

Spiritual Couch to 5K Prayer Ideas

A.C.T.S – Adoration – offer praise for who God is, for what God has done, and for what God has yet to do. Confession – acknowledge our sins and our need for God’s forgiveness. Be open, honest, and specific. Thanksgiving – Thank God for his goodness, his gifts, and his answers to our prayers. Supplication – Lay our needs and the needs of others before God.

Pray Scripture – Read a verse several times. Pay careful attention to any words that stand out to you. And then pray it to God. Psalms are great choices.

Flash Prayer – When you see someone –anyone—silently pray for them. The person next to you at the traffic light, people in a waiting room, in line at the grocery store, wherever you are, say a short prayer on their behalf.

Silent Listening Prayer – Carve out a time that is free of interruption. Use the time to be silent. Pray without words, letting the peace of silence wash over you. Two very close friends can communicate without words – try this with God. Simply enjoy his presence. “A man prayed, and at first he thought that prayer was talking. But he became more and more quiet until in the end, he realized that prayer is listening.” Søren Kierkegaard

Write your prayer as a letter to God – Begin with “Dear God...” and then tell God your hopes and dreams, your worries and needs. Confess your sins and ask forgiveness.

Short Prayer – pray a short prayer throughout the day (every time you check the time, or walk through a door, or every half hour). It could be something like, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.”

Prayer Walk – Walk around your neighborhood praying for the people who live in the houses or the people you pass on the streets.

Nature Prayer – walk in God’s creation and praise God through prayer that “the earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it.”

Centering Prayer – a type of prayer where we try to eliminate all the outside noises of life (lawn mowers, kids screaming, dogs barking) and the “inside noises” (my to-do lists, my thoughts racing, things I shouldn’t have said or should have said, etc.). In eliminating all the noise, we can quiet our hearts to listen for God more effectively. Choose a sacred word – it could be a name or attribute for God (Comforter, Advocate, Friend, Father, Shepherd, etc.). Settle into a quiet place. Start with your palms down and release all the things that are blocking you: anger at your boss, worry about paying bills, frustration with your child, etc. After you’ve released those things, turn your palms up as a symbol of your desire to receive from God. Say your “sacred word” as an invitation to God’s presence. Whenever those “inside noises” or “outside noises” enter your mind, repeat your sacred word in order to refocus yourself on God.

Thanksgiving – Thank God for as many things as you can think of.

Try to wake up praying – see if you can wake up praying. Give your day to God, asking God to guide you through each meeting, conversation, appointment, etc.

Singing Prayer – Find praise songs and hymns that are sung to God and sing them directly to God.

Alphabet Prayer – Begin with the letter “A” and say a word or phrase that describes God or something you’re thankful for. You could say “almighty” or “thank you God that you are all-powerful.” Go through as many or as few letters as you would like as you journey from Spiritual Couch to 5K.

The Hand Prayer – Thumb is nearest to you. Pray for those closest to you. The Pointer Finger – Thank God for those who point you to Jesus – parents, Sunday School teachers, youth pastors, ministers, mentors. Pray for support and wisdom for them as they point others in the right direction. Pray also that you can point others to Jesus. Middle Finger – the tallest, reminds us to pray for those in authority—political leaders, school teachers, people who need God’s guidance as they lead others. Ring Finger – our weakest finger, reminds us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble, in pain, or going through difficult times. Pinky – the smallest finger reminds us to pray for ourselves.

P.R.A.Y.E.R – Praise God for who God is, Repent and confess your sins, Ask your petitions and intercessions, Yield – wait, watch, and listen for God, Expect God will answer, Rejoice.

Examen – Become aware of God’s presence. Look back on the events of the day in the company of the Spirit. 2. Review the day with gratitude. Walk through your day in God’s presence and note its joys and delights. Focus on the day’s gifts. Look at the work you did, the people you interacted with. What did you receive from these people? What did you give them? Pay attention to small things—the food you ate, the sights you saw, and other seemingly small pleasures. God is in the details. 3. Pay attention to your emotions. — recall specific moments and your feelings at the time. 4. Choose one feature of the day and pray from it. 5. Look toward tomorrow — think of how you might collaborate more effectively with God’s plan. Ask God to give you light for tomorrow’s challenges.

Lectio Devina – an ancient form of praying the Scriptures that has its roots in the monastic tradition. There are four basic steps. Begin in silence to prepare your heart to hear the Word of God. Step one: Read (lectio) a portion of Scripture. Ignore any commentary or footnotes or margin comments. Just read the passage slowly. Expect God to show you a word, phrase, or verse. Reread the verse again. Step two: Reflect for a few moments on the word, phrase, or verse that God brought to your heart (meditatio). Ask: God, how are you wanting me to receive this word? Or what would you like me to do with this word? What memories, images, feelings, thoughts, hymns, or other Scripture does it bring to mind? What does it say about my heart, my character? (*Ruminatio* or ruminating). Step three: Respond to the word or phrase (oratio). What am I feeling...joy, anticipation, dread, confession? How is the passage challenging me? Step four: Enjoy the company of God. Be still and rest (*contemptio*).

The Lord’s Prayer – Break it into sections. “Our Father in heaven” – praise and express your love to God for who he is and what he’s done. “Hallowed be your name” – commit yourself to holiness. “Your kingdom come” – pray that you would recognize God’s purpose and will for your life. “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” – commit to doing God’s will, to walking with God each and every day. “Give us this day our daily bread.” – ask God to provide. “Forgive us our debts. As we forgive our debtors” – ask God for forgiveness. “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” – pray that God would keep you from temptation. “For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever” – acknowledge your absolute dependence on God. “Amen” – everything is in God’s hand.

Intercessory Prayer – Lift up your friends and loved ones to God. Let God take care of all their cares and hurts. Be persistent, expectant, specific, and bold.