

# Welcoming Prayer

A practice used to invite God into the unsettling physical and emotional reactions to the events and situations of daily life.

**1 Peter 5:7 “Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”**

In times when we find ourselves overwhelmed by difficult or unpleasant feelings and emotions, our natural tendency is to avoid them or push them away, when what we really need is to bring them into the presence of God. Welcoming prayer offers a structured way to embrace and then release those unsettling feelings into the hands of our good and gracious God.

**Accept:** Begin by accepting the unsettling feeling or emotion (anxiety, fear, anger, grief, sadness, loneliness, etc.). Don't shove it down or push it away. The point of this step isn't to wallow in the struggle but to simply be present with it.

**Welcome:** It is difficult to move forward until you can accept where you are. As such, affirm where you are by welcoming the unsettling feeling or emotion. If you are overrun by fear, say, “I welcome fear.” If you are undone by anxiety say, “I welcome anxiety.” Don't just say this once and move on. Stay with it until you are no longer fighting against the feeling or emotion. Acknowledge God's presence with you and listen for anything he might want to say through the Holy Spirit.

**Let go:** At this point, simply say, “God, I give you my [fear, anxiety, rage, etc.]” Here is where you take a step towards turning your unsettling feelings or emotions over to God.

This is not a ‘do it once and it's over’ exercise. It is one you may find yourself revisiting over and over again as you learn to release your cares to God.