

Covenant Church

Praying Scripture: How to be less bored in prayer and get more out of your daily scripture reading at the same time.

Do you ever feel bored in prayer? Maybe you pray for a long, long time and then look at your clock and all of 4 minutes have gone by? Do your prayers ever feel repetitive, dry, or uninspired? This guide is designed to help you have a fuller, more enjoyable prayer life by teaching a method called *praying scripture*.

A basic definition of praying scripture would be reading a verse, or part of a verse, and praying what comes to mind from that reading. Here is an example. Let's say your daily devotional reading has you in Psalm 1. You read the Psalm and do whatever else is customary in your daily devotions (perhaps reading a commentary or study bible selection on the passage or taking a few notes in a journal). Now you are ready to pray.

Psalm 1:1 in the NLT reads, "Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers." Now, this probably doesn't sound much at all like your usual prayers for your career, relationships, sin, guilt, shame, sickness and so on. But you are praying scripture so you say something like, "Lord, if I have been influenced by mocking types and become too cynical, would you please show me? Do you want to show me anything from this?"

Just like that you have probably prayed something unique from your routine prayers. And, you didn't have to think of a prayer prompt! The Bible provided you with God's inspired words that other people have prayed for millennia to inspire you to pray. Let's go on to the next verse.

Psalm 1:2 in the NIV reads, “but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night.” Any single idea or word from this verse might give you something else to pray. Perhaps it is “meditates.” You begin to pray, “Lord, I so often forget about you all day long. Actually, if I’m honest, recently it’s more like I forget you day and night than that I think and meditate on your word. Please help me to think of you more often today. And *thank you* that you have given us your word to read and think about.” The great thing is that what you are doing *is actually meditation*. You are allowing your thoughts to be influenced by the word of God and then praying from out of that influence!

Does the verse prompt a sin to confess? A Thanksgiving? A specific attribute of God to praise? A reminder to trust in the Lord? A metaphor, promise, or testimony about God’s care? Any of these and more can become the words of prayer for you.

If you want to pray more from any verse, don’t shut yourself off from it. Just pray what God puts on your mind and heart to pray. If you read a verse and nothing comes to mind, don’t concern yourself over it. Read another verse or two and *something* will come to mind. Just pray it. In a very different way than Bible study, praying the Bible does not have to be restricted to “getting it right” before you pray. If there is something on your mind to pray, however small, silly, or unrelated to the lines of scripture, if that is where your mind and thoughts are at, simply offer them to God.

A wonderful and short book on this topic is ***Praying the Bible*** by Donald S. Whitney. It can be read in about 90 minutes or so. It could even be used as a daily devotional guide for a few days (it is very short), trying the exercises out a little each day. The key is simply to try it. If you are concerned about doing it right or saying prayers that are according to God’s will... rest assured that you are more likely to have fresh, robust, honest, and God-honoring prayers by using the words God inspired than by trusting your own thoughts that are so often soaked with anxiety, criticism, or busyness.

A simple guide to get started: The Psalms are the most obvious and natural place to begin praying scripture; this is why they were written.

There are many kinds of Psalms and there are 2,461 verses in the Psalms. Even if you prayed through ten or so verses a day you would have more than half a year of completely unique daily content! That is probably an improvement on your own creativity, at least if you are like me. Plus, if your creativity is sparked by any of these verses you can pray until you run out of time or run out of verses. There is no limit to how far you can take this.

Many people are familiar with the concept of reading or scanning five Psalms each day. With 150 Psalms in the Bible you can scan five each day and neatly finish the entire psalter (Book of Psalms) in a month. But it can be hard to remember which five you are scanning for the day. So, an easy way to remember is to use this simple rule: scan the Psalm that matches today's date. (So, for the day this was written Psalm 15 since it was the 15th of the month). Then add 30 four times, stopping at each number to scan that Psalm. For the 15th of the month you would read Psalms 15, 45, 75, 105, and 135. Simply read them, or scan them, depending on your time allowance. Choose one or more to pray. And pray verse by verse until you run out of time or run out of verses! Voila! You have engaged your Bible more deeply than many daily Bible studies, been less bored and more engaged in prayer, used words you know God planned for you to use, and you almost certainly noticed or learned a few new things about yourself along the way.

Plus, many people who feel they don't know the Bible very well will discover that after *praying the scriptures* for a season in their life they will know and remember far more of the Bible than ever before.

Going deeper: Some resources to check out if you want to pray from other parts of the Bible, get more prayer inspiration or tips, or simply want to know some prayer books that are high on our Covenant recommendations list.


Praying the Bible. Donald S. Whitney. [\\$9 on Amazon](#)

Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God. Timothy Keller. [\\$10-\\$16 on Amazon.](#)

Pray the Word Podcast. By David Platt. [Free at this link.](#)

Covenant Table Podcast. By Covenant Church. [Free at this link.](#)

Covenant Sermons Podcast. By Covenant Church. [Free at this link.](#)

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| <p>DAY 1</p> <p>Psalm 1 Psalm 31 Psalm 61 Psalm 91 Psalm 121</p> | <p>DAY 2</p> <p>Psalm 2 Psalm 32 Psalm 62 Psalm 92 Psalm 122</p> | <p>DAY 3</p> <p>Psalm 3 Psalm 33 Psalm 63 Psalm 93 Psalm 123</p> | <p>DAY 4</p> <p>Psalm 4 Psalm 34 Psalm 64 Psalm 94 Psalm 124</p> | <p>DAY 5</p> <p>Psalm 5 Psalm 35 Psalm 65 Psalm 95 Psalm 125</p> | <p>DAY 6</p> <p>Psalm 6 Psalm 36 Psalm 66 Psalm 96 Psalm 126</p> |
| <p>DAY 7</p> <p>Psalm 7 Psalm 37 Psalm 67 Psalm 97 Psalm 127</p> | <p>DAY 8</p> <p>Psalm 8 Psalm 38 Psalm 68 Psalm 98 Psalm 128</p> | <p>DAY 9</p> <p>Psalm 9 Psalm 39 Psalm 69 Psalm 99 Psalm 129</p> | <p>DAY 10</p> <p>Psalm 10 Psalm 40 Psalm 70 Psalm 100 Psalm 130</p> | <p>DAY 11</p> <p>Psalm 11 Psalm 41 Psalm 71 Psalm 101 Psalm 131</p> | <p>DAY 12</p> <p>Psalm 12 Psalm 42 Psalm 72 Psalm 102 Psalm 132</p> |
| <p>DAY 13</p> <p>Psalm 13 Psalm 43 Psalm 73 Psalm 103 Psalm 133</p> | <p>DAY 14</p> <p>Psalm 14 Psalm 44 Psalm 74 Psalm 104 Psalm 134</p> |  | | <p>DAY 15</p> <p>Psalm 15 Psalm 45 Psalm 75 Psalm 105 Psalm 135</p> | <p>DAY 16</p> <p>Psalm 16 Psalm 46 Psalm 76 Psalm 106 Psalm 136</p> |
| <p>DAY 17</p> <p>Psalm 17 Psalm 47 Psalm 77 Psalm 107 Psalm 137</p> | <p>DAY 18</p> <p>Psalm 18 Psalm 48 Psalm 78 Psalm 108 Psalm 138</p> | <p>PSALMS OF THE DAY</p> | | <p>DAY 19</p> <p>Psalm 19 Psalm 49 Psalm 79 Psalm 109 Psalm 139</p> | <p>DAY 20</p> <p>Psalm 20 Psalm 50 Psalm 80 Psalm 110 Psalm 140</p> |
| <p>DAY 21</p> <p>Psalm 21 Psalm 51 Psalm 81 Psalm 111 Psalm 141</p> | <p>DAY 22</p> <p>Psalm 22 Psalm 52 Psalm 82 Psalm 112 Psalm 142</p> | <p>DAY 23</p> <p>Psalm 23 Psalm 53 Psalm 83 Psalm 113 Psalm 143</p> | <p>DAY 24</p> <p>Psalm 24 Psalm 54 Psalm 84 Psalm 114 Psalm 144</p> | <p>DAY 25</p> <p>Psalm 25 Psalm 55 Psalm 85 Psalm 115 Psalm 145</p> | <p>DAY 26</p> <p>Psalm 26 Psalm 56 Psalm 86 Psalm 116 Psalm 146</p> |
| <p>DAY 27</p> <p>Psalm 27 Psalm 57 Psalm 87 Psalm 117 Psalm 147</p> | <p>DAY 28</p> <p>Psalm 28 Psalm 58 Psalm 88 Psalm 118 Psalm 148</p> | <p>DAY 29</p> <p>Psalm 29 Psalm 59 Psalm 89 Psalm 119 Psalm 149</p> | <p>DAY 30</p> <p>Psalm 30 Psalm 60 Psalm 90 Psalm 120 Psalm 150</p> | <p>DAY 31</p> <p>Psalm 119</p> | |