

TOOL: Breath Prayers

Prayerful reflection three times a day • Daily



Introduction

Breath prayers are an ancient form of prayer designed to center your heart and mind in the midst of your day.

Breath prayers have been around for hundreds and hundreds of years, as early as the 3rd century. The idea is that by speaking a few words on an inhale of breath, and a few words on the exhale, the body is united in prayer. The words themselves of the prayer can change, reflecting your own needs and desires, drawing on scriptures, or using a guided breath prayer.

Not only is this a practice that can shape your spiritual life, but also – as science has learned more about the brain – we’ve learned how the power of this practice can transform anxiety, stress and heal wounds. Evidence has shown that attention to the breath helps regulate emotions and can interrupt trauma.

As you integrate the practice of praying three times a day, use the tool of breath prayers and notice how you experience connectivity with God.

Practice

Before you begin, choose how you want to engage with breath prayers. Some options and ideas are below:

- You could use breath prayers to cast your anxieties on God. The inhale could be a need you want to ask for help with, and the exhale could be, “I trust you to provide”.
- You could use your own words, or lines from a poem or song that is speaking to you.
- You could use scripture. Below are some verses you could utilize.

- [Here](#) are additional ideas for breath prayers
- You could use the work of Cole Arthur Riley to help you. She writes daily breath prayer liturgies available [here](#) or on her [instagram account](#). Kayla Craig also writes breath prayers on [this Instagram account](#). They are applicable to anyone even though the account is directed at parents.

We encourage you to practice the following steps in the morning, noon, and evening.

STEP ONE: Pay attention to your breath

Take a few minutes and just notice your breathing. Take a deep breath in and then exhale. Do this a few times. Become mindful of the presence of God. Imagine God leaning in to listen to your prayers.

STEP TWO: Pray

On the inhale of your breath speak (silently or out loud) the first part of your prayer. On the exhale, speak the second portion. Repeat this inhale and exhale slowly as long as you feel led.

Debrief your experience

After practicing with this tool, debrief your experience with your Praxis Group. Below are some questions to process together:

- Check in on life. (Where are you experiencing Christ's presence this week? What burdens are you carrying?)
- What did you learn from this practice?
- Describe your experience with this practice. (What feelings came up, what went well, what got in the way? How has it impacted your relationship with God?)
- What is the next step for you?

Breath prayers

From Matthew 11:28-30

Inhale: Humble and gentle One,

Exhale: You are rest for my soul.

From John 15

Inhale: True Vine and Gardener,

Exhale: I abide in You.

From Romans 8:38-39

Inhale: Nothing can separate me,

Exhale: From the love of God.

From Psalm 46:10

Inhale: Be still

Exhale: And know you are God.

From Matthew 6:10

Inhale: On earth

Exhale: As it is in heaven.

From 2 Corinthians 12:9

Inhale: Your grace

Exhale: Is enough for me.

From 1 John

Inhale: There is no fear

Exhale: In your Love.

From Psalm 23

Inhale: I will not be afraid

Exhale: For You are with me.

From Psalm 46:1

Inhale: You are our refuge

Exhale: And our strength.

From Psalm 74:16

Inhale: Both day and night

Exhale: Belong to You.

From Psalm 91:1

Inhale: I find rest

Exhale: In Your shelter.

From Psalm 103: 4-5

Inhale: You surround me with love

Exhale: And tender mercies.

Inhale: You fill my life

Exhale: With good things.

From Philippians 4:7

Inhale: Peace of Christ,

Exhale: Guard my heart and mind.

2 Chronicles 20:12

Inhale: We do not know what to do, Lord

Exhale: But our eyes are on you