

TEEN EDITION • A SIMPLE GUIDE TO PRAYER

no church words required

just talk.

*God's listening. Even to the stuff you
haven't said out loud yet.*

Prayer without the performance: how to start, what
to say when your head won't quiet down, and what
to do when God seems silent.

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Sunday Worship: Crossland High School, 6901 Temple Hill Rd, Camp Springs, MD 20748. Sundays at 10:00 AM · www.hiphopenation.com · Facebook @CmtyofHope · YouTube @hiphopenationtv

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If you are thinking about hurting yourself, call or text 988 (the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline) any time, day or night. Someone will answer.

The road map

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The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.

PSALM 145:18 (NIV)

For real: how are you doing? Not the answer you give when a teacher asks. The real one.

Maybe somebody handed you this book and you're flipping through it to be polite. Maybe you searched "how to pray" on your phone at 1 AM because something happened and you didn't know who else to talk to. Maybe you've sat in church your whole life and never once felt like it was for you. Or maybe you don't even know if you believe in God, and you're just curious.

However you got here: welcome. You're not too young for this, and you're not too messed up for it either.

Here's what this book isn't. It's not a list of rules. It's not a guilt trip. It's not a class on how to sound religious. Prayer doesn't need a special voice, a special building, or a life that has it all together. It needs you, being honest, with a God who already knows you and already loves you.

Our church started in a nightclub in 2006 because we believe God meets people where they actually are. Not where they're supposed to be. Where they are. This book works the same way. Start where you are. Use the words you've got. God can work with that.

God's been waiting on you.

Pastor Tony Lee

SENIOR PASTOR, COMMUNITY OF HOPE AME CHURCH

Prayer Is Just Talking

Let's clear something up first: prayer isn't a performance. Nobody's grading it. It's a conversation.

A lot of people think prayer has a dress code. That you need old fashioned words, a certain posture, a religious résumé. That God only listens to people who go to church every week and never mess up. None of that's true. Prayer is talking with God, the same God who made you, knows you, and wants a real relationship with you. Not religion. Relationship.

You can pray on the bus. In the shower. Walking to class. Lying in bed with your phone face down at midnight when your brain won't shut off. Out loud or in your head. Long or short. Neat or messy. Jesus himself said the fancy stuff isn't the point:

And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

MATTHEW 6:7-8 (NIV)

Read that again. God already knows what you need before you say a word. So prayer isn't about informing God or impressing God. It's about connecting with God. The words don't have to be right. They just have to be real.

And you don't have to pray where anybody can see you. Jesus said so himself:

But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

MATTHEW 6:6 (NIV)

Close the door. That's Jesus talking. If praying out loud at your house would be weird, or nobody at your house prays, or you'd get clowned for it, you have permission from Jesus to keep it between you and God. In your head. In your room. In the Notes app on your phone. It all counts.

Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.

PSALM 62:8 (NIV)

Pour out your heart. Not "say the correct formula." Not "fix yourself first." Pour it out. The fear, the anger, the questions, the thing you did, the thing somebody did to you. God can handle your honesty. God would rather have your real than your rehearsed.

If you've never prayed a day in your life, here's the whole starting line: talk to God like you'd talk to someone who loves you and isn't going anywhere. Because that's exactly who God is.

TRY IT: 30 SECONDS

Wherever you are right now, say this, out loud or silently:
"God, I'm here. I don't have fancy words. This is me, being honest with You. Thank You for listening."

That's it. That counted. You just prayed.

God Actually Wants to Hear From You

Maybe the harder question isn't "how do I pray?" It's "why would God listen to me?"

We get it. When you're fourteen, it can feel like nobody's really listening. Adults talk over you. Teachers see a grade, not a person. Even your friends are half looking at their phones. So why would God, who's got the whole world to deal with, stop for you?

God says otherwise.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

JEREMIAH 29:11 (NIV)

This is our church's anchor verse, and here's why it matters for you: God said those words to people who felt forgotten. People far from home, wondering if anybody remembered they existed. God's answer? I know the plans I have for you. Hope. A future.

You can't have plans for someone you're ignoring. God has plans for you. That means God is paying attention.

And "too young" doesn't work as an excuse either. When God called a kid named Jeremiah (yes, the same Jeremiah), his first response was basically "I'm too young for this."

“Alas, Sovereign LORD,” I said, “I do not know how to speak; I am too young.” But the LORD said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am too young.’ You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you.”

JEREMIAH 1:6-7 (NIV)

Do not say “I am too young.” God doesn’t have a minimum age. Years later, a mentor wrote to a young man named Timothy: “Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young” (1 Timothy 4:12). God takes teenagers seriously. Always has.

And when you’re hurting, God’s not far off:

The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles. The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

PSALM 34:17-18 (NIV)

Close to the brokenhearted. Not disappointed in you. Not waiting for you to pull it together. Close. Jesus made the invitation even plainer:

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

MATTHEW 7:7-8 (NIV)

Everyone who asks. Not everyone with perfect attendance. Not everyone with a clean record. Everyone.

That doesn't mean prayer is a vending machine, where you put in the right words and get whatever you want. (We'll talk about prayers that don't get answered in Chapter 6, because we don't dodge the hard stuff around here.) It means the door is never locked from God's side. When you knock, something opens.

TRY IT: NAME ONE THING

Tell God one thing that's weighing on you today. Just one.
Name it: "*God, this is what's heavy: _____.* You said *You're close to the brokenhearted. Be close to me in this.*"

Come As You Are

Whatever you did. Whatever got done to you. Whatever people call you. You can still pray.

A lot of us carry a quiet belief that we've disqualified ourselves. Maybe you got a label early: the bad kid, the problem, the one who's always in trouble. Maybe you did something you've never told anybody. Maybe something happened to you that wasn't your fault, and somehow you still feel like it was. So before we'd ever talk to God, we figure we need to fix ourselves up first.

Jesus told a story that wrecks that idea. Two men went to pray. One was a religious professional who listed his accomplishments. The other was a tax collector, which in that world meant everybody hated him. Here's how the second man prayed:

But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner."

LUKE 18:13 (NIV)

Eight words. No polish. All honesty. And Jesus said that man, not the polished professional, went home right with God.

At Community of Hope we say it like this: we are all flawed and struggling in different areas of our lives. Every one of us. The adults who seem to have it together? Flawed and struggling. The pastor writing this? Same. Prayer isn't for people who have it together. It's for people who know they don't.

And God already knows. All of it.

You have searched me, LORD, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely.

PSALM 139:1-4 (NIV)

Before a word is on your tongue. God knew before you did. God saw what was done to you. And God is still here, still listening, still not leaving. You can't tell God something God doesn't already know. So hiding only keeps you carrying it alone.

God has a personal message for you, and it isn't "clean up first." It's this: it's never too late to start over, begin, or keep going. Never too late to pray for the first time. Never too late to come to Jesus, no matter what your name has been attached to. We've watched it happen in thousands of lives, and it can happen in yours.

And if you're carrying something you've never said out loud to anybody? Prayer is the safest place on earth to put it down. God isn't shocked by your story. God was there for all of it, and God stayed.

TRY IT: THE EIGHT WORD PRAYER

Borrow the tax collector's prayer, exactly as he said it: "*God, have mercy on me, a sinner.*"

If "sinner" feels heavy, here's what it means: somebody who missed the mark and knows it. That's all of us. This prayer has worked for two thousand years. It works today.

How to Start: Four Simple Moves

Even Jesus's closest friends had to ask him how to do this.

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."

LUKE 11:1 (NIV)

So if you feel like you don't know how, you're in good company. The disciples were with Jesus every day and still asked for a lesson. Jesus didn't hand them a textbook. He gave them something short enough to say in twenty seconds. We call it the Lord's Prayer:

This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

MATTHEW 6:9-13 (NIV)

Look at what Jesus packed in there: respecting God, wanting what God wants, asking for what you need today, dealing with forgiveness (both directions), asking for protection. Simple on the surface, deep enough for a lifetime.

From that model comes a pattern anybody can use. Four simple moves.

MOVE 1: THANK GOD

Start with something you're grateful for, even if it's small. "God, thank You that I woke up. Thank You for my best friend. Thank You that practice got canceled." Gratitude changes the whole tone of the conversation.

MOVE 2: BE HONEST

Tell the truth about where you are, including the stuff you'd rather nobody knew. "God, I'm angry at my dad." "I'm scared about this test." "I lied, and I need Your forgiveness." God already knows. Saying it is how you stop carrying it by yourself.

MOVE 3: ASK

Ask for what you need, for you and for others. Help with a class. Help forgiving somebody. Help for a friend who's struggling. Nothing is too big to ask for, and nothing is too small.

MOVE 4: LISTEN

Sit quiet a moment before you grab your phone. God often speaks through a settled thought, a verse that suddenly makes sense, or a nudge toward the next right move.

Thank God. Be honest. Ask. Listen. Twenty seconds in the hallway or twenty minutes in your room, the four moves work at any length.

TRY IT: RUN THE FOUR MOVES

One sentence each: "God, thank You for _____.
Honestly, I'm _____. I'm asking You for
_____." Then sit still for thirty seconds.

When Your Head Is Loud

Anxious? Overwhelmed? Feel like everybody's watching and nobody sees you? This chapter is for you.

Some days don't need a prayer routine. They need a lifeline. The grade that just tanked. The group chat that went quiet after you sent something. The fight at your house you could hear through the wall. The comparison loop where everybody online looks happier, prettier, richer, and more together than you. The feeling that sits on your chest before you even get out of bed. What does prayer look like then?

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7 (NIV)

Notice the promise. It doesn't say God will instantly delete every problem. It says God's peace will guard your heart and your mind. Peace that doesn't even make sense given what you're dealing with. The man who wrote those words, by the way, wrote them from a prison cell. This isn't advice from somebody who never struggled. It's testimony from somebody who prayed in the dark and found God there.

Pastor Tony has preached it this way to young people: your mind is a battlefield. Whatever you let run on repeat in there is going to

win. So Paul's very next sentence is about what to put in your head on purpose:

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

PHILIPPIANS 4:8 (NIV)

Whatever is true. Not whatever the comments say. Not whatever the loudest voice in your head says at 1 AM. Prayer is how you hand the loop to God and let God put something true in its place.

And on the days when it's so heavy you can't even find words? God covered that too:

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.

ROMANS 8:26 (NIV)

Sit with that. When all you've got is tears, or a sigh, or nothing, the Spirit of God takes what you can't say and carries it to the Father. Crying into your pillow can be a prayer. Staring at the ceiling can be a prayer. You showing up with nothing left is a prayer.

One more thing, and we mean this. Prayer and getting help aren't rivals. God works through counselors, school psychologists, coaches, and doctors too. If what you're carrying feels like more than a bad week, if you've started thinking you'd be better off gone, or you're hurting yourself, tell a trusted adult today. A parent, an aunt, a teacher, a coach, a youth leader. That's not snitching

on yourself. That's wisdom. And you can call or text 988 any time, day or night, and a real person will answer.

Praying people get help. That's not weak faith. That's strong faith with its eyes open.

TRY IT: THE EXCHANGE

Breathe in slow. Breathe out. Then pray: *"God, I hand You this: _____ . I can't carry it anymore. You said Your peace would guard my heart and mind. I'm taking You at Your word. Guard me tonight."* Repeat as many times as you need. There's no limit.

When God Seems Quiet

Time to be honest about the hard part: sometimes you pray, and it feels like nobody's there.

You prayed that your parents would stop fighting. They didn't. You prayed that the person who left would come back. They didn't. You prayed for your friend, your grandmother, your family, your own self, and things stayed exactly the same or got worse. And somewhere in the waiting, a question crept in: is anybody actually listening?

Here's what might surprise you. The Bible is full of that exact question. God didn't edit it out:

How long, LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart?

PSALM 13:1-2 (NIV)

That's King David, a man the Bible calls a man after God's own heart, flat out asking God, "Have You forgotten me?" And God put it in the Book. Which tells you something: honest frustration isn't the opposite of faith. It's part of it. You can bring God your doubts. You can even bring God your anger. God's not fragile.

But look how David's same prayer ends, just four verses later:

But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing the LORD's praise, for he has been good to me.

PSALM 13:5-6 (NIV)

Nothing about David's situation changed between verse 1 and verse 5. What changed was David, because he kept talking to God through the silence instead of walking away from it.

Something else needs saying plainly, because a lot of teenagers carry this one in secret. When a prayer about your family doesn't get answered the way you wanted, it is not because you didn't pray hard enough, or believe enough, or because of something you did. Grown people's choices belong to grown people. You didn't cause it, and you couldn't have prayed it away. That was never your job.

What we've learned in twenty years of ministry: God answers every prayer, but not always the way we ordered. Sometimes the answer is yes. Sometimes it's not yet, and you can't see why from where you're standing. Sometimes it's no, because God has something you couldn't think to ask for. And sometimes you won't get the explanation on this side of heaven. We've prayed hard for people and lost them anyway. We've also watched God do things nobody thought were possible. Both are true. We keep praying, not because prayer is a formula that always pays out, but because prayer keeps us connected to the One who holds it all.

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

1 JOHN 5:14 (NIV)

God hears you. Silence isn't absence. Waiting isn't rejection. Keep talking.

TRY IT: PRAY THE FRUSTRATION

Stop performing and tell the truth, like David did: *"God, I've been praying about _____ and nothing's changing. I don't understand. But I'm not leaving. Help me trust Your unfailing love while I wait."*

Praying for More Than Yourself

This is where prayer stops being a private thing and starts changing the people around you.

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-18 (NIV)

Pray continually doesn't mean kneel for 24 hours. It means prayer becomes the running conversation underneath your whole day. Before the test, pray. Walking into the cafeteria, pray. Before the game, pray. When your phone buzzes with news you didn't want, pray. When something good happens, say thank You.

And most people never figure this part out: prayer isn't only for your own stuff. It's one of the most powerful things you can do for somebody else.

The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

JAMES 5:16 (NIV)

Before you object: "righteous" doesn't mean perfect. It means made right with God through Jesus, which is exactly what God offers anybody who comes. Your prayers for your friends, your family, your school? Powerful and effective. That's God's Word, not ours.

So who needs your prayers? Think about it. The friend who's been quiet lately. Your mom, who's more tired than she lets on. The kid who eats alone. And yes, the person who's been mean to you. Jesus said to pray for people like that (Matthew 5:44), and it's one of the strangest and most powerful things you'll ever try. It doesn't mean what they did was okay. It means you're refusing to let them live rent free in your head.

At Community of Hope, we've built our whole ministry on this. Prayer is behind everything we do, from feeding families to showing up in dark places to be light. We tell our members plainly: we need God's help to do this. More prayer, more power.

The world doesn't need more people complaining in the comments. It needs more people talking to God about the problem, then getting up to be part of the answer. Prayer fuels action.

So start small and start real. Pray for one person by name every day this week. Pray over your house. Pray on the way to school. Watch what happens, not just around you, but in you. Because the first life prayer changes is always your own. You start leaving every conversation with God a little more like the person God made you to be.

TRY IT: PRAY FOR SOMEBODY ELSE

Think of one person who's struggling right now. Pray: "God, I lift up _____ to You. You see what they're carrying. Be close to them today the way You've been close to me. Show me if there's something You want me to do for them, and give me the courage to do it."

You've probably got questions nobody answered because you were afraid to ask them. Here are some we hear a lot. Short answers, and nobody's judging.

DOES IT COUNT IF I PRAY LYING IN BED?

Yes. Posture isn't the point. People in the Bible prayed standing, kneeling, lying face down, and walking. God is listening to your heart, not checking your form.

DO I HAVE TO CLOSE MY EYES?

No. Closing your eyes just helps some people focus. If you're praying while you walk to school, keep them open.

IS IT WEIRD TO PRAY ABOUT A CRUSH? OR A GAME? OR A TEST?

Not at all. If it matters to you, it matters to God. God cares about the small stuff because God cares about you. Pray about the crush. Pray about the tryout. Just be ready for God to care more about who you're becoming than about whether you get what you asked for.

WHAT IF I DON'T FEEL ANYTHING?

Most people don't feel anything most of the time. Feelings come and go. Prayer isn't about producing a feeling; it's about showing up. Some of the most faithful people in history prayed for years through dry seasons. Keep showing up. God's there whether you feel it or not.

WHAT IF NOBODY AT MY HOUSE PRAYS OR BELIEVES?

Then you might be the first. That's not a problem, that's a beginning. You don't need anybody's permission to talk to God, and you don't have to announce it. Go back to Chapter 1: close the

door. God meets you where you are, even if that's the only quiet corner in the house.

CAN I BE MAD AT GOD?

Yes. Read Psalm 13 again. David was mad and said so, and God kept it in the Bible. Being mad at God and still talking to God is faith. Being mad and walking away is the part to avoid.

WHAT IF I MESS UP RIGHT AFTER I PRAY?

Then you pray again. That's the whole point of grace. Nobody in the Bible got it right on the first try, and God kept working with them. You're not starting over from zero. You're picking up where you left off.

DO I HAVE TO USE THE WORD "AMEN"?

"Amen" just means "yes, I mean it." Use it if you want. God's not waiting on a sign off to hear you.

WHAT IF I'M NOT SURE I BELIEVE IN GOD?

Pray anyway. Seriously. "God, if You're real, show me" is a real prayer, and God has answered that one for a lot of people. There's a version of it in the toolbox on the next page.

Prayers You Can Borrow

Sometimes you don't need a lesson. You need words, right now. Borrow these. Say them exactly as written, or change them until they sound like you.

WHEN YOU'RE NOT SURE YOU BELIEVE YET

"God, if You're real, and if You're listening, I want to know. I've got doubts and I've got questions, but I'm bringing them to You instead of hiding from You. Meet me where I am. Show me who You are. Amen."

BEFORE SCHOOL

"God, thank You for waking me up. I don't know everything today holds, but You do. Help me pay attention. Help me keep my cool. Put me next to somebody who needs a friend, and keep me away from what's not for me. Amen."

WHEN YOUR BRAIN WON'T STOP

"God, my thoughts are racing and I can't make them stop. Your Word says not to be anxious about anything, but to bring everything to You. So here it is, all of it. Trade me: my worry for Your peace. Guard my heart and my mind right now, in Jesus's name. Amen."

WHEN YOU MESSED UP

"God, I did something I can't take back, and I'm tired of carrying it. You said it's never too late to start over. Forgive me. Help me make it right where I can. And help me not do it again. Amen."

WHEN SOMEBODY HURT YOU

"God, You saw what happened. It wasn't okay, and I'm not going to pretend it was. Heal what it did to me. Help me not carry it around

forever. And I'm going to do the hard thing and ask You to deal with them too, because I'd rather leave that in Your hands than mine. Amen."

WHEN THINGS AT HOME ARE BAD

"God, I can't fix what's going on in my house. I'm asking You to. Protect the people I love, even when they're the problem. Give me somebody safe to talk to. And remind me this isn't my fault. Amen."

FOR A FRIEND WHO'S GOING THROUGH IT

"God, You know who's on my heart right now. I can't fix what they're dealing with, but You can. Be close to them. Protect them. Show me how to be a good friend to them this week. Amen."

WHEN SOMETHING GOOD HAPPENED

"God, before I ask You for anything else: thank You. For today. For the people who've got my back. For the stuff I didn't earn. You've been good to me. Amen."

GIVING YOUR LIFE TO JESUS

"Jesus, I believe You died on the cross for me and rose again. I've been doing life my way, and I'm ready to do it Yours. Forgive my sins. Come into my life. I'm Yours, starting today. Amen."

If you just prayed that last prayer and meant it: welcome to the family. Seriously. Tell somebody you trust. If you're near us, come see us Sunday so we can celebrate you. (Details in the back of this book.)

The 7 Day Prayer Starter

One verse, one thing to try, one prayer. Five minutes. Don't aim for perfect, aim for present. Miss a day? Pick up where you left off. It's never too late to keep going.

DAY 1: JUST SHOW UP

"The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth." Psalm 145:18 (NIV)

PRACTICE: Find two quiet minutes. Tell God honestly why you're doing this, even if the reason is "somebody gave me a book."

PRAY: "God, I'm showing up. Meet me here."

DAY 2: SAY THANK YOU

"Give thanks in all circumstances." 1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NIV)

PRACTICE: Name five things you're grateful for, out loud or in your Notes app. Small things count. Your favorite song counts.

PRAY: "God, thank You. You've done more for me than I noticed."

DAY 3: GET HONEST

"Pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge." Psalm 62:8 (NIV)

PRACTICE: Tell God the one thing you've been avoiding saying. The fear, the anger, the secret. God can take it.

PRAY: "God, here's the real me. Thank You for staying."

DAY 4: ASK BIG

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find." Matthew 7:7 (NIV)

PRACTICE: Ask God for the thing you've been afraid to ask for. Write it down with today's date, so you can look back later.

PRAY: "God, You said ask. So I'm asking: _____."

DAY 5: PRAY FOR SOMEONE ELSE

"The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." James 5:16 (NIV)

PRACTICE: Pray for three people by name. Bonus move: text one of them, "I prayed for you today." Watch what it does.

PRAY: "God, bless them the way You've blessed me."

DAY 6: PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER

"This, then, is how you should pray..." Matthew 6:9 (NIV)

PRACTICE: Pray the Lord's Prayer slowly (it's in Chapter 4). Pause after each line and put it in your own words.

PRAY: "Our Father in heaven... Your will be done in my life."

DAY 7: LISTEN

"Be still, and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10 (NIV)

PRACTICE: Set a timer for three minutes. Phone face down. No music. Just sit with God. If your mind wanders, come back with one word: "Father."

PRAY: "God, I'm listening. What do You want me to know?"

Day 8 and beyond? Run it back. Mix the days. Stretch five minutes into ten. You're not finishing a program. You're building a relationship. Keep talking.

WHEN YOU NEED MORE THAN A BOOK

Some things are too heavy to handle with a book and a prayer alone, and God never asked you to. If any of these are true for you, please don't keep it to yourself:

You've been thinking about hurting yourself, or that people would be better off without you.

Somebody is hurting you, at home or anywhere else.

You feel sad, numb, or scared most days, and it's been going on for weeks.

You're using something (substances, food, your phone, anything) to not feel what you feel.

Tell a trusted adult today. A parent, a grandparent, an aunt or uncle, a teacher, a coach, a school counselor, a pastor. If the first person doesn't listen, tell the next one. Keep going until somebody does.

CALL OR TEXT 988. That's the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. It's free, it's 24 hours a day, and a real person answers. You don't have to be in an emergency to call. You just have to need somebody.

IF YOU'RE IN DANGER RIGHT NOW, CALL 911.

Praying people get help. Getting help is not a lack of faith. It's one of the ways God answers prayer.

Look these up in any Bible or Bible app (YouVersion is free). Read the verses around them. That's where the good stuff hides.

- Psalm 13:1-2, 5-6
- Psalm 34:17-18
- Psalm 46:10
- Psalm 62:8
- Psalm 139:1-4
- Psalm 145:18
- Jeremiah 1:6-7
- Jeremiah 29:11
- Matthew 5:44
- Matthew 6:6
- Matthew 6:7-8
- Matthew 6:9-13
- Matthew 7:7-8
- Luke 11:1
- Luke 18:13
- Romans 8:26
- Philippians 4:6-8
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
- 1 Timothy 4:12
- James 5:16
- 1 John 5:14

Soli Deo Gloria

You're Invited

Prayer was never meant to be a solo sport. You can absolutely talk to God on your own. This whole book has been about that. But something happens when you pray with other people that doesn't happen any other way. Somebody's got your back. Somebody notices when you're not okay. Somebody's cheering when you win. That's what church is supposed to be, and if you've never had a church like that, we're sorry, and we'd like to be the first.

Community of Hope AME Church started in 2006 in a nightclub with eight people, because we believe church should meet people where they actually live. Twenty years in the making, that hasn't changed. We preach Jesus unapologetically. We go into dark places and call it being the light. And we mean our name: this is a community where everyone, everyone, has a chance. We don't care how you come. Come with doubts. Come with a past. Come in whatever you wore yesterday. We only care about the way you leave.

PULL UP SUNDAY

If you're in the DC and Maryland area: Sundays at 10:00 AM, Crossland High School, 6901 Temple Hill Rd, Camp Springs, MD 20748. Yes, a high school. You'll fit right in.

NOT NEAR US?

Watch live on YouTube: @hiphopenationtv · Facebook: @CmtyofHope · Web: www.hiphopenation.com. And find a church near you where people actually pray for each other. They're out there.

NEED PRAYER RIGHT NOW?

Reach us at info@hiphopenation.com or 240-273-9115. Our team prays over every request. That's not a formality. It's the engine of this church.

We'll save you a seat.

— Rev. Tony Lee & the Community of Hope family

where everyone has a chance.

*Prayer without the performance. For
teens who'd rather be real than religious.*

WWW.HIPHOPENATION.COM