

# The Jesus Prayer



*Originating with the desert fathers and mothers, the Jesus Prayer has been a core practice in the Eastern Orthodox church ever since. The prayer involves the repetition of one phrase:*

**Lord Jesus Christ,  
Son of the living God,  
have mercy on me (a sinner).**

*The repetition is not simply a meditative technique, in Orthodox understanding, the name of God is synonymous with the presence of God. Uttering this prayer draws us into the presence of God and to participate in his grace. The words in brackets are a later addition and can be omitted.*

## **Praying the Jesus Prayer**

*The prayer can be used in a group or by an individual. If used in a group, one person leads each repetition. It can be done whilst sitting down using the rhythm of breathing or walking slowly using the rhythm of steps. Some people find prayer beads helpful too.*

- Set aside some time - 10 minutes works well
- Slow your breathing and calm your mind and body
- Breathe in and say **Lord Jesus Christ** as you breathe out.
- With the next breath say **Son of the living God** as you breathe out
- With the next breath say **have mercy on me (a sinner)**
- Breathe slowly in silence for a couple of breaths and repeat.

*With practice this prayer becomes a habit, like breathing, and can be prayed silently throughout the day for an awareness of the the presence of God and intercession for a world in need of mercy and grace.*

