

Make this part of your regular routine in the morning when you wake up and get dressed for the day. An easy way to remember the sequence is to begin with your head and travel down to your feet.

1. First, put on the “helmet of salvation.” This piece of armor protects your thought life and helps you put on the mind of Christ. (2 Corinthians 10:5)
2. Then put on the “breastplate of righteousness.” We are made righteous in Jesus. (2 Corinthians 5:21)
3. Next take up the “sword of the Spirit,” which is living and active, in your right hand. (Hebrews 4:12)
4. Then take up the “shield of faith” in your left hand which can quench all the darts of the evil one. (A Roman shield was a large, oblong shield covering the whole soldier’s body)
5. Then gird your loins with the “belt of truth.” Stand firm in your identity in Christ; accept the truth, resist the lies of the enemy.
6. Finally, ask God to shod your feet with “the good news of the Gospel of Peace.” Walk in His ways and let Him guide your footsteps.

In addition to this personal protection, you may want to pray an “edge of protection” around your family, asking God to protect them from physical harm, emotional hurt, and spiritual attack.



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Helping you grow in prayer



How to Pray Scripture

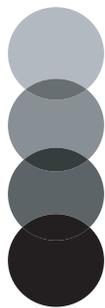
“Prayer and the Bible go together,” says Jack Taylor in his book *Prayer: Life’s Limitless Reach* (Broadman Press, 1977). “Without the Bible prayer has no direction. Without prayer the Bible has no dynamic.” Using biblical words and ideas in your personal prayers will add new energy to your prayer life.

Here are some ways it can make a difference:

- **Enrich your prayer life.**
God’s penetrating Word can express your deepest thoughts when human communication falls short of what you are struggling to say. (Example: 1 Chronicles 16:7-36 when Asaph and his sons used a psalm of David to lead the congregation in praise to God.)
- **Enable you.**
When you pray Scripture, you don’t need to preface your prayers with “If it be Thy Will.” The Bible contains the will of God. If you pray according to His will, your prayers will be more forceful and effective (1 John 5:14-15).



*Imagine Jesus
walking
beside you like
a friend.
Feel free to
share your
heart.
He will listen.*



- *Defeat the enemy.*

Sometimes you will find yourself engaged in spiritual warfare. To stand against the forces of evil that bring pain and destruction in people's lives, maximize your prayer power by using God's weapons, not your own. God's offensive weapon is the "sword of the Spirit," the Bible (Ephesians 6:17). Taylor points out that there is an important distinction to keep in mind: "The Bible as a tangible entity cannot defeat the devil; it is the truth made real by the Holy Spirit and activated through our faith and our lives that defeats him." It is when the written Word *logos* becomes the living word *rhema* – quickened in your heart, personalized and believed for a particular situation or need – that the Word functions with power. God has committed Himself to keeping the promises of His Word: God's Word stands because God stands by His Word and the devil cannot stand against it (Example: Matthew 4:1-11 when Jesus quoted Scripture to resist the temptations in the wilderness).

When you pray scripture, the Holy Spirit leads you to a particular verse or passage that seems to "come alive" and speaks directly to the situation you are praying about. As you pray that verse or passage, you are praying out of God's mind and His heart, not your own.

Here are some specific ways you can pray Scripture:

- *Praise.*

Read Bible passages directly; e.g. reading a Psalm to offer praise. Or sing it to yourself (the Psalms were originally composed as songs!) Be creative. Use a melody of your own making as you recite the words or hum along as you read silently.

Personalize the words:

You are my Shepherd, Lord, You meet all my needs: You make me lie down in green pastures . . . --Psalm 23:1

- *Praying for Others.*

You can do the same thing as mentioned before only insert a friend's name. Imagine the power of this prayer for a friend struggling with depression or anxiety or someone in the throes of divorce or struggling with grief:

You are Karen's shepherd, Lord, You meet all her needs; You make Karen lie down in green pastures. Lead Karen beside still waters, Lord, Only You can restore her soul.--Psalm 23:1-3

- *Praying in Pictures.*

Both of these prayers would have greater strength if pictured with the eyes of faith. In the prayer for yourself, praising God for His care as a gentle Shepherd, imagine actually being in His presence—lying down in a green pasture as a content, resting sheep. Or in intercession, picture the person you are praying for feeling the immediacy of these words: picture Karen as an anxious sheep calmed by the Shepherd's strong, tender hand; see her relax and feel safe as Jesus' presence infuses her with His peace.



- *Protection.*

As an intercessor, there are times when you sense you are walking on a battlefield. This is more than praying down God's blessing on people's lives; this is standing against the evil that prevents that blessing from coming.

To engage in this kind of prayer requires protection. "We are always dressed in Christ Himself," writes Jack Taylor, "but at times of real warfare in prayer, we need to put on the armor." You can claim Ephesians 6:1-18 or literally imagine that armor as visible and put it on piece by piece.



Imagine the power of prayer for a friend struggling with life's difficulties.

