

# ***Classic Prayers for the Employed***

***Workplace Faith Booklet #1***

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*"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. "Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven".*

*Matthew 5:13-16 NKJV*

***The following prayers are enduring classics of great beauty and value. They are found in Holy Living (HL), by Jeremy Taylor, 1650, and the Book of Common Prayer (BCP), 1959 and 1918 (1<sup>st</sup> edition 1552). They are intended to enrich, supplement and perhaps inform the Christian worker's own spontaneous prayers. Some are best for the beginning of the work day, others for occasions during the work day. Coffee breaks and meal breaks are good times to give thanks for accomplishments, to ask forgiveness for any ungodly thoughts, words and deeds, and to ask for strength and guidance for the rest of the day. Meal breaks are good times to meet with fellow Christians or seekers, and to encourage one another by prayer and conversation.***

[Refer also to "Being Salt and Light in the Workplace: A Manual of Classic Guidelines and Prayers"; "Classic Guidelines on the Use of Time, for the Employed", and "Classic Prayers and Guidelines for Bible Study" -- at [www.ccri.ca](http://www.ccri.ca)]

# Classic Prayers for the Employed

## ***1. Preparations for work***

***Prayer for holy intention in the beginning and pursuit of any considerable action, as Study, Preaching, etc.***

*O eternal God, who has made all things for man, and man for Thy glory, sanctify my body and soul, my thoughts and my intentions, my words and actions, that whatsoever I shall think, or speak, or do, may be by me designed to the glorification of Thy name; and by Thy blessing it may be effective and successful in the work of God, according as it can be capable. Lord, turn my necessities into virtue; the works of nature into the works of grace, by making them orderly, regular, temperate, subordinate, and profitable to ends beyond their own proper efficacy; and let no pride or self-seeking, no covetousness or revenge, no impure mixture or unhandsome purposes, no little ends and low imaginations pollute my spirit, and unhallow any of my words and actions: but let my body be a servant of my spirit, and both body and spirit be servants of Jesus: that doing all things for Thy glory here, I may be partaker of Thy glory hereafter; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. HL*

***For Daily Work.*** *O Lord our heavenly Father, by whose providence the duties of men are variously ordered: Grant to us the spirit to labour heartily to do thy work in our several stations, in serving one Master and looking for one reward. Teach us to put to good account whatever talents thou hast lent to us, and enable us to redeem our time by patience and zeal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. BCP*

***For grace to spend our time well.*** *O eternal God, who from all eternity dost behold and love thy own glories and perfections infinite, and hast created me to do the work of God after the manner of men, and to serve thee in this generation and according to my capacities, give me thy grace, that I may be a curious and prudent spender of my time, so as I may best prevent or resist all temptation, and be profitable to the Christian commonwealth, and, by discharging all my duty, may glorify thy name. Take from me all slothfulness, and give me a diligent and an active spirit, and wisdom to choose my employment; that I may do works proportionable to my person and to the dignity of a Christian, and may fill up all the spaces of my time with actions of religion and charity; that, when the devil assaults me, he may not find me idle; and my dearest Lord, at his sudden coming, may find me busy in lawful, necessary, and pious actions, improving my talent entrusted to me by thee, my Lord; that I may enter into the joy of my Lord, to partake of his eternal felicities, even for thy mercy's sake, and for my dearest Saviour's sake. Amen. HL*

***A Prayer for the Grace of Humility.*** O holy and most gracious Master and Saviour Jesus, who by thy example and by thy precept, by the practice of a whole life and frequent discourses, didst command us to be meek and humble, in imitation of thy incomparable sweetness and great humility, be pleased to give me the grace, as thou hast given me the commandment: enable me to do whatsoever thou commandest, and command whatsoever thou pleasest. O mortify in me all proud thoughts and vain opinions of myself; let me return to thee the acknowledgment and the fruits of all those good things thou hast given me, that, by confessing I am wholly in debt to thee for them, I may not boast myself for what I have received, and for what I am highly accountable; and for what is my own teach me to be ashamed and humbled, it being nothing but sin and misery, weakness and uncleanness. Let me go before my brethren in nothing but in striving to do them honour and thee glory, never to seek my own praise, never to delight in it when it is offered: that, despising myself, I may be accepted by thee in the honours with which thou shalt crown thy humble and despised servants, for Jesus' sake, in the kingdom of eternal glory. Amen. HL

## **2. Dealing with worry and stress**

***For those in Hazardous Occupations.*** Protect and prosper, O Lord, all those who labour at tasks of danger and difficulty [especially ... ], that they may be preserved in safety and health; and grant that, knowing the dangers which beset them, they may ever take thought of one another, and be sustained by a sure trust in thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. BCP

***A Prayer for a contented Spirit, and the Grace of Moderation and Patience.*** O Almighty God, Father and Lord of all the creatures, who hast disposed all things and all chances so as may best glorify thy wisdom, and serve the ends of thy justice, and magnify thy mercy by secret and indiscernible ways, bringing good out of evil; I most humbly beseech thee to give me wisdom from above, that I may adore thee and admire thy ways and footsteps, which are in the great deep and not to be searched out; teach me to submit to thy providence in all things, to be content in all changes of person and conditions, to be temperate in prosperity, and to read my duty in the lines of thy mercy; and in adversity to be meek, patient, and resigned; and to look through the cloud, that I may wait for the consolation of the Lord and the day of redemption; in the meantime doing my duty with an unwearied diligence, and an undisturbed resolution, having no fondness for my hopes in heaven and the rewards of holy living, and being strengthened with the spirit of the inner man, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. HL

***For Temperance.*** O Almighty God and gracious Father of men and angels, who openest thy hand and fillest all things with plenty, and hast provided for thy servant

*sufficient to satisfy all my needs; teach me to use thy creatures soberly and temperately, that I may not, with loads of meat or drink, make the temptations of my enemy to prevail upon me, or my spirit unapt for the performance of my duty, or my body healthless, or my affections sensual and unholy. O my God, never suffer that the blessings which thou givest me may either minister to sin or sickness, but to health and holiness and thanksgiving; that in the strength of thy provisions I may cheerfully and actively and diligently serve thee; that I may worthily feast at thy table here, and be accounted worthy, through thy grace, to be admitted to thy table hereafter, at the eternal supper of the Lamb, to sing an hallelujah to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen. HL*

***A Prayer to be said by Married Persons in behalf of themselves and each other.*** O eternal and gracious Father, who hast consecrated the holy estate of marriage to become mysterious, and to represent the union of Christ and his church, let thy Holy Spirit so guide me in the doing the duties of this state, that it may not become a sin unto me; nor that liberty, which thou hast hallowed by the holy Jesus, become an occasion of licentiousness by my own weakness and sensuality; and do thou forgive all those irregularities and too sensual applications which may have, in any degree, discomposed my spirit and the severity of a Christian. Let me, in all accidents and circumstances, be severe in my duty towards thee, affectionate and dear to my wife, (or husband,) a guide and good example to my family, and in all quietness, sobriety, prudence, and peace, a follower of those holy pairs who have served thee with godliness and a good testimony. And the blessings of the eternal God, blessings of the right hand and of the left, be upon the body and soul of thy servant, my wife, (or husband,) and abide upon her (or him) till the end of a holy and happy life; and grant that both of us may live together for ever in the embraces of the holy and eternal Jesus, our Lord and Saviour. Amen. HL

***For Chastity: to be said especially by Unmarried Persons.*** Almighty God, our most holy and eternal Father, who art of pure eyes, and canst behold no uncleanness; let thy gracious and holy Spirit descend upon thy servant, and reprove the spirit of fornication and uncleanness, and cast him out; that my body may be a holy temple, and my soul a sanctuary to entertain the Prince of purities, the holy and eternal Spirit of God. O, let no impure thoughts pollute that tongue which God hath commanded to be an organ of his praises; no unholy and unchaste action rend the veil of that temple where the holy Jesus hath been pleased to enter, and hath chosen for his habitation: but seal up all my senses from all vain objects, and let them be entirely possessed with religion, and fortified with prudence, watchfulness, and mortification; that I, possessing my vessel in holiness, may lay it down with a holy hope, and receive it again in a joyful resurrection, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. HL

***For Right Relations in Industry.*** O God, who hast ordained that men should live and work together as brethren: we beseech thee to bless the industries of this land, that

*there be no strife among those who are engaged in the varied tasks of industry and commerce. Grant that all, seeking only what is right, may ever continue in brotherly union and concord, to their own well-being and the good of their fellow men; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. BCP*

### **3. Prayers for Christians in specific occupations.**

***A Prayer to be said by Merchants, Tradesmen and Handicraftmen.*** *O eternal God, Thou fountain of justice, mercy and benediction, who, by my education and other effects of Thy providence, hast called me to this profession, that, by my industry, I may, in my small proportion, work together for the good of myself and others; I humbly beg Thy grace to guide me in my intention, and in the transaction of my affairs, that I may be diligent, just and faithful; and give me Thy favour, that this my labour may be accepted by Thee as a part of my necessary duty; and give me Thy blessing to assist and prosper me in my calling to such measures as Thou shalt, in mercy, choose for me; and be pleased to let the Holy Spirit be for ever present with me, that I may never be given to covetousness and sordid appetites, to lying and falsehood, or any other base, indirect, and beggarly arts; but give me prudence, honesty, and Christian sincerity, that my trade may be sanctified by my religion, my labour by my intention and Thy blessing, that when I have done the portion of work Thou hast allotted me, and improved the talent Thou hast intrusted to me, and served the commonwealth in my capacity, I may receive the mighty price of my high calling, which I expect and beg, in the portion and inheritance of the ever-blessed Saviour and Redeemer, Jesus. Amen. HL*

***For the Parliament of Canada and the Legislature of the Province.*** *Most gracious God, the author of all good things, we humbly beseech thee for the Parliament of Canada [and the legislature of this province, or the Council of this Territory] at this time assembled; that thou wouldest be pleased to direct and prosper all their counsels to the advancement of thy glory, the good of thy Church, and the safety, honour and welfare of our people. All this we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our most blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen. BCP*

***For Civic Authorities.*** *Almighty God, our heavenly Father, send forth, we beseech thee, upon thy servants who bear office in this city [or town, or village, or municipality] the spirit of prudence, charity, and justice; that they may in all things walk before thee with stedfast purpose and a single heart, and faithfully serve in their several offices; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. BCP*

***For those who serve in the Queen's Forces.*** *O Lord of hosts, stretch forth, we pray thee, thine mighty arm to strengthen and protect the Queen's forces in every peril of sea, and land, and air; shelter them in the day of battle, and ever keep them safe from*

*all evil; endue them with loyalty and courage; and grant that in all things they may serve thee who art invisible; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. BCP*

***The Prayer used in Her Majesty's Canadian Navy.*** *O Eternal Lord God, who alone spreadest out the heavens, and rulest the raging of the sea; who hast compassed the waters with bounds until day and night come to an end: Be pleased to receive into thy Almighty and most gracious protection the persons of us thy servants, and the Fleet in which we serve. Preserve us from the dangers of the sea, and from the violence of the enemy; that we may be a safeguard unto our most gracious Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth, and her Dominions, and a security for such as pass on the seas upon their lawful occasions; that the inhabitants of our Commonwealth and Empire may in peace and quietness serve thee our God; and that we may return in safety to enjoy the blessings of the land, with the fruits of our labours; and with a thankful remembrance of thy mercies to praise and glorify thy holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. BCP*

***For Agriculture.*** *Almighty and merciful God, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift: Bless we beseech thee, the labours of thy people, and cause the earth to bring forth her fruits abundantly in their season, that we may with grateful hearts again give thanks to thee for the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen. BCP*

*Almighty God, who hast blessed the earth that it should be fruitful and bring forth abundantly whatsoever is needful for the life of man: Prosper, we beseech thee, the work of our farmers, and grant such seasonable weather that all may gather in the fruits of the earth, and proclaim thy great goodness with thanksgiving; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. BCP*

***For Fisheries.*** *O Almighty God, who hast made the sea, and all that move therein: Bestow thy blessing on the harvest of the waters, that it may be abundant in its season, and on our sailors and fishermen, that they may be safe in every peril of the deep; so that we all with thankful hearts may acknowledge thee, who art Lord of the sea and of the dry land; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. BCP*

***For Industry.*** *O Lord Jesus Christ, who in thy earthly life didst share man's toil, and hallow the labour of his hands: Prosper our bretheren who maintain the industries of this land, and give to all their labour pride in their work, a just reward for their labours, and joy both in supplying need and in serving thee; who with the Father and the Holy Spirit livest and reignest, ever one God, world without end. Amen. BCP*

***For Teachers in Schools.*** *Grant, we beseech thee, O heavenly Father, to all who teach in our schools, the spirit of wisdom and grace, that they may lead their pupils to reverence truth, desire goodness, and rejoice in beauty; so that all may come to know*

*and worship thee, the giver of all that is good; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. BCP*

***For Universities, Colleges and Schools.*** *Almighty God, of whose only gift cometh wisdom and understanding: We beseech thee with thy gracious favour to behold our universities, colleges and schools, that knowledge may be increased among us, and all good learning flourish and abound. Bless all who teach and all who learn; and grant that in humility of heart they may ever look unto thee, who art the fountain of all wisdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. BCP*

***For Theological Colleges.*** *Almighty Father, grant that our schools of theology may be homes of faith and fruitful study; and that all their students may so learn truth as to bear its light along their ways, and so learn Christ to be found in him; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen. BCP*

***For Healing Ministries.*** *Almighty God, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ went about doing good, and healing all manner of sickness and disease among the people: Continue, we beseech thee, this his gracious work among us [especially in ... ]; cheer, heal, and sanctify the sick; grant to physicians, surgeons, and nurses wisdom and skill, sympathy and patience; and send down thy blessing upon all who labour to prevent suffering and to forward thy purposes of love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. BCP*

***For the Advancement of Medical Science.*** *O God, whose Spirit filleth all the world, revealing the wonders of nature through each succeeding day: We thank thee for the continual advance of medical science, whereby the bodies of men are made apt for thy service; beseeching thee that those who minister to thee in nature may be consecrated to thee by grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. BCP*

***A Prayer to be said by Masters of Families, Curates, Tutors, or other obliged Persons, for their Charges.*** *O eternal God, thou fountain of justice, mercy, and benediction, who, by my education and other effects of thy providence, hast called me to this profession, that, by my industry, I may, in my small proportion, work together for the good of myself and others, I humbly beg thy grace to guide me in my intention, and in the transaction of my affairs, that I may be diligent, just, and faithful; and give me thy favour, that this my labour may be accepted by thee as a part of my necessary duty; and give me thy blessing to assist and prosper me in my calling to such measures as thou shalt, in mercy, choose for me; and be pleased to let thy Holy Spirit be for ever present with me, that I may never be given to covetousness and sordid appetites, to lying and falsehood, or any other base, indirect, and beggarly arts; but give me prudence, honesty, and Christian sincerity, that my trade may be sanctified by my religion, by labour, by my intention and thy blessing, that when I have done my portion of work thou hast allotted me, and improved the talent thou hast entrusted to*

*me, and served the commonwealth in my capacity, I may receive the mighty price of my high calling, which I expect and beg, in the portion and inheritance of the ever-blessed Saviour and Redeemer, Jesus. Amen. HL*

#### **4. For mission and evangelism in the workplace**

***Pray that all may seek the Lord.*** *O God, who has made of one blood all nations of people to dwell on the face of the whole earth, and has sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far away and to those who are nearby, grant that all everywhere may seek after you, and find you. Bring the nations into your fold, and add the non-believers to your inheritance, amen. BCP*

*Almighty God, who by your Son Jesus Christ gave commandment to the Apostles that they should go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature: grant to whom you have called into your Church, a ready will to obey your Word, and fill us with hearty desire to make your way known upon the earth, your saving health among all nations. Look with compassion upon the non-believers that have not known you, and to the multitudes who are scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd. Rise up we pray true and faithful people, to seek and find your sheep dispersed and lost, and by your help bring them home to your flock, that they may be saved forever; through your Son who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end, amen. BCP*

*Almighty God, who by thy Son Jesus Christ didst give commandment to the Apostles that they should go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature: Grant to us whom thou hast called into thy Church, a ready will to obey thy Word; and fill us with a hearty desire to make thy will known upon earth, they saving health among all nations; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. BCP*

*Almighty Saviour, who didst look with compassion upon the multitudes: raise up we beseech thee, faithful men to seek and find thy sheep dispersed and lost, that they may be saved forever; who livest and reignest with thee and the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen. BCP*

***For all Missionary Workers.*** *O God, who willest that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth: Prosper, we pray thee, all those who labour in the Gospel at home and in distant lands [particularly ...]; protect them in all perils, and support them in loneliness and in the hour of trial; give them thy grace to bear fruitful witness unto thee; endue them with burning zeal and love, that they may turn many to righteousness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. BCP*