

PRAYER

Speaking to God



The Collect

A Collect (pronounced “kah-lect”) is a very basic yet ancient form of prayer that has been used in the Western Church for many centuries. It is one of the most commonly used forms of prayer used by people who lead public or corporate prayers. It “collects” or “gathers up” all five parts of the prayer around one common theme. This theme is often taken from scripture, the liturgical season (time of the church year), or circumstance or reason for the gathering for public prayer. Collects are meant to be short and to the point with all five parts centering around a common theme. Using this shape, leaders can craft prayers that are classic in form and substance, yet relevant in nature and language. Some people creatively call this form of prayer, the “*You-Who-Do-To-Through*” prayer.

THE FIVE PARTS OF THE COLLECT

1. **Address to God**
2. **Characteristic of God (forms the basis of the petition)**
3. **The Petition (requests something of God)**
4. **The Desired Result**
5. **The Doxological Conclusion**

Consider these examples:

1. *Almighty God*
2. *To whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid:*
3. *Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit*
4. *That we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name*
5. *Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

—or—

1. *Almighty God,*
2. *the fountain of all wisdom*
3. *enlighten by your Holy Spirit those who teach and those who learn,*
4. *that, rejoicing in the knowledge of your truth, they may worship you and serve you from generation to generation;*
5. *through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

—or—

1. *O God*
2. *You know that today I have broken your commandment of love and that I have gone to bed angry with my friend, my brother in Christ.*
3. *Even though I have been wronged and insulted, teach me how to forgive. Even if I was right, help me to make the first effort and to take the first step to putting things right again. Keep me from foolish pride and from nursing my foolish anger. Help me to keep my eyes focused on Jesus*
4. *That in Him I may see the example of how to forgive, and that in Him I may find the will and the power to forgive*
5. *This I ask for your love’s sake. Amen.*

Part 1—The Address to God

The **YOU** part is how you choose to address and praise God. For example:

- Almighty God
- Light of the world
- Creator of all that is good
- Divine Healer
- God who sees
- Name above all names
- O God our shield
- Sovereign Lord
- Loving God
- Abba, Father
- God of peace
- God of all grace
- Holy One
- Shepherding God
- God of heaven
- God of patience and steadfast love
- Lord of life and love
- Gracious God, all-consuming fire
- O Lord God
- Compassionate God
- Living God
- God of all encouragement and hope

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Part 2—Characteristic of God

The **WHO** part names an attribute or action of God.

For example:

- Who parted the Red Sea
- Who calls us out of sin and slavery
- Who fills the world with life and love
- Who knows us better than we know ourselves
- Who healed the sick and fed the hungry
- Who promises never to leave us or forsake us
- Who sent Jesus into the world to suffer, die, and rise again for our sake
- Who is our only source of hope
- source of all wisdom, justice, truth and love
- Who came to us long ago in the birth of Jesus
- Whose word is authority and power
- Whose way is love
- Whose Spirit brings council and comfort and peace
- Whose chosen dwelling is the hearts of the lowly
- You call us to be your faithful servants
- You call us to pray and you offer yourself to all who seek your face
- You have chosen to speak to us through prophets and wise leaders and most clearly through your Son
- You continually call your people to yourself
- You have shown us what it means to be a servant
- You are the way, the truth, and the life
- You are the source of life and strength and ministry
- In wisdom you created us and all good things

Part 3—The Petition

The **DO** part makes a request connected to the attribute or action of God we just named (What do we want God to *do*?). It begins with an action verb. For example:

- | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------|
| • Grant... | • Enable... | • Keep... |
| • Empower... | • Come... | • Kindle... |
| • Show... | • Comfort... | • Forgive... |
| • Help... | • Speak... | • Breathe... |
| • Save... | • Listen... | • Take... |
| • Fill... | • Dwell... | • Teach... |
| • Send... | • Renew... | • Bless... |
| • Accept... | • Clothe... | • Draw... |
| • Provide... | • Claim... | • Warm... |
| • Give... | • Make... | • Wipe... |
| • Strengthen... | • Create... | • Protect... |
| • Prepare... | • Defend... | • Cleanse... |
| • Quicken... | • Instill... | • Clear... |
| • Enlighten... | • Infuse... | • Place... |
| • Direct... | • Inspire... | • Lead... |
| • Encourage... | • Quiet... | • Break... |

Part 4—The Desired Result

The **TO** part explains why you are asking God for this (*To* what end? Or *To* what result?). For example:

- So that...
- That we may...
- That those who...
- That you might...
- That...

Part 5—The Doxological Conclusion

The **THROUGH** part acknowledges that Jesus invited us to pray according to his authority as he advocates for us. For example:

- Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
- Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.
- In Jesus' (Christ's) name we pray. Amen.
- We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.
- For your love's sake. Amen.
- Accept our prayer for the sake of your Son, our Savior. Amen.