



WORD OF LIFE CHURCH
FORMATION SCHOOL

The Jesus Prayer

In the Orthodox tradition the Jesus Prayer is prayed repeatedly, sometimes even one hundred times or more at a given time. Inevitably people will ask about repeating this prayer over and over because of Jesus' warning about vain repetition when we pray (Matthew 6:7). But Jesus' prohibition regarding prayer is not the repetition itself, but *empty* repetition, that is, praying in a heartless, detached, kind of way. The presence of mind and the attentiveness of heart when we pray is what Jesus is striving for.

The words of the Jesus Prayer aren't empty. Each word and phrase is full of meaning. By focusing on their meaning, we can more fully enter into them and heed Jesus' warning.

We pray this prayer slowly, giving attention to each word. As we pray, envision Jesus upon the cross, dying as the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Take a deep breath, exhale, and then let's pray this together ten times.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me. (10x)