, and the Psalms themselves illustrate some great examples of prayer.

Here are a couple of different ways to meditate on the Bible. Pick the one that appeals to you.

1. Ask yourself the following questions about the passage:

- What does this teach me about God and his character?
- What does this say about who we are and how we should live?
- What do I learn about Christ and his salvation?
- What does this say about being the people of God?
- Not every passage will speak to each question, but as you think about the answers to the questions, allow yourself to praise God for who he is. If you realize you haven't been living in a way that you should, repent. Ask for God's help in breaking a habit or changing your heart.

If, while you're reading, the passage brings a person to mind, pray for that person. Allow the scripture to guide your prayers. Take your time, so the Word of God can penetrate your heart.

2. Emphasize each word of the verse.

A second way to meditate on scripture is to emphasize each word of the verse as you read it over and over.

For instance, if you are meditating on the first line of Psalm 23, it would go something like this.

THE LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want. (Who is my shepherd? The Lord.)

The Lord **IS** my shepherd, I shall not want. (He **IS** my shepherd. It's a fact.)

The Lord is **MY** shepherd, I shall not want. (He's a personal shepherd - my shepherd.)

The Lord is my **SHEPHERD**, I shall not want. (What does a shepherd do? He makes sure the sheep are taken care of. He provides for their needs and protects them. He goes after sheep that wander away. The Lord does this for me.)

And then you would continue on emphasizing each word, thinking about what each word means.

As you recite the verse, you may realize that you haven't trusted the Lord to protect and provide for you. Confess it. You may be blown away that God desires a personal relationship with you. Praise him!

Meditating on Scripture can seem awkward at first, but soon you will realize that taking the time to let the Bible sink into your heart really helps your prayer life.

I'll meet you back here tomorrow!

Blessings,

Lynnae

Day 4 of the Prayer Slacker to Prayer Challenge

Did you try scripture meditation last time you prayed? How did it go? I'd love to know!

Today we're going to talk about getting real with God. So often we have preconceived ideas about how our prayers should sound, and in trying to be a good pray-er, we lose our authenticity.

God wants us to come to him just as we are. I like how Paul Miller puts it in his book [A Praying Life: Connecting with God in a Distracting World](#). (pp. 31-32)

Jesus does not say, "Come to me, all you who have learned how to concentrate in prayer, whose minds no longer wander, and I will give you rest." No, Jesus opens his arms to his needy children and says, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28 NASB). The criteria for coming to Jesus is weariness. Come overwhelmed with life. Come with your wandering mind. Come messy.

You don't have to be perfect in your prayers. Just be you.

God already knows if you're angry, stressed, worried, or feeling distant from Him. Be real. He loves you just where you are. You don't have to pretend with Jesus. He knows you and loves you, despite your flaws.

If you're a mother (or father), you know this. As parents, we don't require our kids to be perfect before they approach us. If they are worried, our hearts break for them. If they are angry, we try to understand them. If they feel distant from us, we long to close that gap.

God feels the same about you. Just go to him.

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for loving me the way that I am. I praise you that I can come to you anytime and anywhere and pour out my heart to you. I confess that I have at times tried to be too perfect in prayer, and I haven't been authentic. Thank you for your love and forgiveness. I long to pour out my feelings to you. Help me to find the words.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Assignment 4: Get Real Before God

Grab your prayer journal. If you use a binder like I do, make a section for free journaling. If you use a regular bound journal, just flip to the next page. If you don't use a prayer journal, grab a regular notebook.

Spend some time just writing a letter to God. Don't censor yourself. Pour out all of your worries and stresses. Just be real.

Add five minutes of free journaling to your daily prayer routine. Write a letter to God every day. Don't try to make it pretty. Don't worry about grammar. Just tell him what's on your mind. Then let me know how it's changing your prayer life.

You're more than halfway through the course! I'm so proud of you for sticking with it!

Blessings,

Lynnae

Day 5 of the Prayer Slacker to Prayer Warrior Challenge

How did it feel to pour your heart out to God? Keep up the effort!

Today we're going to talk about having an organizational system for praying, so you can remember to pray for the people and organizations that are important to you on a regular basis.

1 Timothy 2:1-2 (ESV) says, "First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way."

The Bible is clear. We need to be praying for others. The problem is that most of us have a lot of "others" we need to pray for. We struggle to find the time to pray for them all. And we struggle to remember to pray for them all.

Who are these "others"?

- Your spouse
- Your children
- Your grandchildren
- Your co-workers
- Extended family
- Friends
- Unsaved people you know
- Your pastors and church leadership
- Your government representatives
- And don't forget yourself

You may have other people you'd like to pray for regularly, as well. In today's assignment, we're going to work out a plan to cover everyone on your list in prayer. But first, let's ask God for wisdom!

Heavenly Father,

You know my heart. I long to pray for everyone I should be praying for, but I have struggled mightily. Please bring to mind everyone I need to be praying for, and help me to be faithful in praying for them. Give me wisdom in figuring out how to do just that. Thank you, Father.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Assignment 5: Create a system for regularly covering others in prayer.

Today you are going to make a prayer notebook that gives you a systematic way to cover all of the people you need to pray for.

You're going to need a three ring binder, some notebook paper, and at least eight tabbed dividers.

Begin by making a list of all the people and organizations you'd like to pray for on a regular basis.

Once you have your list, divide the list into seven sections, one for each day of the week.

My sections are:

- Sunday - Government
- Monday - My spouse and marriage
- Tuesday - Others (extended family, unsaved people I know, friends, people who don't fit neatly into another category)
- Wednesday - My children
- Thursday - Ministries (I'm involved in a few ministries, and this is the day I cover them in prayer)
- Friday - Me (anything related to me - my attitude, my work, my fears, etc).
- Saturday - My church

As you divide up your list into seven days, think about which days would work best for each prayer category. I pray for my church on Saturdays, because we have a Saturday night service, and I want to cover my pastors and the congregation in prayer before that service, as well as the Sunday services.

I pray for my kids on Wednesday, because I usually have a lot to pray for. My kids start school late on Wednesdays, so I usually have a little extra time.

Label seven of your tabbed dividers with the days of the week and your prayer categories. I label mine like this:

Sunday/Government

Place them in your binder with some paper behind each tab. In each section write down the prayer requests you can think of right now. You can and will add to your prayer requests over time.

Finally, label the last tab “answers to prayer.” As your prayer are answered, write down the date and the answers to your prayers. You don’t have to keep your categories separate to record the answers. Just keep a running list of answers to prayer. I like to look back over my list as it grows. It reminds me of how faithful God is.

Each day as you meet with God for prayer, pray over the list for that particular day. Of course you can pray for pressing requests in any category on any day -- you need to be flexible. I pray for my kids every day, but I go more in depth on Wednesdays. But by praying for different categories of people on different days, you will systematically cover everyone in prayer.

You have some work to do! I’ll meet you back here tomorrow! You’re almost done!

Blessings,

Lynnae

Day 6 of the Prayer Slacker to Prayer Warrior Challenge

You've almost completed the course! I'm so proud of you! After all that hard work yesterday, today's lesson is an easy one.

Has this ever happened to you? You're doing your weekly shopping, and you run into a friend. As you talk, your friend mentions a trial she's going through.

"I'll pray for you," you say. And you mean it.

But by the time you get home, you forget. And the next time you see her, you feel guilty.

I'm sure that scenario has happened to all of us. It certainly has to me.

One way to tackle the problem, of course, is to pray immediately. And that's always a good thing! **But sometimes the prayer request is ongoing, and you need a way to remember what to pray for.**

We're going to address that in today's assignment. But first, let's pray.

Heavenly Father,

Thank you so much for desiring to spend time with me. Sometimes I can't believe you love me so much! I am blessed. Lord. I know that when my friends have problems, I can support them in prayer. Help me to remember to pray for those requests that I come across throughout the day. You love my friends, my family, and other people I know as much as you love me. Thank you, Father, for caring for them.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Assignment 6: File all prayer requests in your prayer notebook.

Your assignment today is to figure out how to get random prayer requests from your ear to your prayer binder.

I like to keep a few sheets of binder paper folded and tucked into my purse. **When I receive a prayer request from someone I run into, my fellowship class at church, or even in my email, I write it down on that piece of paper.**

When I get home, I copy the prayer request into the appropriate section of my prayer binder. If there are a lot of prayer requests, like I would receive in my church fellowship class, I just put the entire sheet of paper in my prayer binder.

If a sheet of paper doesn't work for you, you could carry a small notebook or even record prayer requests into your phone. Send a text to yourself. Do whatever works for you. **Just find a way to record the prayer request when you're away from your prayer notebook, and then make sure you transfer the prayer request into your notebook, so you remember to cover that person in prayer.**

I created a prayer request tracker for just that purpose. [You can download it here.](#)

That's it! One more day to go! See you tomorrow!

Blessings,

Lynnae

Day 7, the final day of the Prayer Slacker to Prayer Warrior Challenge

This is it! The last day of the course! I'm so proud of you for sticking it out to the very end.

By now you have set aside a time and place for prayer, have learned how to prepare your heart to meet with the Father, and have created a system for covering all of the people you love in prayer. **That's quite an accomplishment, and I hope you are already seeing the fruits of your efforts in your prayer life.**

Today's lesson is a little bit different. It's more of a caution. Having a system for covering your prayer requests is important, but it's also important to guard against elevating the system above the act of prayer itself.

In *A Praying Life*, Paul Miller says, "...systems can become rote, desensitizing us to God as a person. We can become wooden or mindless as we pray." (p. 223)

He goes on to liken crying out to the father as a child would cry to a parent as the "being" side of prayer. That's important.

Prayer journals or prayer cards are the "doing" side of prayer - the side of prayer that makes sure we don't forget to pray for those things we said we would pray for.

Miller continues, "...all of us create systems with things that are important to us. Remember, life is both holding hands and scrubbing floors. It is both being and doing. Prayer journals and prayer cards are on the "scrubbing floors" side of life. Praying like a child is on the "holding hands" side of life. We need both." (p. 224)

I know you are excited about taking prayer seriously, and I am excited for you! **But as you use your prayer journal to remember your prayer requests, don't let it become a rote exercise.** Don't let it become just one more thing you do every day.

Remember that God, your Heavenly Father, cares about you and about each and every person and issue on your list. As you talk to him, always remember that he is a personal God. **Don't elevate your system over your relationship with him.**

That's it! You did it! I pray that your prayer life continues to grow and deepen as you go forward from this course. And feel free to hit reply to this email to let me know how this course has impacted your prayer life. I always love to hear from those who are growing in their relationship with Christ!

Before we bring this course to an end, let's close in prayer.

Blessings,

Lynnae

Heavenly Father,

I praise you for being a personal God who longs to connect with me! Sometimes it blows my mind that you want to take time just to listen to me. As I take my prayer life more seriously, help me to connect with you the way a child connects with a loving parent. Guard my heart against legalism that can come from using a system like a prayer journal. If I stumble, gently remind me. I love you, Lord.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Resources

We use affiliate links. Thanks for supporting our site.

[Helpful books on prayer](#) (especially *A Praying Life* by Paul Miller)

[Make a Prayer Journal](#)

[Make a Prayer Basket](#)

[Prayer Journals on Etsy](#) (in case you don't want to make your own)

Thank you for taking the challenge! I pray you continue to grow in your prayer life!

Blessings,

Lynnae