

## Prayer 5 Ways

We are each different—some say that each Christian falls under one of these categories: sage, lover, mystic or prophet. Experiment with these different ways of praying as a way to experience prayer in a new way, and to understand yourself and your own prayer life better.

You may want to take the Spiritual Types Test found at: [prayer-center.upperroom.org/resources/quiz](http://prayer-center.upperroom.org/resources/quiz) to help understand your spiritual type.

*John 3:16-17*

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.*

### **Pray as a sage:**

Read John 3:16-17.

Think about what this verse means. Paraphrase the verse in a sentence or two that capture the essence of its meaning for you. Then write or think a prayer to God that expresses your thoughts about what God has done for us and why we need what God has given to us.

### **Pray as a lover:**

List several people you love and those you have difficulty loving. Read John 3:16-17 slowly for each person on your list, personalizing this verse as an expression of God's love for him or her. Include yourself. Pause to add your prayer for each person and to pray for what you need in order to love that person. Notice any changes in you as you affirm God's love for the person. Decide how you are going to express God's love and your love to the people on your list.

### **Pray as a mystic:**

Repeat John 3:16-17 prayerfully as a way of focusing on God. Open your spirit to the loving attitude of Jesus Christ who allowed himself to be given for our salvation. Give yourself to the flow of God's boundless love for the whole world, a love that flows in and through you. As people and situations come to mind, bring them into the flow and allow them to be washed in God's boundless love. Finally, carry some part of John 3:16-17 with you in your daily activities as a way of practicing openness to God's love.

### **Pray as a prophet:**

Today you will not be seeking to understand, feel, or contemplate the love described in these verses. Rather, be a living prayer today, an expression of God's sacrificial love. As you are able, take a walk through your house, your workplace, or your neighborhood. Bless everyone and everything you see with the words, "For God so loved the world. . ." Where do you see a need for God's love? Consider what Jesus would do in that situation, and choose a way to embody God's love in action.

### **Pray as yourself:**

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-19.

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit.*

Take a moment to reflect on what these verses say about what it means to live prayerfully. Devote most of your time to the practice of being present to God and remaining in God's love. Use whatever approach helps you and seems most natural. During your last few minutes, reflect on these questions: a)How am I experiencing God's presence and my presence to God these days? b)What am I discovering about my way of praying and relating to God? c)What helps me pray, and what gets in the way?