

KRISTEN  
WETHERELL

# Teach Me to Pray

PRAYING  
GOD'S WORD  
*from A to Z*





*“Lord, teach us to pray.”*

LUKE 11:1

PRESENTED TO

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BY

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ON

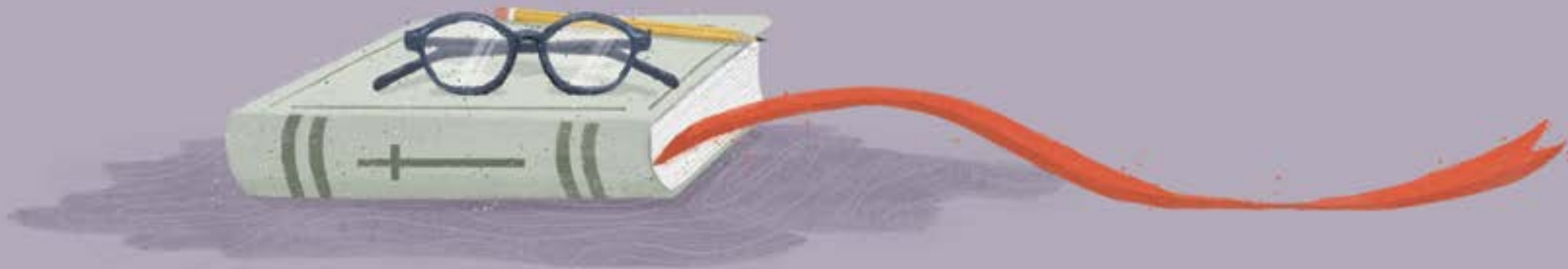
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# Teach Me to Pray

*Praying God's Word from A to Z*

Kristen Wetherell

 **CROSSWAY**<sup>®</sup>  
WHEATON, ILLINOIS



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*Teach Me to Pray: Praying God's Word from A to Z*

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## INTRODUCTION

WHEN I WAS GROWING UP, my parents had an entire shelf of *The World Book Encyclopedia* in our home office. These were hardcover, glossy books labeled from A to Z—a treasure trove of knowledge! And I loved referencing them. If I had a question, all I had to do was find the subject and read about it. These books taught me so many amazing truths about creation and history. They are now on our family bookshelf, and my kids love learning from them.

*Teach Me to Pray* is like an “encyclopedia” for prayer. From A to Z, you will find topics, emotions, and situations that are worth praying about—like fear, friendship, mistakes, obedience, worry, loneliness, and many more. All of these prayers are based on God’s word, the Bible, which tells us the truth and changes us. You can use the rhyming prayers in this book to talk to God (and you can challenge yourself to memorize the first two lines of each!).

My prayer is that you will open God’s word and draw near to Jesus, our Lord and Savior. And, just as my parents passed down their encyclopedias to me, perhaps someday you will give *Teach Me to Pray* to your kids.

Enjoy praying God’s word from A to Z!



## A NOTE TO GROWN-UPS

THANKS FOR CHOOSING *Teach Me to Pray* as a resource for your family and church. Jesus’s disciples once said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray” (Luke 11:1). Prayer isn’t always easy, which is why we need God’s word to help us—yes, even as adults! We can use the words and truths God has given us in his word as we pray and as we teach our kids how to pray. And we can trust his promises: When we pray, God listens. He cares. And, in his timing and according to his will, he responds.

I hope this book serves you and your kids well. While older kids might read this on their own, I encourage you to read it alongside the children you care for, talking about each topic and reading the Bible verses together.

You might use this book:

- as a morning devotional
- at the kitchen table during meals
- during family worship
- before bedtime
- alongside your homeschool curriculum
- in your Sunday school classrooms
- sporadically, as situations arise and the Spirit leads

I count it a great privilege that this book is in your homes and churches, and I am praying the Holy Spirit uses it to equip you as you shepherd the kids God has entrusted to you.



TEACH ME TO PRAY ABOUT

# Anger

*O God, I'm so angry! I feel so upset!  
You're slow to be angry. Don't let me forget!*

You're patient with me, and you're gentle and kind.  
Your mercy surrounds me before and behind.  
In light of your tenderness, help me to see  
How slowness to anger can also mark me.  
Lord, help me to listen, and then help me speak.  
To use self-control doesn't mean that I'm weak.  
I thank you that Christ bore your wrath in my place.  
My anger's forgiven, for I've received grace.

*In Jesus's name I pray, amen.*

## READ ABOUT IT

"Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. . . . Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."

EPHESIANS 4:26–27, 32

## THINK ABOUT IT

Have you ever been so angry you could explode? Maybe things didn't go your way, or someone really upset you. There's a good and right kind of anger—a godly, acceptable response toward sin. But there's also a sinful and wrong kind of anger that hurts others with our words and actions. How can we know the difference? We look at who God is: "Slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love" (Ex. 34:6). God sees all our sin. And rather than giving us what we deserve, he gives us his Son. Every day, God remains patient and gentle with us, giving us a chance to turn away from our sin and turn toward Jesus. So, when we are angry, we can cry out for his help. When our anger leads to sin, we can ask for forgiveness. And when someone sins against us, we can forgive.

## LEARN ABOUT IT

Numbers 14:18  
Psalm 103:8  
James 1:19–20

## DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT

Have you been sinfully angry toward someone lately? Confess your anger to God, ask for his forgiveness and help, and then apologize to the person you hurt.



TEACH ME TO PRAY ABOUT

# Attitude

*Dear God, I need a brand-new start!  
Create in me a humble heart.*

My heart's a prideful, selfish place.  
Would you please fill me with your grace?  
I want a mind like Jesus, please,  
Who, serving all the least of these,  
Became like me so I can be  
Filled up with true humility.  
Renew my attitude today  
So I can bless those in my way.

*In Jesus's name I pray, amen.*



## READ ABOUT IT

“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. . . . Have this mind [attitude] among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.” | PHILIPPIANS 2:3, 5-7

## THINK ABOUT IT

It's hard to have a good attitude all the time, isn't it? Some days, it feels like we wake up on the wrong side of the bed, and everyone had better stay out of our way! We usually have a bad attitude because we want to do things our own way. But complaining and arguing lead only to unhappiness in our circumstances and relationships. Instead, God wants us to have the attitude of Christ—a humble-heartedness that trusts God's plan for our days and thinks of others before ourselves. It's not easy—but *it is possible* because of Jesus. He humbled himself to serve us in his death and resurrection. And he continues to humbly serve us right now. Why? So we can share in his attitude, take interest in others, and bring him honor and glory in all we do.

## LEARN ABOUT IT

Jeremiah 17:9  
Psalm 139:23-24  
Romans 12:1-2

## DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT

If you're struggling with a bad attitude right now, give yourself this challenge: Say nothing negative or critical. Instead, say only what is necessary, kind, and true.

TEACH ME TO PRAY ABOUT

# Blessing

*O God of all mercies, the God I embrace,  
I know I'll be blessed as I trust in your grace.*

Please help me remember where true blessing lives:  
In Jesus, your Son, and the life that he gives.  
I'm sorry for looking for comfort and ease  
In things that can't give them, but only displeasure.  
I thank you for giving me many good things  
Like family and friends with the blessings they bring.  
Your blessings, O God, are eternally true.  
They go on forever. I'm thankful for you.

*In Jesus's name I pray, amen.*

## READ ABOUT IT

"O LORD of hosts,  
blessed is the one who trusts in you!" | PSALM 84:12

## THINK ABOUT IT

What does it mean to be "blessed"? Does it mean God gives us everything we want—good grades, cool clothes, funny friends, and an easy life? Actually, God's blessings are way better than these. They're better than we could even ask or imagine! He wants so much more for us than we want for ourselves. To be blessed is to be completely happy in Christ. According to the Bible, you are blessed (1) when you know your need for Jesus, (2) when your sins are forgiven, (3) when you're adopted into God's family, (4) when his Holy Spirit dwells in you, (5) when heaven is your eternal home—the list goes on and on! True blessing isn't about us getting what we want. It's about God giving us what we need most: a deeper, stronger relationship with him. It's about God's good and perfect plans unfolding in our hearts. It's about trusting him and loving him, now and forever.

## LEARN ABOUT IT

Psalm 1  
Proverbs 3:13–18  
Ephesians 1:3–14

## DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT

How long a list of blessings (spiritual or material) can you make? Go ahead and try! (You might use the "Learn About It" verses to help you make your list.)



TEACH ME TO PRAY ABOUT

# Boldness

*Lord Jesus, I'm praying for loved ones today,  
For boldness to tell them that you are the way,*

That you are the truth and that life's in your hands.  
You overcame death! You crushed Satan's plans!  
O Lord, let me speak the right words I should say.  
You promise your Spirit will help me obey  
And tell my lost neighbors there's hope to be found  
In Jesus, our Savior. Please help me abound  
With gentleness, love, and respect as I do.  
The only one worthy of fear, Lord, is you.

*In Jesus's name I pray, amen.*

👉 READ ABOUT IT

"Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect." | 1 PETER 3:14-15

👉 THINK ABOUT IT

Do you know someone who doesn't yet believe in Jesus? The Son of God once told his disciples that he is the only way to heaven—the only way to enter into the Father's presence (John 14:6). That means there is only *one way* to be rescued from our sin. And we want our loved ones to know this good news! But telling others about Jesus isn't always easy. Sometimes we feel afraid of how people will respond or what they will think of us. Even the apostle Paul (a pastor and preacher) knew he needed boldness (see Eph. 6:19). We need God to fill us with confidence in him so we are ready to tell others about Christ. We can also ask God to prepare us by giving us the right words to say, as well as a heart of gentleness and respect as we say them.

👉 LEARN ABOUT IT

Jeremiah 1:4-9  
Matthew 28:18-20  
Romans 10:14-15

👉 DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT

Pray for unbelievers by name. You can make a list of the people you love who don't know Jesus. Then pray for one or two of them each night before bed.

TEACH ME TO PRAY ABOUT

# Church

*Lord, you cherish your church, and you've made us for you!  
Please help me to love it the way that you do.*

You call us your people, your body, your bride.  
For us, you are holy. For our sake, you died.  
I pray for my pastor, who cares for your sheep.  
Protect him and lead him. Please carefully keep  
Your people committed to loving your word—  
We long to be faithful to what we have heard.  
Lord, strengthen your body to love as you do,  
So, shining like lights, we will glorify you.

*In Jesus's name I pray, amen.*



## READ ABOUT IT

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.” | ACTS 2:42

## THINK ABOUT IT

How would you describe “church”? Maybe you love going to church every week, or maybe it’s a struggle. Maybe you’ve never been to church before. God’s church isn’t just a building. The Bible calls God’s church “the body of Christ” (1 Cor. 12:27). Why? The church isn’t only a place; it’s made up of God’s many different people who work together to show the world who Jesus is. God’s church is devoted to proclaiming the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. It serves like Jesus. It teaches the Bible in his name, and it prays for more people to become part of his body. What an amazing gift to be members of God’s church and to worship him together! You can praise God for your local church and ask him to protect, guide, strengthen, and mature his people. It is also a gift to our churches and their pastors and ministry workers when we pray for them.

## LEARN ABOUT IT

1 Corinthians 12:12–20  
Ephesians 4:15–16  
Colossians 3:16–17

## DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT

Spend some time praying for the leaders of your church. You could ask your parents to help you make a list of names, and then pray through that list.

TEACH ME TO PRAY ABOUT

# Confession

*I'm sorry, God, for all my sin.  
Forgive me, cleanse me from within!*

The darkness makes me want to hide,  
To hold my secrets deep inside.  
Please give me strength to speak what's true,  
Confessing all my sins to you!  
I praise you that you've covered me  
With Jesus's blood that sets me free.  
I'll walk in goodness, truth, and light.  
In Christ, I'm holy in your sight.

*In Jesus's name I pray, amen.*



## READ ABOUT IT

“If we walk in the light, as [God] is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. . . . If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” | 1 JOHN 1:7, 9

## THINK ABOUT IT

Imagine you're in a dark room. You can't see anything, so you keep stubbing your toes and walking into walls—ouch! You don't know how to escape or find anyone to help you. Sounds painful and lonely, doesn't it? When we disobey God and try to hide our sin, we're like people stumbling around in the dark, hurting ourselves and others. The Bible says we even grieve God's heart when we sin (see Eph. 4:30). But there is hope! Christ died to free us from the darkness. Instead of running away from God when we sin, we can run straight to him. We can confess our sins because God knows everything anyway. He wants us to walk in the light of his forgiveness, freedom, and peace. When we tell God everything and say we're sorry, he promises to forgive us and help us.

## LEARN ABOUT IT

2 Samuel 12:13  
Psalm 51:1–2  
John 12:46

## DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT

Is there anything that you've been hiding from God or others (like your parents, grandparents, teachers, or friends)? Don't stay in the darkness. Use today's prayer to tell God you're sorry, and then tell others too.



TEACH ME TO PRAY ABOUT

# Decisions

*Decisions and choices—they make me feel stressed!  
Lord, grant me your wisdom to choose what is best.*

To make wise decisions is no easy task,  
But, God, you give wisdom to all those who ask.  
Please teach me your paths, Lord, and show me your ways  
To please you and honor you all of my days.  
I praise you for people who help me to know  
The wisest way forward, the way I should go.  
Please soften my heart so I'm wise to obey,  
To make right decisions and walk in your way.

*In Jesus's name I pray, amen.*



## READ ABOUT IT

“Where there is no guidance, a people falls,  
but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.” | PROVERBS 11:14

## THINK ABOUT IT

Kids make around three thousand choices every day.\* Whew! You make decisions about simple things like what to wear and what to eat. You also make hard decisions about what's right and wrong. Decision-making requires wisdom—knowing the best path forward—and some choices require more wisdom than others. When we don't know what choice to make, we can start by asking Jesus. He promises to counsel us through his Holy Spirit as we read the Bible. We can also talk to wise people we trust, like our parents, teachers, pastors, and trustworthy friends. Without guidance, we risk making foolish decisions. But with good counsel, God will lead us in the right and best paths. We don't need to be afraid of decisions, because God uses all of them—even the not-so-good ones—to bring about his perfect plans for his people.

## LEARN ABOUT IT

Job 28:28  
Psalm 25:8–9  
James 1:5

## DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT

What decision is on your mind right now? Who could you talk to about it after you bring it to God in prayer? Go to that wise person and ask for help.

\*Kaethe Weingarten, “Decision Fatigue, and Tips on Making Consequential Decisions,” Migrant Clinician, September 15, 2022, [www.https://www.migrantclinician.org/](https://www.migrantclinician.org/).



TEACH ME TO PRAY ABOUT

# Discouragement

*O Father God, my heart feels sad.  
Please show me Christ and make me glad!*

And make my faith and hope so sure  
That I will know I am secure.  
God, hear my cry. I turn to you!  
Please show me all the good you do.  
My rock, you're strong and you are near.  
I need to know that you are here.  
I feel discouraged, down, and sad,  
But you're my hope. You make me glad.

*In Jesus's name I pray, amen.*



## READ ABOUT IT

“Why are you cast down, O my soul,  
and why are you in turmoil within me?  
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,  
my salvation and my God.” | PSALM 42:5-6

## THINK ABOUT IT

A disagreement with a parent or friend. A sports competition you lost. A bad habit you can't seem to break. Sometimes life can be discouraging, can't it? Ever since sin entered the world, humans have felt sad, confused, and low. Discouragement is brought on by our own choices, by other people, and by our circumstances. So, what can we do when we feel discouraged? We have a choice: We can either stay “cast down,” or we can look up to God. We can give in to complaining, worrying, and sad thoughts. Or we can turn our thoughts to him. This is what Scripture calls *hoping in God*. First, we look away from what is discouraging us. Then we remember Jesus and his perfect love: how he cares for us, protects us, and is always with us. Discouragement will flee as we run to God and choose to worship him.

## LEARN ABOUT IT

Joshua 1:9  
Isaiah 40:28-31  
Philippians 4:8

## DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT

When you're discouraged, it can help to write down what's bothering you. Journal some honest thoughts. Then bring each discouraging thought to God in prayer.

TEACH ME TO PRAY ABOUT

# Enemies

*I pray for all my enemies. Lord, loving them is tough!  
Please change my heart and help me trust: Your strength  
will be enough.*

I ask, Lord, that you change their hearts.  
Please humble them to know  
That friendship is the better, wiser way for us to go.  
O Father, please forgive them, for they don't know what  
they do.  
In hurting me, they do not see they're also hurting you.  
Please grant me self-control so what I do and what I say  
Reflects the heart of Jesus Christ—his love, his peace,  
his way.

*In Jesus's name I pray, amen.*



READ ABOUT IT

“Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.” | MATTHEW 5:44-45

THINK ABOUT IT

Have you ever met someone who treated you badly, made you mad, and seemed to enjoy it? The Bible calls these people our enemies, those who put others down and hurt them. Our natural reaction is to retaliate—to get back at the person who hurt us. But Jesus calls us to something different: loving our enemies. Instead of retaliating, we pray for them. We ask God to change their hearts. We ask for wisdom to know how to respond. And we ask for patience to trust God with the situation. When Jesus was arrested, tortured, and crucified by his enemies, he trusted his Father and he prayed for them. Because Jesus died to make his enemies into friends, he is able to do this for us too. We only need to ask.

LEARN ABOUT IT

1 Samuel 26:11-12, 21-25  
Romans 12:17-18  
1 Peter 2:21-23

DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT

Think about your enemies. Pray for them by name, asking God to change their heart. Then ask God to help you think of one way you might bless them this week.

TEACH ME TO PRAY ABOUT

# Envy

*Dear Father, I'm struggling with envy and greed.  
Please help me to trust that you're all that I need.*

You've given me everything good, right, and true.  
The best of these gifts? That I get to know you!  
It's easy to want what you've given my friends.  
My jealousy burns, and my pride never ends.  
O Lord, how I need you to strengthen my heart!  
My flesh, it grows weak, and my faith falls apart.  
My heavenly treasure, you're perfect and true.  
There's nothing on earth that I need besides you.

*In Jesus's name I pray, amen.*

## READ ABOUT IT

"Truly God is good to Israel,  
to those who are pure in heart.  
But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled,  
my steps had nearly slipped.  
For I was envious of the arrogant  
when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." | PSALM 73:1-3

## THINK ABOUT IT

Did you know that envy is also called "turning green"? I think of envy as a rotten mold that spreads its ickiness and creates other problems. Think about it: When you want what someone else has—say, a cool bike, a close friend, or a fun opportunity—what effect does it have? Envy often leads to greed, unthankfulness, bitterness, and even unkind words and actions. When we stumble into envy, we can confess it to God, remember his goodness to us in Christ, and ask for his help in fighting envy with gratitude. At the end of the day, only Jesus can truly satisfy our deepest desires. He is the good gift we need most of all.

## LEARN ABOUT IT

Proverbs 14:30  
1 Corinthians 13:4  
Galatians 5:26

## DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT

Practice fighting envy by being grateful to God for who he is, for all his good gifts, and for other people. You can thank him out loud or write down a list in a journal.