

5 Ways to Pray in April



April is a transition month. Birds return from their winter travels, the early spring flowers shake off their sleepy lethargy, and the sun's rays warm us for the first time in months. The earth starts to reawaken, and us with it. Why not use some of that new-found energy to pray with **Only By Prayer** through the month of April.

1. Maundy Thursday, April 2 – Today we remember Jesus celebrating the Last Supper with his disciples. During this meal, **Jesus** set two important precedents that, as His followers, we still live out today.

First of all, as they were preparing to eat the meal, Jesus, the Teacher, took on the role of servant. He wrapped a towel around His waist and filled a basin with water; then he went around and lovingly washed each of his disciple's feet. Peter, especially, was uncomfortable with this and protested, but Jesus explained the reason for his actions. He was setting an example for them: As He had done for them, so they needed to do for others. On this special day, **Holy Thursday**, Jesus

introduced the Christian virtue of **service**.

Secondly, Jesus shares the evening meal with his disciples. It, however, was not quite an ordinary supper. He foretold of His upcoming sacrifice on the cross by using the metaphor of the bread as his body and the wine as His blood. His disciples would not understand the significance of this until later after His death and resurrection. Today we celebrate communion at church in memory of the Last Supper.

Resources:

- Amazing Grace

Verse: *“Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.” John 13:14-15 NIV*

Prayer: Dear Lord, You never ask us to do anything that You have not done Yourself. Thank You for setting the example of serving others. Help us to carry on that mission in our own lives. Give us opportunities daily to serve others, as well as regular acts of service. May we also realize the importance of meeting regularly with believers, encouraging and communing with each other. Amen.

2. Good Friday, April 3 – Today is the darkest day of the Christian calendar, for it was on this day that Jesus was crucified and buried. It is so very tempting to want to skip over this day and go straight to the celebration of Easter, but it would also be so very wrong. We need to reflect on the pain and sacrifice that Jesus endured when He took our sins upon Himself. We need to follow his path to the cross so that we can more fully appreciate the mercy, grace, and righteousness that God gives us for His sake. Please spend a few minutes on the following resources and/or participate in a Good Friday service at your church today.

Resources:

- Following Jesus to the Cross by Mary Kane
- Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?

Verse: *“When he had received the drink, Jesus said, ‘It is finished.’ With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.” John 19:30 NIV*

Prayer: Dear Jesus, we offer You our deepest thanks for taking the punishment of our sins on the cross. We can never repay You for Your suffering; we accept this gift with a humble spirit. The greatest gift we can give back is to share the gospel with others. Help us to overcome any reticence in sharing about the eternal life that waits for them also. Amen.

3. Easter Sunday, April 5 – The most joyous event on the Christian calendar, Easter, is a day for celebrating The Resurrection. I never tire of imagining the look on the faces of the women who went to Jesus’ tomb, only to find the stone blocking the entrance rolled away and the tomb empty. It is this miracle that makes Christianity different from every other religion, because that same power of God that raised Jesus from the dead is available to us, His followers, (Ephesians 1:18-19) in our own ministries! God does not want us living in weakness, but in the resurrection power of Jesus. Imagine what we could do for Him if we truly believed this.

Resources:

- He Is Risen
- Youth Group Easter Drama

Verse: *“Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!” Luke 24:5-6 NIV*

Prayer: Dear Jesus, Our hearts are filled with joy this morning. You have triumphed over evil and death. Because of

this victory, we have the certainty of eternal life in heaven. And we also have many promises for our life on earth. May we spend our lives filled with Your Holy Spirit, equipped to live an abundant life. We praise You that You have broken the power of death. Amen.

4. Tax Day, April 15 – This many seem a silly thing to pray about, but when you consider the stress that finances put on families, states, and countries, we need to focus some prayer power on this issue. Tax Day is a day that people dread because of the many hassles involved in the preparation and filing of taxes. Money itself is a cause for concern in America with our ballooning national debt. Just watching the National Debt Clock rise is enough to make your blood pressure rise along with it. Along with national debt, many people are drowning in personal debt. With maxed-out credit cards, expensive cars, home mortgages, and college bills, too many of us are overextended and underfunded. Learning to budget and live within our means is a skill to be learned and practiced. As Dave Ramsey always says, “Act your wage!”

We also need to pray for those who are enduring financial stress because of circumstances beyond their control. Job loss, illness, and fraud are just a few of the reasons for an unexpected financial crisis. Let’s pray for all circumstances today.

Resources:

- Dave Ramsey
- Tax Questions Answered

Verse: *“No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.”*
Matthew 6:24 NIV

Prayer: Dear Lord, help us to give You first place in our

hearts. It's easy to want all the trappings the world has to give, but may we manage our money with wisdom and discernment. Help us not to make emotional, quick spending decisions. We pray for our government that the authorities would work on a balanced budget and stop spending more than we have. For those innocent victims suffering financial stress, we ask for wisdom and resources to help them recover from the loss. In Jesus name. Amen.

5. Iran Talks – Talks drag on in Switzerland, albeit without the foreign ministers of China, France, and Russia, who left earlier this week for home. “The negotiators’ intention is to produce a joint statement outlining general political commitments to resolving concerns about the Iranians’ nuclear program in exchange for relief of economic sanctions against Iran. In addition, they are trying to fashion other documents that would lay out in more detail the steps they must take by June 30 to meet those goals,” FoxNews.com said in an article published on April 2 on their website. Let’s pray for wisdom for our leaders that they make the right decision regarding these negotiations.

Resources:

- Iran Talks News Story

Verse: *“Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of the age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?” 1 Corinthians 1:20 NIV*

Prayer: Lord, we need Your wisdom and discernment to make the right decision. We pray that what is hidden will be brought to light and that our leaders will make a decision based on truth and facts; we pray for Your protection. Amen.

Thank you for praying with us today. Feel free to use this as a reminder throughout the month, and please add any of your prayer suggestions in the comment section below.

Pray on!

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