



20 Days of Prayers
for the
Try-Hard Girl

by Jill E. McCormick



Hello sweet friend,

You are sweet and precious in God's sight. You are so loved. You are forgiven, chosen, and free.

But some days you just don't feel as if the truth is actually true for you.

That's where this prayer book comes in - it's a resource to help give you words when you don't have any to offer.

You don't have to pray these prayers in order. Just pick a prayer that resonates with where you are and pray that one. The next day, pray the same prayer or offer up new words to God.


Just pray.

God wants to hear from you because He loves you and He loves to know the thoughts weighing on your heart.

Your God is good. He is holy. He is for you. He loves you like crazy.

May this book be a helpful guide to your on your journey of leaving behind the try-hard girl so you can embrace the grace-filled life God designed you to live.

- *Jill E. McCormick*



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Day 1: A prayer of submission

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank you for meeting me right here, right now. Thank you for being the God of the present, who loves me just as I am in this moment.

Father God, I submit myself to You, even though submission sounds so big and scary and unknown to me right now. I don't know what You have in store for me.

But here is the truth I know: the safest place to be is in Your hands, obeying what You tell me to do. Living out Your truths, working out my salvation, and picking up my cross and following You, are tasks beyond my human ability. I need Your help. I need You to draw me near and remind me how close You are in this moment.

Be my guide.

Guide my conversations, show me who to serve, and lead me to whatever glorifies You.

Be my guide and I will be Your follower. Amen.

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." - James 4:7



Day 2: A prayer of submission

Dear Heavenly Father,

You are here with me right now, even closer than the heart beating in my chest. Give me a moment to relax in that truth. I want to become more like you but I can't do it on my own.

So right now, I surrender my striving and strategies in order to receive Your peace, hope, and guidance.

Be my teacher.

Teach me how to be kind to myself as You are kind to me. Teach me how to receive the grace You offer. Because I have an easier time giving than receiving, I need Your help to learn how to receive the gifts You offer me. Teach me how to hear the truth You sing over me and not to push it away.

Give me a teachable heart and a spirit hungry to learn what You have to share. Be my teacher and I will be Your willing and receptive student. Amen.

*"I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go;
I will counsel you with My eye upon you." - Psalm 32:8*

Day 3 – A prayer of identity

Dear Heavenly Father,


You tell me I am fully known and fully loved by You. Help me to receive this truth today.

So often I dismiss this truth because I know all the mistakes I've made and sins I've committed. But Your Word says that NOTHING can separate me from Your love. Not one sin, past hurt, or future mistake can separate me from You.

Help me live in this truth today. Break down any strongholds I cannot see, am too weak to break down on my own, or too prideful to acknowledge. Penetrate my heart so that Your truth about me sinks down deep.

Reveal to me who I am in You. Amen.

*"I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful. I know this very well." – Psalm 139:14*



Day 4 – A prayer of identity

Dear Heavenly Father,

Your love for me is wide, high, long, and deep, but my sinful nature has the hardest time believing this is true.

Will You rewire my heart to know and receive Your love?

Father God, deliver me from any lies I believe that cause me to doubt Your love.

Show me Your love today in a real and tangible way — a way that's unmistakably You. Then help me receive that love. Amen.

*"And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should,
how wide, how long, how high, and how deep His love is." – Ephesians 3:18*

Day 5 - A prayer away from comparison

Dear Heavenly Father,

You tell me not to compare (2 Cor. 10:12) because you know it's not good for my heart, but I can't seem to stop. It's like an involuntary reaction when I look around and see others with more or better or different.

Today, will You replace my comparison default into a cue to pray a blessing over the other person? Will You give me Your eyes to see them as someone You made and love deeply instead of a threat or rival?

Remind me today that my identity is tucked away in You and no matter what anyone else has or does, I'm still secure in You. With You, life is not a zero-sum game, but a way of abundance, joy, and freedom. Amen.

"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." - Galatians 2:20



Day 6 - A prayer away from comparison

Dear Heavenly Father,

As my eyes scan those around me and what's on my screen, I feel "less than." I find myself measuring myself against others and coming up short.

I know comparing myself to others isn't healthy, but I have a hard time breaking myself of this habit. Will You give me a spirit of contentment and thankfulness?

Will You replace my envy with gratitude? When I feel comparison rise up in my heart, will You give me the ability to bless the other person?

Remind me of 10 people, gifts, or situations You've given me specifically, so I may give You thanks. Please give me the desire to give You thanks and praise when my fleshly default is jealousy. Amen.

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." - James 1:7

Day 7: A prayer to be kind to myself

Dear Heavenly Father,


You treat me with kindness, love, mercy, grace, and respect yet I have a hard time treating myself the same way.

Will You teach me today how to be kind to myself? You know that I say unkind things about myself on an hourly basis. I get down on myself when I make a mistake or say the wrong thing, and that's not how You treat me.

Will You give me the skills, resources, people, or time I need to learn how not to beat myself up?

Will You remind me that You're just crazy about me no matter what? Amen.

*"Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another,
as God in Christ forgave you." - Ephesians 4:32*



Day 8: A prayer to be kind to myself

Dear Heavenly Father,

So often I think that I must be perfect, or that I'm not allowed to make mistakes. I believe I must know what to do in every situation that comes my way. When I don't have all the answers, I beat myself up for not knowing what to do.

Will you correct the false line of thinking that says I must have life all figured out? Will you help me practice kindness to myself when I don't know what to do? Remind me today that I'm not an expert, but a beginner. Even though I've lived many decades, I'm still learning how to live in this season, with these problems, challenges, and joys.

Will You show me today how to be kind to myself? Remind me that I'm still learning, still training to walk in Your ways, and still figuring all this out.

Be with me today as I free myself from the belief that I must know all the answers.

Help me as I learn this new skill of being kind to myself.

Only You know all the answers. Thank You for always being with me and showing me the right way. Amen.

"Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance..." - Proverbs 1:5

Day 9 – A prayer for taking my thoughts captive

Dear Heavenly Father,

You ask me to take my thoughts captive (2 Cor. 10:5), but I must admit this is new and hard for me. Will You show me how to do it?

Train me today on what it looks like to capture my thoughts. And please give me please the energy and endurance to stick with it.

My thoughts come and go so fast and I don't know what to do with them all. Please be my intercessor today and capture what needs to be captured so I can release every thought to You.

You are my strength when I'm not sure I can do this.
You are my shield that protects me from negative thoughts.
You are my hope because You remind me freedom is available.
You love my soul when I'm not sure it's worth loving.

God, thank You for giving me what I need to take my thoughts captive. Amen.

"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer." – Romans 12:12



Day 10 – A prayer for taking my thoughts captive

Dear Heavenly Father,

You are so good and gracious to me. You knew before I was born I'd think thoughts that aren't true. So in your loving kindness, You gave me the ability to capture my thoughts and bring them to You—freeing me from false beliefs.

God, today will You teach me how to do that?

Will You give me the strength, grace, and time to bring my thoughts to You throughout the day?

You are truth and You direct me in the truth. Empower me to live by and in Your truth today. Remind me I'm powered by Your strength.

Thank You for the kindness You extend to me each day and for giving me the power and soundness of mind to always come back to You. Amen.

*"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life.
No one comes to the Father except through me.'" – John 14:6*

Day 11 - A prayer for peace

Dear Heavenly Father,

You are peace. Your Son Jesus is the Prince of Peace.

I believe that I'll experience peace once my struggles are over, but that's not what You say.

You say peace isn't found in perfect circumstances because it's found only in You. I can always experience peace because You are peace and You are always with me. Peace isn't an absence of chaos, but confidence in You, my Creator.

So be my peace.

Throughout this day, remind me of Your presence. Give me the desire and resolve to trust that You are who You say You are. Amen.

"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful." - Colossians 3:15



Day 12 - A prayer for peace

Dear Heavenly Father,

It feels like my brain doesn't ever stop. My thoughts are constantly spinning with ideas, solutions, errands, and activities. All this whirling makes me feel anxious and antsy.

Will You help me slow down and remember You are God, the One who holds all things together?

Some days I feel so distant from You. Instead of thinking about You, I'm thinking logistical thoughts, worries, and to-do's. Today, I ask You to calm my brain and soul. You are welcome in this hurried and rushed space of mine.

I boldly approach Your throne, even as I feel frantic, because where You are there is grace, truth, light, life, abundance, hope, joy, and kindness.

I want Your peace. Bless me with Your presence. Amen.

"Be still and know that I am God." - Psalm 46:10

Day 13: A prayer for joy

Dear Heavenly Father,

Father God, can I be honest with You for a second? Sometimes I think joy is for other people, people who have it all together—people with more money or better jobs, people with different circumstances or a different personality.

But God, You say Your joy is for all the people, no matter how they're wired or what they are going through.

Joy comes from being with YOU, not from what I have or my temperament.

My soul can have joy because You are with me and You have saved me.

No matter my situation—hungry or full, tired or rested, frustrated or peaceful—You are bigger than my circumstances. Can You bring joy and peace into my heart today?

I don't want to keep waiting for my circumstances to change to have joy. I want the joy that comes from just be with You, my Heavenly Father and most joyful God. Amen.

"This is the day that the Lord has made. I will rejoice and be glad in it." - Psalm 118:24



Day 14: A prayer for joy

Dear Heavenly Father,

You are a joyful God. You celebrate. You're happy. You love singing and dancing and feasting.

But sometimes, I don't feel joyful. Jesus, to be honest I believe I don't deserve joy because I'm not perfect and neither are my circumstances.

Will You teach me how to be joyful even when things don't go my way or turn out as I'd hoped?

Whenever my inner critic tries stealing my joy, surround me with Your love. Remind me that You created this day so I can be happy in it. No matter what.

Remind me only You are perfect. Replace my perfectionism with the gift of joy.

Thank You for being with me and for never giving up on me. Amen.

"My soul shall be joyful in the Lord; it shall rejoice in His salvation." - Psalm 35:9

Day 15: A prayer to break down any strongholds

Dear Heavenly Father,

Over and over I return to scripts, habits, and behaviors which don't serve me well. These patterns may have been modeled for me or I may have learned them all on my own. No matter where they came from, I feel like I can't break free.

I feel stuck.

But God, You tell me You're making me new, that I don't have to be stuck in old habits.

Today, help me kick out those lies telling me I can't change and this is always how I'll be. Deliver me from the I "can't," "won't," or "will never" thoughts. They simply aren't true.

Nothing is impossible with You, even tearing down habits and reactions I've had for years. Thank You for never leaving me or forsaking me. Amen.

"Nothing, you see, is impossible with God." - Luke 1:37



Day 16: A prayer to break down any strongholds

Dear Heavenly Father,

You are strong and mighty. Nothing is as strong as You. Your arm is never too short to save.

Sometimes, I feel like I can't break out of these destructive thought patterns and behaviors holding me back. I keep running to the habits even though they're unhelpful.

When I struggle with old patterns, I tell myself to get it together. I think a checklist, willpower, or trying harder will free me from decades of bad habits.

But those methods aren't working.

But You God, can make all things new. You can make me new too.

I pray in the name of Jesus to be set free from whatever is holding me back from what You have for me. I'm tired of these hurtful habits. Give me the courage to let them go and to hold on to Your truth that says I am new. Amen.

*"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:
The old has gone, the new is here!" - 2 Corinthians 5:17*

Day 17: A prayer to root out lies

Dear Heavenly Father,

You are truth. When I live in the truth of who You are and who I am, then I am free. But when I believe lies about who You are and who I am, then I am a slave to fear. I don't want to live with false beliefs anymore.

Will you show me today what lies I believe about myself, others, and my circumstances?

My enemy, Satan, lurks around with the intention to kill and destroy by planting half-truths and lies into my heart.

Give me the strength today to root out any lies I believe. You want me living in the light of the truth so help me do just that today. Amen.

"The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.'" - Romans 8:15



Day 18: A prayer to root out lies

Dear Heavenly Father,

You tell me to think about whatever is good, lovely, pure, and right. Yet so often I think about how I am failing, not measuring up, or how I need to try harder.

I need Your Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of truth, to come and guide me. I have a hard time separating what is true from what is a lie when all these thoughts bounce around in my head.

Help me root out any lies I believe today. May I take unkind and hurtful thoughts to You so You can help me learn what is true and what is not.

You are good and faithful to help me to walk in the truth. Thank you. Amen.

"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth." - John 16:13

Day 19: A prayer to live out who God created me to be

Dear Heavenly Father,

You have plans and a purpose for me. I was not an accident, afterthought, or surprise. You carefully and uniquely crafted me to do good works that You planned in advance for me.

Will You show me what those works are? And will You give me the ability to relax in Your presence as I walk in your plans?

Help me rely on you instead of striving out of my own energy and strength. This is really hard for me, because as You know, I have a long history of doing things out of my own strength and it's left me exhausted.

You don't ask me to work at a frantic pace. Instead, You say Your yoke is easy and Your burden is light.

I want the peace that comes from living within Your will.

Let me hold Your hand today so we can work side-by-side. Lead me at the pace You know I can take. Press my hand close to Your heart so I can stay in step with You.

I love You and I can't wait to go on this adventure with You. Amen.

"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." - Ephesians 2:10



Day 20: A prayer to live out who God created me to be

Dear Heavenly Father,

You are my creator, which means You planted gifts and talents inside me. Jesus said when I do what You ask me to, I shine Your glory out in the world.

Today, let me shine not so I get credit or recognition, but so I can continually shine Your glory to others.

Show me what good works You created me to do and what work is meant for others. Do not let me snuff out the light of others by doing their work. Do not let me steal Your glory by taking credit for the gifts You've given.

Let me only do what you've asked of me so I can reflect Your glory to a hurting world. Amen.

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." - Matthew 5:16