
PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

Lord God,

You alone are the source of every gift,
of the vast array of our universe,
and the mystery of each human life.
We praise You and we thank You
for Your great power and
Your tender, faithful love.

Everything we are and
everything we have is Your gift,
and after having created us,
You have given us into
the keeping of Your Son, Jesus Christ.

Fill our minds with Christ's truth
and our hearts with His love,
that in His Spirit we may be bonded
together into a communion of faith,
a parish family, a caring people.

In the name and spirit of Jesus,
we commit ourselves to be
good stewards of the gifts entrusted to us,
to share our time, our talent,
and our material gifts
as an outward sign of the treasure
we hold in Jesus.

Amen.

Making Decisions with God

Have you ever presented a request to someone who responded, "Let me pray about it"? This is an appropriate response, showing that this person wants to yield his or her own desires to the will of God. Jesus himself prayed intensely before making significant decisions. Before the appointment of the Twelve Apostles, *"He went out into the hills to pray, and all night He continued in prayer to God"* (Luke 6:12). Christian stewards also begin and end significant decision-making with prayer — not accepting jobs, moving families, or taking on major commitments without first seeking God's guidance through prayer. Christian stewards acknowledge God's will in all their planning.

Persistence in Prayer

Jesus said to us: *"Pray and do not lose heart"* (Luke 18:1). The Christian steward prays for any and every circumstance, not losing heart, not giving up. The One who teaches us to pray is the One who has promised to hear our prayers. God will not lead us into a spiritual desert and abandon us. If we remain good stewards in our prayer life, the Lord will certainly reward our stewardship of prayer, for *"You need endurance to do the will of God and receive what He has promised"* (Hebrews 10:36).



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*To Share Christ in and
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*“Pray always and do not lose heart.”
(Luke 18:1)*

“I Don’t Have Time to Pray”

How often do we say that we are just too busy to pray? How often do we believe that there are so many urgent things to do that we just don’t have the opportunity to pray? Prayer, however, is absolutely essential to Christian life. It is the first fundamental principle of being a Christian steward.

Prayer requires that we stand in God’s presence and confess that without Him we can do nothing. Christian discipleship doesn’t mean that we turn to God after our own devices fail. Instead, it means that God comes first in our lives. It also means that we listen to God speaking to us. Therefore, prayer must be the first concern of discipleship.

Jesus and the Stewardship of Prayer

The Gospels are filled with occasions when Jesus paused from His public ministry, departed from the crowds, went off to a lonely place, and prayed. After great crowds gathered to listen to Him, *“He withdrew to the wilderness and prayed”* (Luke 5:16). After the multiplication of the loaves, He sent the crowd away and *“went into the hills to pray”* (Mark 6:46). In His agony in the garden of Gethsemane, *“Abba Father, all things are possible to You. Take this cup from Me, but not what I will but what You will”* (Mark 14:36). The work of each day was closely bound up with prayer as Jesus Christ showed us that prayer was the center of His Messianic ministry and Paschal death.

Prayer is a Gift from God

God takes the initiative in prayer. Indeed, prayer is God’s gift to us. We could not even desire to pray without God planting that desire within us. The desire to pray is a clear sign of God’s presence in our lives, making us aware of God and opening us to God’s love. Prayer helps us realize our complete dependence on God, urges us to appreciate how utterly bound we are to God’s grace, and encourages us to recognize the great power we have as His disciples who can use our own God-given gifts in a meaningful way.

The Christian Steward Makes Time to Pray

The early Christian community made a habit of constant and persevering prayer. Indeed, Luke ends his Gospel story with a picture of the apostles *“continually in the temple praising God”* (Luke 24:53). When we make a habit of prayer we are practicing good stewardship; we stay constantly tuned to God’s presence and open to receive His blessings. If we want to live in God’s presence, we need to lay aside our other concerns, shut out the world, and focus on God every day, without fail.

Regular time for prayer is essential because without regularity, prayer will never be a priority. Many times, we do not provide specifics about the time, place, and manner of prayer. But we can no more grow in our prayer life without structure and discipline than we can become more physically fit or financially sound by not planning and having good habits. If a goal is really important to us, we discipline ourselves in order to achieve it. The good steward decides that making a habit to pray is non-negotiable. If we develop good prayer

habits, we heighten our sense of involvement with God and experience prayer in a whole new way.

A Daily Rhythm

We can remember to pray the same way we remember anything else that matters to us — by working prayer into our daily schedule. If we find that we are praying very little, it probably is because we never made prayer part of our daily routine. Because our prayer life is personal, the best and most appropriate time of day we choose doesn’t matter, so long as we keep it faithfully. Prayer needs to be part of the rhythm of our daily lives, tying it to regular daily events, such as when we wake up, eat, or go to sleep.

Thanking the Lord for His Many Blessings

Jesus gave thanks when He prayed and considered it a normal response to a loving God. Jesus reflected the psalms in His life of prayer: *“Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not His many blessings”* (Psalm 103:2). St. Paul writes: *“Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus”* (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

Thanksgiving is essential to prayer, since all that we are, all that we have, and all that we receive comes from our gracious God. Failing to give thanks reflects the condition of our relationship with God. If we are not thanking God, we are probably not reflecting on God’s generosity toward us. The Christian steward remembers to thank God every day for the blessings that He has bestowed.