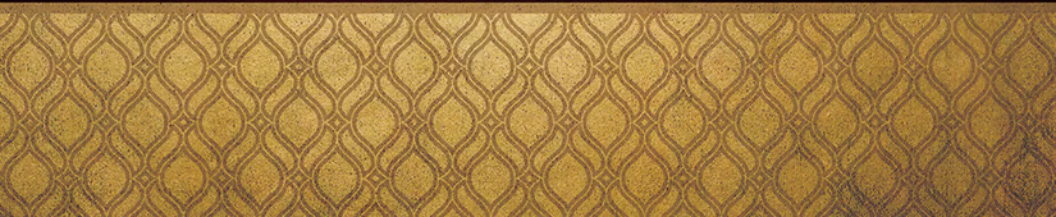


100 PRAYERS  
EVERY  
CHRISTIAN  
SHOULD KNOW



BUILD YOUR FAITH WITH THE  
PRAYERS THAT SHAPED HISTORY



# 100 PRAYERS EVERY CHRISTIAN SHOULD KNOW



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PRAYERS THAT SHAPED HISTORY



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# INTRODUCTION

The very nature of prayer, words spoken to God, ensures that most of them last only a blink, a moment. Some are spoken in the depths of night by worried parents awake, minds racing for what awaits their children. Some are shouted in praise at moments of triumph and victory. Some are just spoken in amazement or wonder or even fear at the glory of the Almighty. Sometimes congregations read words of prayer together from a screen, but then the next slide comes up and the words have entered silence and the prayer is gone.

But we know God collects them. We know He hears and is presented with our words through His Son, in a tradition echoing back through the generations.

But the words themselves—so many of them have vanished, which makes the ones that have lasted through the generations all the more critical.

This book is an effort to collect some of the words that have remained. It is also designed to introduce—or reintroduce—you to some of the men and women who have spoken those words throughout history, because the hearts of believers today and millennia ago beat astoundingly the same.



A great cloud of witnesses.

When the writer of Hebrews sought to encourage members of the early Church, he reminded them of the lives of faith of those who went before. Men and women whose godly lives were captured in the Bible. Abraham and Isaac and Moses and David and Solomon and another and another. Drawing on hundreds of years of history and innumerable stories of faith, the writer creates an image of countless lives before us that point the way to God and serve as examples.

Since then, hundreds of years have passed, and more and more lives have been added to the great cloud. Writers and pastors and missionaries and politicians and mothers and fathers and artists and simple men and women. As we run the race given to us, it's natural, then, to turn to these lives in the same way the writer of Hebrews urged. Not as perfect examples of unblemished faith, for there is no such thing outside of Jesus himself. Instead, for encouragement that, in word and deed, others have run the race before us, and the path is not one we need tread alone.

Perhaps no area of faith is as personal or instructive as prayer. The chance to speak directly to God, to present prayers and petitions to our Lord and Creator, is a sacred opportunity, a holy obligation. But sometimes the words we want to say feel inadequate or like something we've said a million times before. There are lessons we can learn in prayer, too, from those who have come before.



This is a book of some of the most famous and world-changing prayers in history, though we admit to being a little generous with the definition of the word *prayer*. You'll find a few hymns and a few poems in here. Some articles of faith from the history of the Church. All, however, are directed to God and offer a glimpse

at the span of Church history and the concerns of the hearts of those who've lifted their voices and thoughts.

Some of the selections you will know and will have read before. What is something new you can find in the words, today, as you perhaps look at them in a new context, a new light? How can new breath be breathed into the familiar?

Others you may have never heard before, but you know of the person who offered it before God. What new facets can these words open in your understanding of that person, and perhaps of a particular time and place? How can the heart of someone one hundred or even two hundred years ago be made to seem relevant and alive today?

Some of the prayers and witnesses will be completely new. We hope a phrase or confession or plea will resonate with your soul. As you dwell on them, or even offer them as a guided prayer yourself, we hope you feel drawn not only into the presence of the Almighty who loves you, but into the awareness of being one witness of many to His ongoing story of redemption.



# PRAYERS *for* PEACE *and* COMFORT

May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace. All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.

2 Corinthians 1:2–4 NLT

# FANNY CROSBY

Known primarily for her hymn writing, Fanny Crosby added as many pages to church hymnals as nearly anyone who has lived. She is credited with more than eight thousand songs of praise, including stalwart favorites like “Blessed Assurance” and “To God Be the Glory.” Crosby, born in 1820, was blind from a very young age and became an avid musician while studying at an institute for blind children. She was also a gifted poet, and her mind seemed perfectly formed to capture fragments of praise in stanza and verse.

*Come in our midst, O gracious Lord,  
Unveil Thy smiling face,  
Distil in every waiting heart,  
The dew of heavenly grace;  
From earthly scenes we turn aside,  
On Thee we cast our care;  
We worship in Thy holy name;  
O! bless this hour of prayer.*

*Come in our midst, O gracious Lord,  
Thy promise we believe,  
That bids us seek and we shall find,*

*Ask and we shall receive;  
We gather at Thy mercy seat,  
Our only hope is there,  
We plead the merits of Thy blood;  
O! bless this hour of prayer.*

*Come in our midst, O gracious Lord,  
Eternal King of kings,  
And fold the children of the law  
Beneath Thy mighty wings;  
Support the weak, the mourner cheer,  
Help all their cross to bear;  
Thou spring of joy, Thou source of life,  
O! bless this hour of prayer.*

---

**WHY THIS PRAYER?**

---

So often a hymn is a prayer that is sung. The words above, written by Crosby in 1868, have the structure and rhyme of a poem and the soul of a prayer. Personalizing the words, changing the pronouns from plural to singular, reveals a portrait of a person attempting to ready their heart for a time of prayer, and hope for the blessing that can be found there. Our only hope is at God's seat of mercy, and whether we find ourselves there for hours during the day or just minutes, each time is an opportunity we should cherish and find refreshment in.

## PRAYER *of* JABEZ

Tucked into chapter four of 1 Chronicles, Jabez is a man we know little about. We know his mother had such a difficult birth that his name bears that weight. Jabez is a man of sorrow and pain and seems to feel them like a blade hanging over him, because when he calls out to God, a life free from pain is among the things he begs for. He has known his share and wants no more.

*Oh, that you would bless me and enlarge my territory! Let your hand be with me, and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain.*

---

### WHY THIS PRAYER?

---

There are surprisingly few verbatim prayers recorded in Scripture. The word *prayer* appears countless times, but usually the prayers themselves are not within quotation marks so we know what the men and women actually prayed. One good reason for this is that most prayers are deeply personal. They're part of a singular conversation—and how often would you want your side of a private, emotional conversation shared? When they do appear in the Bible, then, it must be because there is universal

relevance in the words. Jabez's words mirror our own. They can't be the *only* words we offer because they're so focused on ourselves—"bless *me*," "enlarge *my* territory," "keep *me* from harm"—but they're honest in seeking the things we all want from God.