

= Pray ( Justin Bieber song ) =

" Pray " is a song performed by Canadian recording artist Justin Bieber . The song was written by Bieber along with Omar Martinez and Adam Messinger and Nasri of The Messengers , with the latter duo producing the track . The song is taken as a single in several European countries from his first compilation album , My Worlds : The Collection . In the United States and Canada , the song is included on My Worlds Acoustic . According to Bieber , he was inspired by Michael Jackson 's " Man in the Mirror " ( 1988 ) when writing the song . The song is a contemporary Christian song , while deriving from pop and R & B influences , and using a world music backdrop . It primarily features acoustic instruments , however does make small usages of electronic sounds .

" Pray " received generally positive reviews , with critics appreciating the message portrayed in the song . It reached the lower half on the singles charts in Germany and Austria , and charted in several regions where it was not released as a single such as the United States and Australia . The song 's music video premiered on Facebook on December 11 , 2010 . The video , which also has religious undertones , features clips of places affected by natural disasters , sick children , possessed homes , and more , which are intercut with Bieber performing . Bieber debuted and performed the song on the American Music Awards , accompanied by a full choir .

= = Background and composition = =

" Pray " was written by Omar Martinez and Adam Messinger and Nasri Atweh of The Messengers . While Bieber was being interviewed by Ryan Seacrest on his radio show , Bieber talked about the songs initial writing stating the song was influenced by Michael Jackson , Bieber elaborated , " It 's a very uplifting song , very motivational . It definitely comes from the heart . It 's very beautiful . I definitely thought of Michael [ Jackson 's ] ' Man in the Mirror ' when I was writing it . " The song was released as a CD single in Germany on December 3 , 2010 . " Pray " is a mid @-@ tempo song that uses a " world @-@ music beat " as a backing . According to the sheet music published at Musicnotes.com by Universal Music Group , " Pray " is set in common time with a tempo of 80 beats per minute . It is composed in the key of B major with Bieber 's vocal range spanning from the low @-@ note of F ? 3 to the high @-@ note of B4 . The song follows in the chord progression of B / G ? ? B / F ? ? E ? B.

Present throughout the songs background is the use of violins and a choir , as well as guitar , string instruments , congas and a cajon . However it does make subtle use of synths and electronic sounds . Musically and lyrically , it is influenced by Contemporary Christian music , and has a gospel feel , while including standard pop and R & B. The song opens with Bieber singing , " And I pray " over a keyboard , while the song 's chorus repeats one simple refrain , " I close my eyes and I can see a better day / I close my eyes and pray . " In the lyrics , Bieber " recognizes the pain and suffering in the world " and then offers " a passive solution " through lines such as " Children are crying / soldiers are dying / Some people don 't have a home , " before compromising , " I know there 's sunshine beyond that rain / good times beyond that pain . " Vocally , Bieber 's vocals are sung in a lower key compared to previous singles .

= = Critical reception = =

Referring to the song as a " junior varsity " take on " Man in the Mirror " , Allison Stewart of Washington Post said " as an indicator of the Bieb 's awakening social consciousness , it 's a good start . " Melinda Newman of HitFix called the song a " lovely testament to the power of prayer , " commenting that it was " for True Believers , not just True Beliebers " Calling it Bieber 's " Man in the Mirror " moment , Newman also said while it did not have the " staying power or resonance of the Michael Jackson classic , " she said the themes of how to effect change were the same . Lucy Jones of The Daily Telegraph noted the song as a recommended download from the album . Dan Savoie of Rockstar Weekly said the song " is a more advanced lyric and shows a more political side to the young singer , but the gospel feel of the song really works with his voice . " Savoie went on to

say " The song just moved Bieber from the category of pop child star to responsible young man . " Monica Herrera of Billboard wrote that the song was " a treacly but well @-@ meaning ballad that taps into Bieber 's spiritual beliefs . " Katie Amoroso of ReviewStream.com writes , " The song itself is less poppy and more natural than other Justin songs and shows strong musical talent . Many have commented that the song made them emotional ... promotes deep thought on our impact on the world "

= = Chart performance = =

" Pray " was only released as a single in select European countries , and had moderate success . On the Belgian Flanders Tip chart , the song charted at number five , while on the Belgian Tip chart for Wallonia , the song charted at number fifteen . On the Austrian Singles Chart , " Pray " peaked at number sixty @-@ five , spending a week on the chart . " Pray " debuted at fifty @-@ one on the German Singles Chart , and spent eight weeks on the chart . Despite not being released as a single in these countries , due to sales after the digital releases of My Worlds : The Collection and My Worlds Acoustic , " Pray " debuted at number ninety @-@ four on the Australian Singles Chart , and number 112 on the UK Singles Chart . It also debuted at number ninety @-@ one in the US Billboard Hot 100 and reached number sixty @-@ one the following week .

= = Music video = =

In the music video , Bieber highlights several social injustices around the world . Clips are shown from footage of earthquake @-@ torn Haiti , a suffering post @-@ Katrina New Orleans , and Bieber himself visiting sick children in hospital beds . More scenes feature military soldiers being reunited with their families , and homes being possessed because families cannot pay mortgage . The video is intercut with scenes of Bieber performing . Like the song itself , the video also includes religious undertones , including the video ending with the quote , " God speaks in the silence of the heart . Listening is the beginning of prayer . " Bill Lamb of About.com likened the video to the saying , " There are times when putting pictures to the words does indeed make a song more powerful than simply listening to the track . " Calling the video " outstanding for the holiday season " Lamb said the theme of " bringing hope and joy into the lives of others " related to " the celebrations that bring all of us together in hope for a brighter future for our world . "

= = Live performance = =

" Pray " debuted and was performed for the first time at the 2010 American Music Awards . The performance opened with Bieber sitting playing the piano while singing . Midway through the performance Bieber arose from the piano and took center stage , he was accompanied by a choir singing background vocals . The performance was ended with Bieber kneeling singing the songs title , the performance was greeted by standing ovation from the audience . According to Jocelyn Vena of MTV News Bieber , " threw in that showmanship that 's made him famous . " Thomas Conner of Chicago Sun @-@ Times noted Bieber as the standout performance of the night , saying it was proof that he could sing , besting " the wavering pitches " of Taylor Swift and Miley Cyrus .

= = Track listing = =

Classic single

" Pray "

" U Smile " ( Acoustic Version )

= = Charts = =