

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. One of my favorite names for this prayer is 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. *fountain of all wisdom*
3. *send your Spirit to those who teach and those who learn,*
4. *that they may hear your Word, understand your truth, and and grow in wisdom as they live to love and serve you;*
5. *through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.*
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
- Name above all names
- O God our shield
- Sovereign Lord
- Loving God
- 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

Part 2—Characteristic of God

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

For example:

- 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
- Who is our only source of hope
- Source of all wisdom, justice, and truth
- Whose word is authority and power
- Whose way is love
- Whose Spirit brings council and comfort and peace
- Whose dwells in the hearts of the humble
- Who call us to be your faithful servants
- Who calls us to pray in times of trouble
- 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

PRAYER

Speaking to God



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...
- Empower...
- Show...
- Help...
- Save...
- Fill...
- Send...
- Accept...
- Provide...
- Give...
- Strengthen...
- Prepare...
- Quicken...
- Enlighten...
- Direct...
- Encourage...
- Enable...
- Come...
- Comfort...
- Speak...
- Listen...
- Dwell...
- Renew...
- Clothe...
- Claim...
- Make...
- Create...
- Defend...
- Instill...
- Infuse...
- Inspire...
- Quiet...
- Keep...
- Kindle...
- Forgive...
- Breathe...
- Take...
- Teach...
- Bless...
- Draw...
- Warm...
- Wipe...
- Protect...
- Cleanse...
- Clear...
- Place...
- Lead...
- 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.
- For the sake of your Son, our Savior. Amen.

Finally, Time to Practice!

In the space below, practice writing your own collects.

SITUATION #1

YOU

WHO

DO

TO

THROUGH

SITUATION #2

YOU

WHO

DO

TO

THROUGH

SITUATION #3

YOU

WHO

DO

TO

THROUGH