

The Disciplined Intercessor

Are you tired of falling asleep when you pray? Do you have difficulty staying at the business of prayer, or find your mind wandering to a thousand other things? Are you still struggling to spend a daily time with God, let alone extended prayer times? Discover the power of “focused” prayer that begins with regular times of intimacy with God.



Focus on God

Intimacy with God is often a missing link in our prayer lives. Too frequently we rush into prayers and petitions without tuning our hearts, minds, and spirits to God himself. God has instructed us in the way into his presence in Psalm 100. Let us be careful to wait on the Lord. *“Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise, be thankful and bless His name.”*

Be Still - Be Worshipful - Be Thankful



Focus on You

The second part of our prayer time is personal in nature. It is a time to rend our hearts and not our garments. It is time to allow God to shine the searchlight of his Spirit into our hearts to *“see if there is any wicked way in me...”* We know that *“If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me.”* Therefore we should spend significant time in personal examination before God.

Confess Sin - Clothe Yourself - Cast Burdens

Intimate Times With God

A Prayer Strategy

Biblical Steps to
Intimacy With God



by Richard W.LaFountain

Introduction

A number of years ago now I began to pray in earnest, "Lord teach me to pray!" Though many complimented me on my personal disciplines and my prayer life I was acutely aware that I was falling far short of what God expected for me. My prayer life was sporadic and not very exciting. I was busy in the fields of the Lord but my romance with my Creator was dying. "I was lukewarm" -- at least in prayer.

I began to search the Scriptures for teachings on prayer and in so doing I discovered some important and neglected elements of prayer in my life. For many years prayer to me had been "asking." Prayer was not a refreshing interlude with God -- It was work! As I examined my prayer life I found that I was predominantly a beggar before the throne of God. I kept slipping into asking, begging, and pleading with God and most often for my own needs. How could I prevail in prayer for others when I was so needy? Then God taught me that there was a way to deal with my needs and put them away so that I could pray for others.

As I walked through the Scriptures on prayer I discovered "undiscovered territories". There were things God teaches us about prayer that I never experienced, practiced, or saw evidenced in other believer's lives. I began to compile the truths about "how to pray" and came up with 12 steps of intercessory prayer. It was time to embark on a new journey into the adventure of prayer.

These lessons are the result of years of study and practice. My hope is that they will be to you what they have become to me - precious treasures of God.

The Struggle To Pray

Most of us, if we were honest about it, struggle with prayer. We don't pray enough, and we don't pray as we ought. Our lives are so busy from dawn to dark that there is little, if any, time for quiet moments alone with God. We trade our walk with God for a pot of porridge. We cheat ourselves out of the richest experiences God has to offer by not learning the art of intercessory prayer.

Prayer Is Not Easy

Intercessory prayer is not easy. It does not come naturally. It must be learned in the school of personal discipline. It will not come to us. We must pursue it. We must want it badly enough to sacrifice treasured activities to have it. For years I read material about the prayer lives of great men of God, how they prayed for many hours. They knew God. They enjoyed his presence. They walked with God. I wanted that!

A Desperate Prayer

A number of years ago now I began to pray in earnest, "Lord teach me to pray!" Though many complimented me on my personal disciplines and my prayer life I was acutely aware that I was falling far short of what God expected of me. My prayer life was sporadic and not very exciting. I was busy in the fields of the Lord but my romance with my Creator was dying. I was "lukewarm" -- at least in prayer. I prayed that prayer every day for two years. "Teach me to pray, Lord. I don't know how to pray. I know about prayer, but I don't pray as I ought. Please, teach me to pray."

Search the Scriptures

I began to search the Scriptures for teachings on prayer and in so doing I discovered some important and neglected elements of prayer in my life. For many years prayer to me had been "asking." Prayer was not a refreshing interlude with God -- It was work! As I examined my prayer life I found that I was predominantly a beggar before the throne of God. I kept slipping into asking, begging, and pleading with God and most often for my own needs. How could I prevail in prayer for others when I was so needy? Then God taught me that there was a way to deal with my needs and put them away so that I could pray for others.

New Discoveries

As I walked through the Scriptures on prayer I discovered "undiscovered territories". There were things God teaches us about prayer that I never experienced, practiced, or saw evidenced in other believer's lives. I began to compile the truths about "how to pray" and came up with 12 Steps of Intercessory Prayer. It was time to embark on a new journey into the adventure of prayer. I discovered there is a way to come into God's presence in such a way that sleepiness never overtakes you. I discovered a way to stay in the presence of God and enjoy it immensely. I found ways to wait on the Lord and listen to Him in which you pray what is on the heart of God, not what's on your heart. I have discovered how to pray the purposes of God, in the will of God the way God intended.

This Book

This book is the result of years of study, practice, and struggle in the art of prayer. It is born out of the struggle that all of us feel. My hope is that they will be to you what they have become to me - precious treasures of God. Is it perfect? No. Am I perfect in my prayer life? No. But I am far richer because of it. This booklet is designed to be a guide to intercessory prayer. It is a training tool. Use it on a regular basis to develop skills as a Biblical intercessor.

Personal Prayer Trainer

Welcome to my closet of prayer. I invite you to come into my private place of prayer. Please close the door behind you, (Jesus said to do so) and sit in silence as you watch me pray. I am not your guru or teacher. I am your prayer coach. This is a training course in intercessory prayer. It is a prayer strategy based on 12 Biblical Steps of Intercession. This intercessory prayer time is to be divided into two parts: Intimacy and then Intercession. It begins with your relationship to God in "Intimacy." Daniel says, "*They who know their God will be strong and do exploits.*" (Daniel 11:32b) Daniel knew God because he spent many disciplined hours alone with him.

This intimacy begins with the simple discipline of "being still" and grows from there. We start with learning to be quiet in God's presence and so, to hear His whispers. It is about intimacy, not getting things from God. It is about relationship, not about telling God all the world's needs. Begin small by learning the first step. It will take you awhile. It took me a good year to learn to be still. I still struggle with it. We are not used to being still or listening to God's whisper. It takes time. It takes patience, but you can learn it.

Begin with one step, the first step. Learn it well until you can discipline yourself to spend three minutes on it without distraction. A three-minute egg timer will become your best friend as you seek to discipline your mind and heart in prayer.

It is extremely important to spend adequate time in preparation for intercession since that is the discipline most often neglected or missing altogether in our times of intercession. It is important because God says it is.

Intimacy Before Intercession

“Are you known at the throne?” There is an interesting event in the 19th chapter of the book of Acts. Paul is preaching in Ephesus, and God is doing great wonders among the spiritist people. Two Jews take it on themselves to cast out demons like Paul, using the name of Jesus as their magic words. It didn’t work. Jesus name is not a magic word, it represents a relationship. Without the relationship, there is no power in using his name. So the demons jumped all over these clever fellows, but before doing so they left us with a clear spiritual insight. They said, “Jesus we know, and Paul we know, but who are you?”

You see Jesus was known in heavenly places because of who he is. Even the demons knew him in his ministry as Son of David, who came to destroy them. He, Jesus, was mighty in prayer. Paul was a follower of Jesus, but he also developed intimacy with God in his closet of prayer, so that he was a familiar face before the throne of God, and evidently a terrifying spectacle to demons as well. Paul was known around the throne! Paul was known in spiritual realms as a friend of God, and therefore a force to be reckoned with. God fought for him. Are you known at the throne?

Jesus calls us to develop an intimate relationship with him and the Father by becoming frequent visitors before the throne. This is why Paul could say in Hebrews 4:12, “*Therefore, (since we are intimate with the Son of God) let us come boldly to the throne of grace to find mercy and grace to help in the time of need.*” The secret was not some pretended, forced, or ad-libbed boldness of “name-it and claim-it” before the throne, but a natural result of intimacy with God developed over long hours, days, months, and years of being a regular worshipper around the throne.

The lesson is clear. We are not magicians before the throne, magically calling things into existence by using the mighty name of Jesus, but we are “friends of God” known at the throne, and therefore feared by demons. William Cowper said it rightly in his work, Exhortation to Prayer, “Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees.”

Early in my ministry one of my favorite books on prayer was by the notable Baptist preacher, John R. Rice. One of his

memorable chapters was titled, “Prayer Is Asking.” One can easily be drawn into that kind of understanding of prayer but it is not quite true. Part of prayer is asking, but “*before the asking comes the basking.*” We need to learn to bask in the presence of God, to revel in God himself, to soak ourselves in the presence of the Almighty, to hide beneath his wing, to take refuge in his everlasting arms. God seeks such to worship him who would worship (pray) in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24) Daniel reminds us that prayer is a relationship, “*but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.*” (Daniel 11:32 KJV)

Worship comes before wishing, wanting, or wallowing. We are not beggars before the throne. We are sons. Sons who only know their Father as Santa Claus are not sons. True sons revel in the relationship of their loving Father. The “stuff” they get as an overflow from the relationship, not a manipulation of it. Prayer is not asking. Prayer is living in the presence of God. Prayer is loving God and letting ourselves be loved by Him. We must learn that prayer is a love relationship. If it is anything else it is no different than the prayers of all other religions – it becomes merely an attempt to manipulate God for our own benefit. Only when we see prayer as a relationship can we understand the exhortation, “*Pray without ceasing.*” (I Thessalonians 5:17)

As I entered the school of prayer with Jesus as my instructor his first words, and only words for a year or more were, “*Be still and know that I am God.*” (Psalm 46:10)

Time With God

We Are Creatures of Habit.

We get up every morning about the same time, we run through the same routines as though diligently memorized – Turn off the alarm, use to bathroom, turn on the coffee, take a shower, brush your teeth, shave, comb your hair, dress, sit down for a brief coffee and breakfast, and off to work.

Sound familiar? Perhaps your routine is somewhat different than mine, but it is a routine nonetheless. We all establish routines, or habits. It is the way we live. We generally swing a golf club the way we always have, we drive with the same idiosyncrasies we always did, we dress a certain way, comb our hair the same every day. We even have patterns for the way we brush our teeth!

We Are In a Rat Race.

In the western world we all fall into macro-habits, along with the rest of our nation. Generally, we let the world squeeze us into its mold. Conformity keeps us from standing out like sore thumbs. George Barna, of Barna Research Foundation, has found that by in large American Christians are not much different than the culture around them. They spend money the same, they watch the same amount of television, and the same programs. They have about the same stated values, incur about as much debt, read the same newspapers and magazines, and go to church 2.5 times per month. It is as though we were automatons, mass-produced clones of a post-industrial age, or cookie-cutter Christians stamped out in the same factory with little or no variety from the rest of the cheaply produced wares of an over-commercialized society.

Did You Ever Watch a Gerbil?

It is fascinating what a little rat can teach us! Gerbils are glorified rats, domesticated as house pets, shoved in cages, fed pellets, and basically stink up the house. Gerbils are known for their nocturnal hyper-activity. Every night, though they should know better by now, they climb aboard their spinning wheel and begin the race of a lifetime, chasing who-knows-what to get who-knows-where, just as fast as their little stinky feet can carry them. So what's the point?

Who knows but they all do it, and always have as far as we know, so the habit goes on and on generation after generation. Parents teach it to their children (monkey see monkey do), those children in turn pass it on to their offspring and so on it goes.

We are just like gerbils. We run the same gambit of spinning wheels that our ancestors did before us. We pattern ourselves to run the rat race, perhaps believing against hope that we will somehow run it faster than our predecessors and win some glorious prize. (Yummy! Another box of pellets!) What is the point anyway?

We see Christians falling into the same ruts with the rest of the world, running faster and faster, earning and spending more than their predecessors, and all the while asking themselves, “What am I doing anyway?” Heart attacks, strokes, nervous breakdowns, divorces, are just as prevalent among Christians as with their counterparts in the world. STOP THE WORLD I WANT TO GET OFF!

It Was Not Always This Way.

There was a time when Christians found the secret of a fulfilling life. Years ago saints on every continent knew the secret of joy and true satisfaction that comes from an intimate walk with God. There is a cost to that walk. It cannot be had while with hold hands with the world and run to the beat of their drums. God speaks to his children of every age and calls to them in quiet whispers, “*Be still and know that I am God.*” and again, “*In quietness and confidence would be your strength...*”

Unfortunately, as with the people of Israel, so it is with us. The epitaph is the same, – “*but you would not.*” Throughout the centuries God has had his called-out-ones, the Augustine's, the Francis of Assisi's, the AW Tozer's, who longing and heart's desire is to know God.

Choose Ye This Day

Solomon said it well for all of us, “*There is a way that appears right unto man but then end of it is the ways of death.*” The choice is yours. It is chosen every day of your life. We are not talking here in this booklet about a newfangled prayer fad, or some fantastic or novel prayer technique or discovery. We are talking about a decision to change our lifestyles, beginning with our prayer lifestyle. It is a decision to become “men and women apart,” ones who daunt to walk with God as Enoch, Moses, and Elijah. Men and women who consider it more important to be known at the throne in heavenly places than to be rich and famous in earthly values. Men and women who are willing to trade all the riches of Egypt to sit at the feet of the Master and know Him, whom to know is life eternal.

In this book we will talk much about time and stillness for that is the crisis of our age – so many time-saving technologies, but little time for the Savior. Our challenge is not so much of strategy as it is of priorities. We challenge you to change your life, by changing your life aspirations. We challenge you to change the way you do prayer, and begin living a life of prayer. We challenge you to sacrifice sacred time – minutes, hours, yes, even days and weeks, to the Savior’s call to come apart.

**Little with God
means
Little for God**

Intimacy Is Learned The Power of an Hour

Practice Makes Better

Any discipline takes practice. Focus is the essential ingredient of this prayer plan. It is not about talking at God but listening to him that brings about a new level of intimacy. Learn each step one at a time. The key is to start with the first step and learn to be silent first. Once you begin to master yourself you will find new freedom in prayer. The joy of God’s presence will surround you and inundate you.

Three Minute Prayer Meeting

This prayer strategy can be as short as three minutes. Take three minutes on each step. Take a full three minutes for each step and it will then take 18 minutes to complete all six steps. Eighteen minutes a day can change your prayer life forever. You will want to start each day with the intimacy steps and use that as your prayer pattern .

When you learn all of them begin small with one minute on each. From there grow strong and disciplined in your intercession. You may not be able to do this plan every day but while you are learning it make yourself do it every day for 4-6 weeks. That will build habit into your prayer time. Then use the plan several times a week for intense intercession.

Use it in your all-day prayer retreats or in extended times of fasting and prayer. Expand your exercise from 3 minutes to an hour on each step. You will find it easy then to do an all-night or all-day prayer retreat, or even a weekend or three-day retreat. The amazing result will be that you will end each prayer session longing for more!

The Three-Minute Timer



I suggest that you use a timer to keep yourself focused and to spend an equal amount of time on each. It takes work. Your mind is not used to focusing on one item. Your spirit is not disciplined and will want to hurry. Do not hurry! Spend time with God. That is what intercession is all about. It is not about asking many things from God. Spend time with God getting to know Him in unhurried preparation. Bathe yourself in prayer.

My mind is like a wild stallion, not wanting to be tamed, refusing to be ruled. It wanders wherever it wishes. It speeds ahead to the agenda of the day. It clamors for its own way. It refuses to be bridled. It won't be still. Peter tells us to bring it under control. *"Gird up the loins of your mind."* (1 Peter 1:13) Put a girdle on it! Fasten it down. Make it do what you order it to. Paul says, *"Bring every thought into the captivity of Christ."* (2 Cor. 10:5)

I have found that it is virtually impossible for my busy mind to be still. So, I found a simple tool that helps me discipline my mind. It is a 3-minute timer. I use the three-minute egg timer to keep myself focused and to spend a disciplined amount of time on each step of intercession. It is hard. It takes work. It demands time. Make yourself do it.

I begin with BE STILL and force myself to lay quietly on my face before God asking him to help me be obedient and be still. Then I push things out of my mind by saying "No" to them. I demand a complete 3 minutes of a quiet mind and heart before allowing myself to go on.

I punish (discipline) my mind for wandering by tacking on another 3-minutes when I perceive that my mind has not been quiet - that is, it has not been brought into subjection to the obedience of Christ. "Be still" is a command, not a suggestion!

Sometimes it takes me five or six flips of the timer until my spirit and mind begin to slow down and obey. That's 18 minutes! I have had to spend as much as 36 minutes getting quiet in God's presence before moving on. Hurry is the enemy of prayer. Hurry and busy-ness is what has always kept you out of God's throne room. Satan knows that if he can get us worried about going somewhere, or doing some thing, we will not be where we should be to receive God's approval and blessing.

Your mind is not used to focusing on one item. Your spirit is not disciplined and will want to hurry. Do not hurry! It is Satan who is pushing you out of the presence of God. Corral that wild stallion! Make yourself spend time with God. That is what intercession is all about. It is not about asking many things from God. Spend time with God getting to know Him in unhurried preparation. God did not come to Adam in the cool of the day to check up on his progress or productivity in the garden of Eden. God came to spend time with his friend.

Your goal is not supplication. Your goal is Intimacy with God. It may be months before you get far enough along to walk through all 12 Steps in one sitting (kneeling). Your goal is not to do the steps. Your goal is to be intimate with the lover of your soul. Get familiar with the holy place. Get known before the throne. Spend time with God. Enoch "walked with God" and he was not because "God took him." God wanted fellowship with Enoch, not Enoch's productivity.

Intimate Patterns of Prayer

Tough Stuff

Becoming a praying person is not easy. The disciples soon discovered that prayer was work, and did not fit into their world-style of fun things to do. Yet they watched Jesus pray and something inside was stirred. They wanted to pray as Jesus prayed, so they began to ask, not once, but over and over, "Lord, teach us to pray."

An important lesson in Christian living is the realization that we are no different than the disciples or the people of Israel. We do the same things, have the same hang-ups, fail in our disciplines, are tempted and sin in the same ways, and struggle with the same life-long issues they struggled with.

Disciplines

Learning to pray is a basic Christian discipline, and most of us think we learn it but never succeed in it. Praying is not asking – that is only the tip of the iceberg. Real prayer is intimacy in one's relationship with God. It is prioritizing God in more than our rhetoric. It means having a time, a place, and a plan by which we spend rich luxurious amounts of time alone with God. It is the satisfaction of the heart-longing that David expressed for all God-seekers – *"as the deer pants for the waterbrooks, so my soul pants for you O God."* and *"One thing have I desired, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord forever and inquire in his temple."*

Secret of Prayer

True satisfaction in prayer will never come until we learn the secrets of intimacy. Intimacy means secret prayer, as Jesus expressed it to his disciples and as David announced it in Psalm 91:1, *"He that dwells in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."* David was obsessed with "dwelling" with God, and being in secret places with Him. Until we discover that secret love-affair with God we will never pray effectively. Prayer is not asking God, but living with God and

loving God with all our inner being.

Prayer Habits

It is with this intimacy factor in mind that we have redefined our own prayer habits. The following guide to intimacy in prayer is our own journey into the depths of God's love. There is indeed a pattern for entering into God's presence. David found it and spoke of it. Psalm 24 and 100 serve as templates for effective intimacy in prayer.

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? He that has clean hands and a pure heart... Open the gates (lift up your heads you gates)! And be lifted up you everlasting doors and the King of Glory will come in." (Ps 24:3-7)
"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name." (Ps 100:4)

What Is the Principle?

Gates must be opened and entered into. There is a proper way to enter into the Holy of Holies and an improper way. Too often we quote Hebrews 4:16 *"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace..."* as an excuse to barge into the presence of God without thought or preparation, but that is not the intent of the writer. There is a right way and a wrong way to come into his presence.

A Pattern For Intimate Prayer

A disciplined prayer life is to obey God rather than our own hurried inclinations, to take time to be holy, is to enter the presence of the living God with reverence and holy awe. This is God's appointed way, not our clever devising. Let His Word be your teacher on how enter into intimate prayer times with God. Make this your pattern, for it is God's pattern, and you will be blessed. Holy men of God, the monks, learned this secret a thousand years before us, and it is no less powerful today. Intimacy with God is not found in the marketplace but in the secret quiet place.

FOCUS ON GOD

Be Still

Psalms 46:10 "be still and know that I am God."

Isaiah 30:15 "in quietness and confidence would be your strength."

Be Worshipful - Behold His Beauty

Psalms 27:4 "to behold the beauty of the Lord."

Psalms 104:34 "My meditation of you will be sweet."

Be Thankful

Psalms 92:1 "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord."

Psalms 100:4 "Enter his gates with thanksgiving... be thankful unto him."

FOCUS ON YOU

Confess our sins

Psalms 32:5 "I acknowledge my sin unto you, and my iniquity...I will confess my transgressions"

1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins he is faithful...to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Cover our nakedness

Psalms 32:1 "blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered."

Revelation 3:18 "I counsel of you to gold... white raiment... that the shame of your nakedness does not appear."

Cast our burdens

Psalms 55:22 "Cast your burden on the Lord and he will sustain you."

1 Peter 5:7 "Casting all your care upon him; for he cares for you."

Now that all this is done we may enter into the holy of holies. *"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."* (Hebrews 10:22)

Beginning With Intimacy

Intimacy cannot be hurried. Hurry is the great thief of intimacy. Intimacy is about having a relationship with God. That relationship comes through Jesus Christ tearing down the walls of partition that divided us off from God. Paul says, "You who were far off are now made near." (Ephesians 2:14-17) Daniel said, *"They who know their God will be strong and do exploits."* (Daniel 11:32b) Daniel knew God because he spent many disciplined hours alone with him.

You cannot hurry these lessons. You can't learn it all in one day, one week, or even one month. Take your time. Stop being in such a hurry. There is no such thing as instant intimacy with God, or instantaneous transformation of your prayer habits. Habits are ugly things that stick to us. They were not made overnight nor will they be broken quickly. Learning prayer skills takes time. Give it some time. Just as a pregnancy normally takes nine months and you can't hurry it, so developing and intimate prayer life will take time. Give these first lessons on "Intimacy" nine months of day by day study and practice before you move on. It has taken me years and with all that I cannot say that I have mastered intimacy with God. It really takes a lifetime.

This intimacy begins with the simple discipline of "being still" and grows from there. We start with learning to be quiet in God's presence and so, to hear His whispers. It is about intimacy, not getting things from God. It is about relationship, not about telling God all the world's needs.

Begin small by learning the first step. It will take you awhile. It took me a good year to learn to be still. I still struggle with it. We are not used to being still or listening to God's whisper. It takes time. It takes patience, but you can learn it.

Begin with one step, the first step. Learn it well until you can discipline yourself to spend three minutes on it without distraction. A three-minute egg timer will become your best friend as you seek to discipline your mind and heart in prayer.

It is extremely important to spend adequate time in preparation for intercession since that is the discipline most often neglected or missing altogether in our times of intercession. It is important because God says it is.

A workbook is available to accompany this portion of your prayer training. Use the regularly. Feel free to make copies and work each exercise over and over. I still do them each time I go on a prayer retreat.

Step 1 – Be Still

Without a doubt the most difficult step in intercessory prayer is this one – keep silence, be still. Learn this step and you will transform your prayer life. Remember, your mind is like an undisciplined child running constantly and refusing to be dominated. It wants its own way. It is like a wild stallion that does not want to be tamed, bridled or ruled. It wanders wherever it wishes. It clamors for its own way. It speeds ahead to its own agenda. It refuses to be brought under control. But God says it must be bridled. Peter urges us to “*gird up the loins of your mind.*” (1 Peter 1:13) Paul says, “*Bring every thought into the captivity of Christ.*” (2 Corinthians 10:5)

A Secret

There is a secret that God reveals to his servants that is hidden from all other men. It is the secret of his presence. He delights to walk and talk with us but he will only do so in the “*Secret place of the Most High.*” Therefore David exalts the mystery of that secret retreat with God alone where God shadows over his own with his protective presence. Jesus said that the secret place for believers is the “*closet of prayer*” in Matthew 6:6. The Greek word translated in KJV is “*tameion*” which means a closet, secret or inner chamber, or a storehouse – thus “a closet.” He is very specific about it. “When you have entered into your “*tameion*” (secret chamber), shut the door...and pray in secret!” God longs to have that romantic secret chamber of interlude with each of us.

A Command (not a suggestion)

God has given his people express commands governing the turbulence of their own hearts and the peace that he offers and expects. None stands out so markedly as Isaiah 30:15 “*In quietness and confidence will be your strength and you would not...*” It declares that the Lord's purpose is for his people to return to Him to find quietness and confidence before Him. The indictment was that his people “WOULD NOT”, therefore they had no peace.

- Psalm 4:4 “*Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own*

heart upon your bed, and be still.”

- Psalm 46:10 “*Be still and know that I am thy God...*”
- Isaiah 30:15 “*In quietness and confidence will be your strength and you would not...*”
- Isaiah 32:17 “*The effect of righteousness is quietness and assurance forever.*”
- Isaiah 41:1 “*Keep silence before me, O islands; and let the people renew their strength: let them come near; then let them speak: let us come near together to judgment.*”
- 1 Kings 19:12 “*After the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.*”
- Ecclesiastes 3:7 “*A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;*”
- Habakkuk 2:20 “*But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.*”
- Mark 4:39 “*And he arose and rebuked the wind and said unto the sea, Peace be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.*”
- Revelation 8:1 “*And there was silence in heaven for about the space of a half hour.*”

It is the mandate of God that we still ourselves before him in order to find his peace and hear his voice. So thus we have as the first and most important step in the believer's prayer life to still ourselves before the Lord.

Priority – “I set the Lord always before me...”

What is first in your life? David testified that he always, meaning every day, “*set the Lord before me.*” (Psalm 16:8) The word used here is the same used in Exodus 20:3 for the command “*to have (to place) no other Gods before Him.*” God is a jealous God and will not share his glory with another. (Exodus 34:14) There is room for only one on the Throne of Omnipotence. Either God, the Lord, is first and supreme and before all others or someone (maybe you?), or something else is first (your agenda, day-timer?) and on the throne. Jesus indicates the same priority theme in Matthew 6:33 when he commands that we

“Seek first the kingdom of God and everything else will fall in place.”

Listen – Hear His Voice

We live in a busy, noisy, tumultuous society. There is noise and constant demands for our attention every waking hour. There may not be any quiet Judean hillsides for us to retreat to daily for prayer. Therefore we must find an inner solitude in the Lord's presence.

Elijah, the mighty prevailing intercessor, learned this lesson when in weariness of the battle he fled into the wilderness. God sent first the wind and storm, then the earthquake and finally the fire. But God was not in them. After this there was “*a still small voice.*” God was found, not in the spectacular, but in the stillness.

Quiet Rest

Rest is important to God. The tireless Creator rested the seventh day from all his work. He commands us to do the same on the Lord's Day. He enforced the year of Jubilee for the land to rest. So too, he wants us to rest in Him. Get this message from Isaiah 40. “*The Creator of the ends of the earth, does not faint, neither is He weary...*” But they that wait on the Lord will renew their strength. God doesn't need to rest, we do!

Isaiah 40:28-31

Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, *that* the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? *there is* no searching of his understanding. 29 He giveth power to the faint; and to *them that have* no might he increaseth strength. 30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: 31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; *and* they shall walk, and not faint.

Wait on the Lord

In the age of cell phones, microwaves, satellite TVs, high speed computers, and nano-second processing, we don't like to wait. But waiting on God is an important biblical principle. Most of us are in a constant frenetic hurry. We don't like to wait. We don't have time to wait. Waiting is a waste of time. So we don't wait and we miss God's train of blessing. Waiting is part of the blessing of

prayer. It requires that we put aside the rush of life and sit still and just wait. The point of prayer is not getting stuff from God. The point of prayer is getting God! Take skiing for example. The thrill of skiing is not in the arrival at the bottom of the hill, but in the joy of getting there – so it is with seeking God. The delight of prayer is not getting the answers, but being in the presence of the One who freely gives us all things.

- Psalms 27:14 Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.
- Psalms 37:7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him.
- Isaiah 30:18 And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the LORD *is* a God of judgment: blessed *are* all they that wait for him.

One Desire – To Behold His Beauty

David again is a wonderful example of one who learned about the secret place of stillness before God. He declares, “One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek after.” What is that one thing that consumed his desire? It was to behold the beauty of the Lord, then secondly to inquire in his temple. Beholding God's beauty begins in the quiet place of stillness. Then it blossoms into worship, the second step of our intercessory prayer strategy. One desire... what is yours?

Songs of Quietness:

Try singing these songs quietly, even mentally, to help quiet your heart and mind.

- There is a Quiet Place: There is a quiet place, far from the noise and pace, where God can soothe the troubled heart. Sheltered by tree and flower, and in that quiet hour, we find a new, new day.
- In the Garden: I come to the garden alone, while the dew is still on the roses, and the voice I hear falling on my ear, the Son of God discloses. And he walks with me and he talks with me. And he tells me I am his own. And the joy we share as we tarry there, none other has ever known.
- Be Still My Soul: Be still my soul, the Lord is on thy side. Bear patiently thy cross of grief or pain. Leave to thy God to order and provide. In every change he faithful will remain.

On no other step is it more important to begin and continue to use the 3-minute timer. It is the only way I know of to make myself be still before the throne.

The secret is in the discipline of laying aside everything else until your heart, mind and spirit are quiet before God. God says, “Be still!” The choice to obey him or not is up to you. Obedience begins here.

Even Heaven requires silence

Revelation 8:1 And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

As you attempt to train yourself in these prayer disciplines remember that learning new habits takes time. Don't try to apply all of the steps at the same time. May I suggest that you discipline yourself in this step of silence only for at least 4 weeks, 10 minutes per day before going on to the next step.

Step 2 – Be Worshipful

“The Father seeks such to worship him.”

“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeks such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” – John 4:23-24

To worship God is to seek his face, that is, to see the Lord in his beauty by meditating on Him and extolling (proclaiming) his worth. Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up and was forever changed (Is. 6:1-8). Jesus said that the Father is seeking worshippers who will worship him in spirit and in truth. God desires for us to seek after him in steadfast worship beholding his beauty.

- *The fear (reverence and awe) of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. – Proverbs 9:10*
 - *And the people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits. – Daniel 11:32*
 - *Delight yourself also in the Lord; and He shall give you the desires of your heart. – Psalm 37:4*
 - *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple. – Psalm 27:4*
 - *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: – 1 Peter 2:9*
 - *But you are holy, O thou that inhabits the praises of Israel. – Psalms 22:3*
-

Behold His Beauty

The worship part of intercession is to behold the beauty of the Lord. That means to take time to muse, meditate, and focus on who God is in all His splendor and glory, until the truth of His greatness fills us with awe, adoration, love. True worship is to quietly, deliberately look into the kaleidoscope of God's character, and then stand in awe of His matchless beauty. Remember that Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up and was never the same. This was not a worship service in the Temple or Synagogue. It was private worship, "on-your-face-before-a-living-God" worship. It stirred the heart and cleansed the soul. David said his one overriding supreme desire was this. *One thing* have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple. – Psalms 27:4

In Spirit and In Truth

Jesus authenticated private worship experience when he clarified for the woman at the well in Samaria that worship had nothing to do with temples made with hands. (John 4:23-24) Solomon too revealed that when at the dedication of the Great Temple in Jerusalem he confessed... *"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?"* (I Kings 8:27 and Stephen quotes him in Acts 7:48 *"Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet."*)

Confined Worship

Too often we Christians make the mistake of confining our worship to the house of God. Worship is personal adoration expressed directly to God himself. It has little to do with formal services, and music. It has everything to do with loving God with all one's heart, mind, soul, strength and expressing that love emotionally and verbally. Jesus said, *"The Father seeks such to worship him."* "Worship in spirit" is not referring to the Holy Spirit, but to the spirit of man – his emotions, his soul, his innermost being. Each day of our lives we as believers, the blood-bought redeemed ones, should seek to fervently worship God in our spirit.

Who Is He?

Would to God that we would learn the secret of His presence in learning to worship the Lord for who he is, not just for all the things He has done. I am afraid for all of us too often our praise is not real worship or

adoration but fumbling attempts to "do praise" so that we can get on with the real business interest of our prayer – the asking. True worship has nothing to do with getting. True worship is worship in truth, that is, worshipping God for who he truly is. Who is God? What is He like? God has revealed himself in His word. Worship is reviewing who he is according to that revelation. To know the Lord is to hold him is highest "awe," and to stand amazed in his presence. True worship melts the heart before the heat of God's personal revelation. "No man can look on him and live."

Worship is Action – Exalt the Lord!

Worship is not a quiet thing. It demands expression both verbally and physically. Angels and cherubim do it constantly before the throne. Worship is our invitation to join them.

Read the book of Revelation of Jesus Christ and you will find physical and verbal declarations of the worth and holiness of God. People fell down and worshiped. You cannot truly worship and be quiet or still. To exalt the Lord requires your personal investment. It involves all of you. Peter expresses the physical and dynamic declaration of God's worth when he says,

"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." – 1 Peter 2:9

We are to SHOW FORTH his praises, not just say praises. The word "show forth" is one word in Greek, "exaggello" which literally is "to message forth" or to make known by praising, proclaiming, or celebration. "Aggelos" is angel or "messenger of God" who heralds God's glory. The Hebrew "Shofar," or trumpet, introduced worship with a loud, long blast, so too, we are to trumpet God's praises loudly, just as angels do before the throne.

Psalms 66 verses 1-3 is worth our full attention as David instructs us in the art of worship. "Shout to God, Sing to God, Make his praise glorious, Say to God." Psalm 68:4 continues the instruction, "Sing to God, Sing praise to His name, extol Him who rides on the clouds, rejoice before Him."

To Know the Lord

Paul declared his goal in life was to “know the Lord in the power of his resurrection.” Daniel similarly praises those who truly know the Lord as ones who will do exploits. (Daniel 11:32) He who knows God by showing forth his praises will do valiantly. He will be victorious.

Worship With Scripture

Use the Scriptures to prime the pump of praise by reminding yourself of God’s greatness. Psalm 111, 112, 113, 117, 134, 144, 145, 147, 148, 149, 150

Exalt His Holy Name(s)

(There are over 600 descriptive names of God and Christ)

1. Jehovah-tsidkenu = The Lord our Righteousness
2. Jehovah-shalom = The Lord our Peace
3. Jehovah-shammah = The Lord our Who is There Ever Present
4. Jehovah-m’kaddesh = The Lord our Sanctifier
5. Jehovah-jireh = The Lord our Provider
6. Jehovah-rohi = The Lord our Shepherd
7. Jehovah-nissi = The Lord our Banner
8. Jehovah-rophe = The Lord our Healer
9. Jehovah-saboath = Lord of Hosts

Make His Praise Glorious

Praise - Give Glory - Magnify - Worship
- Exalt/Extol - Sing - Ascribe - Bless -
Declare - Shout - Delight in - Honor -
Behold - Love - Clap - Lift up hands -
Bow down -

Lord, You are _____ (*attributes of God*)

Lord, You are my _____ (*Names of Jesus*)

Lord, Your name is _____ (Jehovah-)

Jehovah Jireh-Provider / Jehovah Nissi--
Banner / Jehovah Shalom-Peace /
Jehovah Tsidkenu-Righteousness /
Jehovah Shammah-Present / Jehovah
M’Kaddesh- Sanctifier / Jehovah Rophe-
Healer / Jehovah Rohi-Shepherd

Exalt His Name Together

Ancient of Days – Almighty – Alpha and
Omega – Amen – Anchor – Author – Balm –
Bread – Bridegroom – Brightness of glory –
Bright Morning Star – Captain – Cornerstone
– Counselor – Creator – Deliverer – Defense –
Door – Eternal God – Everlasting Father –
Fortress – First and Last – Immanuel – Hiding
Place – High Tower – Judge – King of kings –
King Eternal – Lamb of God – Lilly of the
Valley – Lord Mighty in Battle – Lion of
Judah – Life – Lifter of my head – Light –
Living Bread – Living Way – Lord Strong
Mighty – Love – Mediator – Mighty God –
Omnipotent – Only Potentate – Prince of Peace
– Potter – Redeemer – Refiner – Refuge –
Rock – Rose of Sharon – Savior – Shelter –
Shepherd – Shield – Sun of Righteous – Truth
– Victor – Vine – Way – Wonderful

Worship Verbs

Worship is not something we go to. It is something we do, or that we leave undone. It is not something done to us or for us by others. We often hear people remark about a special meeting - “*The worship was awesome!*” What does that mean? That elsewhere worship isn’t as good. Or good worship equals great musicians?

Worship is not about your harp and lyre.

It’s about your heart and desire!

1. Praise - (yadah) - to throw, shoot arrows, cast laud, praise
2. Give Glory - (yahab) -- make shine, to bring splendor, to ascribe worth,
3. Magnify - (gadal) - to cause to grow, to make great, powerful, to magnify
4. Worship - (shachah) - to bow down, prostrate oneself, to crouch in homage
5. Exalt/Extol - (ruwm) - to raise, to heave high, to lift up lofty, exalt above
6. Sing - (zamar) - to make music, to sing with voice, to play an instrument
7. Ascribe - (nathan) - to give, bestow, grant, permit, ascribe, employ, devote
8. Bless - (barak) - to kneel, to salute, to congratulate
9. Declare - (caphar) - tell of, to count, relate, to number, take account of, reckon
10. Shout - (ranan) - cry out, a loud shout of joy, a ringing cry (in joy, exultation)
11. Delight in - (anag) - be happy about, take exquisite pleasure in, make merry
12. Honor - (tiph'arah) - glory, renown, as attribute of God, make beautiful
13. Behold - (chazah) - (means to wash off one’s face) to see, perceive, look at
14. Love - (racham) - have tender affection, deep love
15. Clap - (taqa) - to give a blast, give a blow, to strike or applaud
16. Lift up hands - (nasa') - to raise, raise up high, to bear, hold high
17. Bow down - (kara) - curve over, sink down to one's knees

Practical Worship Strategies (Get into worship!)

1. Read Scripture that exalts Who He is. (Prime the pump with Scripture)
2. Sing songs to the Lord. (Sing out loud!)
3. Exalt His Names. (Magnify his names)
4. Remember His mighty works. (Think on, Meditate on)
5. Tell of His excellent greatness. (Rehearse it to Him)
6. Acknowledge His Sovereignty, Power, Wisdom, Control.
7. Physically express your worship and adoration. (lay prostrate, kneel)

God's Name In Prayer

Daniel said, *"The people that know their God will be strong and do exploits."* (Daniel 11:32) Solomon said, *"The name of the Lord is a strong tower. The righteous run into it and they are safe."* (Proverbs 18:10) The Lord through Malachi commends those who *"think on His name."* Jesus taught to ask anything "in his name" and it will be done for us. Jesus' name is a powerful name. It is a *"name above every name"* so that *"at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God."* (Philippians 2:9-11)

Let us learn to exalt his name(s) in prayer.

- Lord, You are _____ (*attributes of God*) [adjectives]
- Lord, You are my _____ (*Names of God or Jesus*) [nouns]
- Lord, Your name is _____ and I exalt and worship You.

Ancient of Days	Deliverer	Lion of Judah	Redeemer
All Knowing	Defense	Life	Refiner
Almighty	Door of the Sheep	Lifter of my head	Refuge
Alpha and Omega	Eternal God	Light of life	Rock higher than I
Amen	Everlasting Father	Living Bread	Rose of Sharon
Anchor	Express Image	Living Way	Savior
Author	Fortress	Lord Strong Mighty	Scapegoat
Balm in Gilead	First and Last	Love	Shelter
Bishop of our souls	Immanuel	Lover of my soul	Shepherd
Branch	Holy One Of Israel	Mediator	Shield
Bread	Hiding Place	Mighty God	Sun of Righteous
Bridegroom	High Tower	Morning Star	Truth
Brightness of glory	Judge of all	Omnipotent	Victor
Bright Morning Star	King of kings	Only Potentate	Vine
Captain	King Eternal Invisible	Peace, our Prince of	Way
Cornerstone	Lamb of God	Peace	Wonderful
Counselor	Lilly of the Valley	Potter	
Creator	Lord Mighty in Battle	Prince of Life	

Jehovah Jireh/ Provider	Jehovah Shammah/ Present
Jehovah Nissi/ Banner	Jehovah M'Kaddesh/ Sanctifier
Jehovah Shalom/ Peace	Jehovah Rophe/ Healer
Jehovah Tsidkenu/ Righteousness	Jehovah Rohi/ Shepherd

"Bless the Lord O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

Alpha and Omega Praise

Praise His name through the alphabet. Lift up and exalt God's names beginning with A and end with Z. (Alpha and Omega - 26 Praises) Do it together in the congregation. Attempt to give 3-5 on each letter. It is a wonderful experience, especially when people read their praise of Him from the Word. There are more than 600 names of God and the Lord Jesus Christ in Scripture. To review and rejoice in his name is to truly know him and make his splendor known. Believe me, you won't run out of praises.

A Ark, Alpha, Almighty God, Advocate, Author, Ancient of Days, Anchor
B Bread, Balm, Bright Morning Star, Breath, Beauty, Beginning, Best gift, Branch, Bride
C Creator, Captain, Comforter, Counselor
D Door, Defender, Deliverer, Daystar
E Everlasting Father, Everything to me, Earnest of our inheritance
F Faithful High Priest, Father, Friend of Sinners, Firstborn, Fairest of 10,000, First and Last
G God of Comfort, Great God, Good Shepherd, Giver, Gift, Guide, Glory-Lifter of my head
H Healer, Helper, Health, Holy One, Heir of all, High Priest, Hope of the ages
I Immanuel, Invisible, Immortal, I Am
J Judge, Jehovah-*, Jesus,
K King of Kings, King - *, Keeper
L Lover of my soul, Lord strong and mighty, Lord *, Lamb, Light Life, Lilly of Valley
M Maker, Master, Marvelous One, Mighty God, Mediator
N Never-failing God, Name above all names, Nest, New and living way
O Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent
P Protector, Provider, Physician, Prince of Peace, my Peace, Passover, Priest , Promise
Q Quickening One, Quickening Spirit, Quietness and my confidence
R Resurrection, Redeemer, Rock, Refuge, Righteous One, My Righteousness
S Savior, Sanctifier, Sun, Shield, Shade, Shepherd, Sure, Shelter, Source
T Teacher, Tower, Transformer, Truth
U Unmovable, Unspeakable Gift, Upholder of all things,
V Victor, Vine, Vision
W Water, Wonderful, Way, Wisdom, Worthy, Wing under which I trust
X Xcellent, Xaminer or my heart,
Y Yeshua, Yesterday, Today, Forever,
Z Zeal of Lord,

The Name Above All Names

There are so many names the Lord used of himself it is hardly possible to savor them all. Be careful not to just say his name, but to think on His name. Savoring it like a lozenge in your mouth, roll it over and over until you pull from it all it's wonderful savor. Just as a bee pulls the sweet nectar from the flower so should we drink deeply from the never-ending fountain of his name.

Keeper, Shade Upon Right Hand, Shield, Defender, Refuge, Fortress, High Tower, Ancient of Days, Creator, Friend, Glory and Lifter of my head, King of Glory, Lord Strong and Mighty, Lord of Hosts, Very Present Help in Trouble, Well of Salvation, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Altogether Lovely, Balm of Gilead, Branch, Lilly of the Valley, Chiefest Among Ten Thousand, Defense, Deliverer, Desire of all Nations, Despised by the People, Diadem of Beauty, Fountain of Life, Friend that Sticketh Closer than a Brother, Refiner, Guide Even Unto Death, Helper of the Fatherless, Hiding Place, One Who Inhabits Eternity, Refiner's Fire, Refuge, Refuge in Times of Trouble, Refuge for the Oppressed, Refuge from the Storm, Reproach of Men, Resting Place, Reward for the Righteous, Righteous Branch, River of Water in a Dry Place, Rock that is Higher than I, Rock of My Refuge, Rod, Rose of Sharon, Scepter of Israel, Star out of Jacob, My Stay, Stone which the Builders Refused, Strength of My Life, Strong Tower from the Enemy, Sun of Righteousness, and many more.

Three Questions to Answer As You Worship:

- Who Is He?
- How Great Is He?
- What Is His Wonderful Name?

Step 3 – Be Thankful

“Enter his gates with thanksgiving.”

Thanksgiving naturally follows confession and forgiveness! We did not put it in third place right next to worship lest we be tempted to think that worship and thanksgiving are the same thing. They are not. Thanksgiving is a distinct act of the will. It recognizes the hand of God and is thankful. It chooses to give God credit for what he has done, and what he has promised, while worship praises God for who He is.

In Everything Give Thanks

Thanks giving is to be as much a part of the believer's life as breathing. We are exhorted to live in thankfulness to God, and to exalt him with continual expressions of thanks regardless of our present circumstances. "In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." (2 Thessalonians 5:18)

In prayer we are exhorted to give thanks profusely for the goodness of the Lord, for all his benefits, for his mercies, for his faithfulness, for his steadfast love, for loads of blessings. Psalm 100 is an excellent guide for entering the presence of God. "Enter his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise: Be thankful unto him, and bless His name." Unthankfulness and silence curses God's name. It brings him shame.

Ingratitude

It was Israel's ingratitude of heart, the murmuring, the complaining, the grumbling, that brought on the wrath of God. It was not that God had not blessed. He had over and over again! It is that men soon forget the goodness of the Lord. We are quick to forget his answers to our prayers, His mercies in our troubles, His healings when we are sick, His forgiveness when we fail, His provisions in our need. Well did the psalmist groan in Psalm 107, *"O Give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good...Oh, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"*

The Psalms

The Psalms are filled with expressions of thanks to God on every side. Oh, may our lives, our lips, be continual psalms of thanksgiving! The apostle Paul commands the same principle in the New Testament, regardless of the circumstances we are to be thankful and think on the good things the Lord has done. "Be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep you hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7)

Good Mental Health

Good mental health begins with a thankful attitude of heart. *"A merry heart does good like medicine...He that has a merry heart has a continual feast."* (Proverbs 15:13 / 17:22) Depression and discouragement are the inability to see the goodness of God around you. David frequently expressed his depression, *"I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of God in the land of the living."* (Psalm 27:13) The eyes of faith see the goodness of God even in the midst of adversity. God's purposes, plans, and provisions are always good! Remember, He is working it out. Be thankful while He works it out. (Romans 8:28 and Jeremiah 29:11)

Forget Not All His Benefits

Forgetfulness of God's multiplied blessings is sin. Forgetting or neglecting to give Him thanks is the sin of ingratitude - at least it is taking God for granted. D.L. Moody in commenting on Psalm 103 said, *"I can't remember all his benefits and blessings, but I dare not forget all of them either."* Thanksgiving is remembering God's good gifts and giving Him the credit due his name.

- Psalm 103:2-5 "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities; who heals all your diseases; who redeems your life from destruction; who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies; who satisfies your mouth with good things; so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's."
- Psalm 68:19 "Blessed be the Lord, who daily loads us with benefits..."
- James 1:17 "Every good gift and every perfect gift comes down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

Thanksgiving Is a Sacrifice to God

Hebrews 13:15 points out that thanksgiving is a sacrifice to God. A sacrifice of our lips, that is to be offered up to God continually. Thanksgiving is not easy. It is tough to be thankful and express thanks from the heart for everything.

Wouldn't prayer be wonderfully transformed if we would offer 10 sacrifices of thanksgiving for every request we make of God?

Thank You Lord!

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Practical Disciplines

1. Thank God for His Creation, your own body (Psalm 139:14)
2. Thank God for His provisions. For everything you have. List each thing for which you are thankful.
3. Thank God for people He has put into your life. Name them by name and what you are thankful for.
4. Thank God for little things. Start with the smallest things you can think of for which you are thankful. From there work toward the bigger things he has done. Never start with the big lest you despise the small. Do not despise the day of small things. (Zech. 4:10)
5. Thank God for hard things. "In everything give thanks...for this is the will of God..." Thank God for the trials and adversities that come to make us strong. They are what make us lean on Him. So thank Him!
6. Thank God for everything. Keep a notebook handy in which you write down your thanksgiving list. It helps!

Use these Psalms to guide your thanksgiving. Pray the Psalms. Mark them as "Thanksgiving" in your Bible: Psalm 103; 104; 105; 107; 111; 118; 124; 126; 136; 139

Be Thankful Unto Him

- His mercies new every morn
- His benefits
- His blessings
- His way and will is perfect
- Good, bad, and the ugly

"In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." – 1Thess 5:18

He Has Made

- Earth by his great power
- Me, I am fearfully and wonderfully made
- All things small an great
- All things richly to enjoy
- This day
- Good and evil

"Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?" – Ecclesiastes 7:13

Step 4 – Confess Sin

"If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" 1 John 1:9

John, the beloved disciple, warns us against an attitude of innocence before a holy God. To say that we have nothing to confess to God is to call Him a liar, and to practice self-deception before our Maker. David says: *"Behold I was shaped in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."* (Psalm 51:5) And Isaiah adds to his own unworthiness before a holy God when he says: *"All of our righteousnesses (that is, our best efforts) are as filthy rags."* (Isaiah 64:6) Most of us misread that passage and think that God means *"all of our unrighteousnesses."* But it is all our best effort at right living that are still as filthy rags. Even if we could keep all the law and stumble in only one small point we would be guilty of all.

Woe Is Me!

Isaiah, a man filled with the Spirit, a prophet of God, a man above reproach, is a good example of this truth. In Isaiah 6 he first sees the Lord in all his beauty, high and lifted up, and glorified. The sight was so awesome that the just and righteous Isaiah fell on His face before God with an acute awareness of his own sinful nature. He was not exaggerating. He was not bemoaning the sinfulness of other people. He saw himself in the light of God's holiness and cried *"Woe is me I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips."* (Isaiah 6:1-5)

We are not just to come into God's presence presumptuously, but humbly (2 Chronicles 7:14) contritely, with a sincere perspective on our own nature. We need a vision of ourselves, our true fallen nature, our minds which are unclean, and of which God knows every passing thought. (Psalm 139:1-5)

Bankruptcy

Until we recognize our own state of bankruptcy before a holy God we cannot truly lean upon His Righteousness, without which no man will see the Lord. (Hebrews 12:14) We would instead come into his presence as the Pharisee, proud, bragging of his kept laws, righteous deeds, his right to gain the Father's favor. We need to see ourselves as destitute, and totally depraved, without the righteousness of Christ. We have nothing of which to boast. We, are as the rich church of Laodicea in Revelation 3:14-22. We need to see ourselves as God sees us. *"Lukewarm...wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."*

A.W. Tozer says:

"We need to admit...the shallowness of our inner experience, the hollowness of our worship, the worldliness of our lives, our fleshly fallen nature that lives on, yet unjudged within us, uncrucified and unrepudiated, and the hyphenated sins of the human spirit, self-righteousness, self-pity, self-confidence, self-sufficiency, self-admiration, self-love, self-indulgence, and a host of other self-sins. They are not something we do, they are something we are..."
The Pursuit of God

REGARDING INIQUITY IN MY HEART

"If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me." Psalm 66:18

To regard iniquity means to leave it alone, to tolerate it, to know it is there and do nothing about it. It is to hide it, to cover it by excuses, to consider it unimportant, to ignore its dangers.

God considers any iniquity to be an abomination. An abomination is a horrible disgusting thing. There are no "good guy" iniquities, no little white lies, no insignificant rebellions of the heart! God calls rebellion in any form "as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness as idolatry." (1 Samuel 15:23) God considers sin as sin and all equally appalling to His holiness. Sin in our heart is to the Lord as festering sores, and maggots in his holy offerings – slimy, crawling, slithering, disgusting, maggots defiling the whole! (Isaiah 1:6)

Daniel was conscious of the subtle ways in which sin surrounds us and creeps into our thoughts, actions, and in-actions. In his exemplary prayer in Daniel 9 he identifies nine faces of sin.

WE HAVE ...

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Sinned | v 5 | Missed the mark, fallen short |
| 2. Committed iniquity | v 5 | Deliberate conscious sin |
| 3. Done wickedly | v 5 | Life-style habitual sin |
| 4. Rebelled | v 5/9 | Said no to God! |
| 5. Not hearkened | v 6 | Closed our ears, ignored |
| 6. Not obeyed voice | v 10 | Grieved the Holy Spirit |
| 7. Transgressed law | v 11 | Legal term, to know law and disobey |
| 8. Departed from God | v 11 | Backslidden, wandered away |
| 9. Made not prayer | v 13 | Sin of prayerlessness |

DEAL WITH SIN !

Jesus emphasized the need to deal with sin each time he spoke of prayer. In the Lord's prayer he deals heavily with the need to deal severely with sin. That is, in fact, the primary lesson of the Lord's Prayer. Immediately after citing it he pointed out the need to forgive as well as ask for forgiveness. In Matthew 5:23-26 Jesus further deals with sin in prayer by saying that when we come to God's altar with an offering we must first do something about broken relationships before we pray and offer praise!!! An attempt at reconciliation must be made before our prayers will be heard. I Peter 3:7 includes the marital relationship as being a hindering factor in prayer.

CONFESSION OF SIN

A man that truly enters into the presence of God cannot but help to see himself as unclean. Even the Scripture admits that *"all of our good deeds are as filthy rags."* So was the feeling of Isaiah before the throne in Isaiah 6, and of Daniel in chapter 9. The holiness of God cannot tolerate the presence of sin! We are exhorted to confess our sins to God (1 John 1:8-9), and even admit our faults one to another (James 5:16) so as to pray effectively and fervently and be healed.

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR SIN

- Conviction is seeing sin as exceedingly sinful.
- Repentance is "Agreeing with God about my sin," and turning from it.
- Confession is exposing it to God & asking Him to forgive and cleanse.

We cannot do penance for our sins, it would do no good. We cannot pay the penalty of our sins. The penalty or "wage of sin is death." Therefore God has provided a better way. We lay our sins on Jesus.

Isaiah 53 is a magnificent passage that describes the atonement of Jesus Christ for sins. Jesus paid it all on the cross. That is why he could say, "It is finished." Verse five says, *"He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed."* Verse six goes on, *"All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquities of us all."* Verse twelve goes even further, *"He was numbered with the transgressors; and he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."*

There is nothing more for me to do but lay my sins on Jesus. That is why the thief on the cross could be saved. He could not do penance. He could not make restitution for what he had done. He could not even prove his sincerity. He simply laid his sin on Jesus and said, "Have mercy on me." That is what Jesus came to do. *"Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."*

Lay your sins on Jesus - he is your sin-bearer. Then rejoice in what God says he has done with your sins. Confession is not commiserating or grieving over your fallen nature, your secret thoughts, or your sins of commission or omission, but asking and receiving forgiveness and the covering of the blood of Jesus. Do not leave the altar of confession without appropriating the provisions of the cross!. Be forgiven and give thanks.

What Happened To Our Sins?

1. They were paid in full - Romans 5:11 / Isaiah 53:6
2. They were pardoned - 1 John 1:9
3. They were laid on him - Isaiah 53:6
4. They were washed whiter than snow - Isaiah 1:18
5. They were covered - Psalm 32:1
6. They were cleansed by blood of Jesus - Hebrews 9:22/ 10:4
7. They were blotted out - Isaiah 44:22
8. They were removed as far as east from west - Psalm 103:12
9. They were cast in depths of sea - Micah 7:19
10. They were forever forgotten - Jeremiah 31:34

**Read Psalm 51 and Psalm 139
as part of your confession of sin.**

It is Well

My sin, O the bliss of this glorious thought
My sin, not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul.

Confess Sin

(Do spiritual inventory, open heart surgery)

Words - have you spoken evil of anyone, criticized, sharp words

Attitudes - complaining spirit, depressed, grouchy, know-it-all

Thoughts - evil desires, lusts, doubts, fears, hatred, bitterness

Actions - broken God's laws, trespassed on forbidden ground

Step 5 – Clothe Yourself

What is the first thing you do after taking a bath? Get dressed! I am so glad provision has been made for our nakedness! God commands us to “Put on”, as elect of God. We are commanded to “put on the Lord Jesus,” “Put on the new man,” and to “Put on the whole armor of God.” So put it on! That means dress in it. Reckon it to be so before the throne. Stand in Him complete.

Abraham believed God and it was “imputed” to him as righteousness. That word imputed means it was credited to his account. Though he was bankrupt himself, God applied it to his account because of his faith. Believe God and apply His provision for your nakedness.

Zechariah 3:1-3

The Old Testament book of Zechariah, chapter three contains a wonderful example of the need to put on, or to reckon ourselves clothed in the righteousness of God, and in the armor of the Lord. Joshua, the high priest, was standing before the Lord and Satan was at his right hand accusing him before the throne of God. Everything Satan brought against him was true except for one thing - God said, “I forgave him. I clothed him. Leave him alone!” Therefore God commanded the angel of the Lord to take off Joshua’s dirty tattered garments and give him a robe of pure white, a turban on his head, and a scepter in his hand. Then God looks at him and says, “Is not this the brand plucked out of the fire?”

There Are Two Parts to Reckoning:

1. Principle of Position - seeing yourself in heavenly places as God sees you.
2. Principle of Practice - exercising authority in Christ in heavenly places

Principle of Position

There is a “Principle of Position” that we all need to learn. It is the principle that though we all fall far short of the glory of God, God himself has made provision for us. His provision is that we can put on Christ. We wear his righteousness, his white robe, his crown, his authority. As God sees us in heaven he sees us through his perfect sacrifice, Jesus Christ his Son. We are brands plucked out of the fire. Reckon it to be so! See yourself as God sees you... “*and you are complete in him.*”(Colossians 2:10)

“*To Reckon*” is to appropriate God’s invisible truth as our visible reality.

“*To Believe*” is to see the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

*Faith applies to our hearts
the heavenly realities that God already sees.*

- Put on the Lord Jesus Christ
- Put on His Righteousness
- Put on the Whole Armor of God

Reckon it!

“*To reckon*” is an old biblical term for calculate, or add it up. We use it today to refer to balancing a checkbook, or to reconcile our accounting to the bank’s statement. Just like that we are to reckon God’s statements about us to be true.

- Reckon yourself to be dead to sin and alive to God.
- Reckon yourself to be seated with Christ in heavenly places.
- Reckon yourself to be clothed in his righteousness.

Principle of Practice – Using Your Authority

How do we exercise our God-given authority in Christ? How do we address the devil in our prayers? (We certainly don't pray to him.)

Weapons

God has clearly given us "Weapons of our Warfare" for the pulling down of strongholds. Our weapons (the word literally is "strategies") *are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself above the knowledge of God, and brings every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.*" (2 Corinthians 10:4-6)

Words

The sword of the Spirit, is the Word of God. God's word is that which we use as our offense. It cuts, penetrates, convicts, declares, exposes, and casts out the enemies of God. Jesus said, "*All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*" That is why whatever we bind on earth will be bound in heaven. (Matt. 16:19, 18:18) That authority is in his word, his ultimate authoritative command. We simply wield the sword. Just point it in the right direction.

Prayers

Our prayers, offered up to God in Jesus name, have powerful effects in spiritual realms.

- "*The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man has great effect.*" – James 5:16
- "*Be strong*" or be bold, boldfaced, courageous, aggressive, un-intimidated - Eph 6:10
- "*Lay your hand upon the throne*" - Exodus 17:16
- "*Build a hedge of protection*" - Ezekiel 22:30
- "*Come boldly to the throne of grace*" - Hebrews 4:16

SPIRITUAL WARFARE TOOLS

Like it or not, we are involved in this wrestling match against spiritual forces. Since we cannot get away from it we'd better put on God's armor and do as he did to win the day.

<u>Be strong</u> in the Lord!	Ephesians 6:10
<u>Put on</u> the armor of God	Ephesians 6:11-18
<u>Bind</u> the enemy	Matthew 18:18-20
<u>Resist</u> the devil	James 4:7
<u>Claim</u> the blood	Revelation 12:11
<u>Declare</u> loosing of the captives	Luke 4:18
<u>Pull down</u> strongholds	II Corinthians. 10:3-5
<u>Put a hedge</u> of protection	Ezekiel 22:30
<u>Command</u> him to leave	Matthew 10:1
<u>Rebuke</u> him in Jesus name	Matthew 17:18

It is only when we stand in our own righteousness that we should be afraid to stand before the enemy, for our righteousnesses are as "filthy rags" but the righteousness of Christ is called the armor of God.

Identify Enemy Strongholds

TRIALS Attacked & Sieges	TORMENTS Oppression of the enemy	TRAGEDIES Bondage to the enemy
<u>People</u> - enemies persecutors, blasphemers, interferes <u>Finances</u> - devouring worm, waster, losses <u>Family</u> - disintegration, scatterer, anger <u>Marriage</u> - destroyer, divorce, separation <u>Problems</u> - flood of bad events <u>Physical</u> - health attacks "buffeting"	<u>Depression</u> - prolonged emotional attacks <u>Physical</u> - spirit of infirmity, hypochondriac <u>Fears</u> - unfounded fears, anxieties, panics <u>Anger</u> - hatred, bitterness, temper, rage, violence <u>Moral</u> - repeated failures, obsessive temptations <u>Backslider</u> - apostate deliberate willful turning away	<u>Drugs</u> - under the power of substances, alcohol, pills, etc. <u>Sexual deviations</u> - addictions, porno, homosexuality, immorality <u>Abusive behavior</u> - destructive, assaults, language <u>Insanity</u> - uncontrollable mind, psychosis, voices, visions, etc. <u>Occult involvement</u> - consulting psychics, palm readers etc <u>Cults</u> - blinded to the truth, choose to believe a lie

Step 6 – Cast Your Care

Ps. 55:22 Cast your burden on the Lord...He shall sustain you.

Phil. 4:6 In everything...let your requests be made known unto God.

1 Pet.5:7 Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

Praying For Yourself

Often those who are the best intercessors carry heavy burdens for others in the hour of prayer, but they forget that they too have personal burdens that need to be laid at the feet of Jesus. Before we can appropriately carry the burdens of others we need to put down our own lest we be constantly returning to God to make petitions for ourselves. We should examine our hearts and “wring out” the cares and concerns on our own hearts. God delights to hear it.

Unpacked Baggage

We cannot properly intercede for others until we have cleared away the baggage of personal concerns, needs, and cares. We need to wring out our burdened hearts until all our care is laid before Him. We must find a resting place where we can lay down our burdens, in order to bear other’s burdens in prayer. Hearts that are "overloaded" with care will be distracted in prayer and made ineffective in their intercession.

In Luke 21:34, Jesus warned his disciples to beware of the danger of three distracting pitfalls:

1. Over-abundance (surfeiting, over-spending, over-charging, too many possessions)
2. Over-indulgence (drunkenness, lover of pleasures, over-eating, over-playing)
3. Over-load (cares, burdens, worries, fears of this life)

Take Your Burden To The Lord

The most deceptive and innocent looking is the "overload...with cares of this life." We cannot escape the cares of normal living, but we can UNLOAD the OVERLOAD. Jesus concludes the issue in verse 36 by saying, "Therefore watch and pray always..."

Leave It There!

The solution to overloaded cares is to pray. That means to bring those excess burdens, cares, concerns, problems, worries, fears, anxieties, and troubles TO THE LORD and leave them there! Too often we take these concerns to the Lord, and walk away just as burdened as before we prayed. There is no "leaving it there."

Cast, Roll, Dump It!

David used an interesting word for "leaving it there." "Cast thy burden on the Lord." Psalm 55:22 The word "CAST" is the key. It literally means... ROLL... DUMP... UNLOAD... as one who is carrying a backpack of heavy equipment allows it to slide from his shoulders to another who is stronger, more able to carry the load.

He Cares for You!

Peter’s words are a great reminder of our love relationship with Christ. He delights when we tell him our innermost secrets and the desires of our hearts. God longs for us to be brave, bold, and unabashed before the throne. We are his children, so ask! Often the Holy Spirit waits on our cry for help. I often hear him say, “What do you want me to do? Be very specific!” That specificity is to expose to the Lord the deep desire of my heart.

*You cannot carry your own burdens
and the burdens of others!*

*Burdens are lifted as we
roll them onto the Lord*

Practical Disciplines

Pray for yourself:

- Your troubles
- Your aches & pains
- Your faith & faithfulness
- Your courage to witness
- Your heart's secret goals
- Your needs, provisions
- Your finances, funds
- Your enemies

Pray for your Future

- Your plans
- Your goals
- Your ministries
- Your vision

Pray for your family

- Each member by name and need
- Salvation of children
- Spouse needs
- Spiritual growth & love of all in family
- Health and safety
- Protection from evil & temptation

Pray for your faults

- Your struggles
- Your worries
- Your temptations
- Your wants & wishes
- Your heartaches
- Your failures

SONGS:

Burdens Are Lifted At Calvary / Jesus Knows Just What I Need / No One Understands Like Jesus / What a Friend We Have in Jesus / Take Your Burden to the Lord and Leave It There / I Cast All My Cares Upon You.

Cast your burden on the Lord...He shall sustain you. – Ps. 55:22
Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. – 1 Pet.5:7

Now Go To The Workbook!

We have provided you with a Workbook to accompany these lessons. You will find it a wonderful help as you begin the process of personal discipline of prolonged prayer. This will be especially helpful in doing a Personal Prayer Retreat in which you have one or two days to carefully work through each step.

Close Your Time Of Intimacy

Extended Times With God

Intimacy with God is very personal. It is a rich time of fellowship with God and personal inventory through the work of God's Spirit. It is a good thing to take a break at this point in your prayer time, unless of course you are doing the hour of intercession and not an extended time. Go for a walk. Give yourself a time of rejoicing. Listen to worship tapes and let your heart be glad in the Lord. He is with you. Enjoy basking in His presence.

Take Time

Developing Intimacy with God takes time. There are no shortcuts, no quick fixes, no speed-praying techniques. Spending time with God is about s p e n d i n g t i m e with God! God is not in a hurry. He never was and never will be. Slow down and get to know Him. Your journey is the journey of a lifetime.

A Prepared Heart

There are many ways to search your own heart and mind to see if there is any wicked way in you and allow the Holy Spirit to convict, cleanse and fill you, so that you can pray "in the Spirit."

Utilize this workbook often to exhaust the possibilities of worship, and thanksgiving. We often cheat God and ourselves by not spending adequate time basking in God's presence. Worship and thanksgiving are not bribes offered to an angry God. They are our expressions of true heart-felt adoration and gratitude.

Take Spiritual Inventory

We have prepared a number of tools that can be useful in self evaluation. We encourage you to use them as the Spirit leads.

- Disciple's Maturity Check-up
- Hindrances to Prayer
- Spiritual Maturity

Spiritual Warfare is Not War Games

It is serious business to take God and his word seriously. When Paul exhorts that we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against spiritual forces, he was not speaking in hyperbole. That is a reality. You cannot learn spiritual warfare by occasionally practicing it. It only comes through daily discipline and exercise.

Intimacy with God

Hints & Helps

Biblical Steps to Intimacy With God

by Richard W. LaFountain

How To Use This Prayer Plan

Daily Meals With God

Begin the day with devotions at breakfast preparing your heart before God with the first six steps. Then use your meal times for the intercessory steps. Lunch will focus on people, and supper will focus on leaders. If you have a family you could pray around the table, assigning a person to lead in prayer for each of three steps.

Hourly Intercession

Begin the day with devotions and walking through the first six steps of personal preparation. Spend at least 3 minutes on each for 18 minutes of personal preparation. Go to work and each hour set your watch alarm to go off at the top of the hour. Spend the first 3-5 minutes of each hour in an intercessory step.

Morning Preparation	Hourly Intercession
Be Still	9 am - Souls
Be Worshipful	10 am - Saints
Be Thankful	11 am - Sick
Confession	1 pm - Ministers
Clothe in Armor	2 pm - Missionaries
Cast Cares	3 pm - Magistrates

Weekday Intercession

Every day spend use the first six steps of personal preparation to get your heart prepared for intercession. Then daily use one step of intercession as the focus of your intercession that day.

Daily Preparation	Weekday Intercession
Be Still	Monday - Souls
Be Worshipful	Tuesday - Saints
Be Thankful	Wednesday - Sick
Confession	Thursday - Ministers
Clothe in Armor	Friday - Missionaries
Cast Cares	Saturday - Magistrates

Other Ways to Use These Steps

One Hour Daily Prayer - Begin each day quietly before God with the time of preparation. Do not be in a hurry. You should annex 36 minutes or a one hour period (either morning, afternoon, or evening) to be quiet, undisturbed and unhurried before God. When your heart is quiet and prepared then do the Six Steps of Intercession.

Half-Day of Prayer - Each Thursday I try to spend a half-day of fasting prayer with God. Begin at 6 am and running through 12 noon. Use the Steps spending a half hour on each. You can mix them up rather than doing them in consecutive order. Give yourself a 10 minute break each hour, or a 5 minute break each half hour.





Monthly Personal Retreat - Every month my goal is to spend a day and a half in intercessory prayer. This is usually the first or last Monday evening and Tuesday of the month. I go to a local retreat center for an overnight with God so as to have no distractions. Then I use the Steps of Prayer for 12 hours of intercession - one hour each. I give myself a 10 minute break each hour, and begin each hour with the first three steps.

Prayer Groups/Partners - With your prayer partner or a small group of people you can walk through the Steps of Prayer together. Each one offers to God a sentence or two on each Step as the Spirit leads them. It is refreshing.

Whole Church Prayer Concerts - A concert of prayer is a partial day dedicated to prayer in the church. See our lessons on Prayer Concerts for a schedule of AM Concerts or PM Concerts using the Steps of Prayer.

Extended Prayer Retreats - An extended prayer retreat is anywhere from a day and a half to three days in intensive prayer. See our lessons on Prayer Retreats for a variety of scheduling options.

The Day-Long Intercession

	<p><u>Top of Every Hour</u> At the top of every hour we begin a new step of intercession. This keeps us focused and moving along in our intercessory prayer time. Prayer discipline begins with “time.” Jesus asked his disciples, “<i>Could you not watch one hour?</i>”</p>
	<p><u>First 10 minutes</u> The first 10 minutes are preparatory so we use the first 3 steps of stillness, worship, and thanksgiving. Make this a regular pattern in your prayer life whenever you pray. “<i>Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise, be thankful and bless His name.</i>”</p>
	<p><u>40 Minutes of Intercession</u> Each hour is composed of a solid 40 minutes of intercession on the step at hand. If you find trouble staying focused then use some prayer actions to keep attentive. Change your position often, journal to God, pray some out loud, pray Scripture, etc.</p>
	<p><u>Last Ten Minutes</u> The last 10 minutes of every hour is time for a break. You are only human and need to break your routine to keep from weariness. Take a bathroom break, a coffee or juice break. If you are on a retreat with others use this time to chat with a friend about what God is teaching you about prayer.</p>

Begin Every Day

F O C U S O N G O D	<p><u>Be Still</u> (Shhh - still your mind and heart)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow down • Keep silence • Lay prostrate before God • Rest in His arms • Wait patiently for Him <p><u>Be Worshipful</u> (It is not thinking but doing worship)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sing a Hymn to God - <i>sing of his greatness</i> • Read Psalm of praise out loud - <i>declare His glory!</i> • Do worship - <i>shout, exalt, extol, bow, clap, sing, dance, etc.</i> [verbs] • You are _____ (<i>attributes of God</i>) [adjectives] • You are my _____ (<i>Names of God or Jesus</i>) [nouns] <p><u>Be Thankful</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mercies new every morning - <i>bread, breath, health, life, strength</i> • My body which is wonderfully made - <i>sight, hearing, touch, smell, etc</i> • All creation - <i>wonders of His amazing creation</i> • Blessings and Benefits received - <i>all that I have</i> • Bad, Sad, and Broken - <i>things that have gone wrong</i>
--	---

F O C U S O N Y O U	<p><u>Confess Sin</u> (Do spiritual inventory, open heart surgery)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your <u>W</u>ords - <i>have you spoken evil of anyone, criticized, sharp words</i> • Your <u>A</u>ttitudes - <i>complaining spirit, depressed, grouchy, know-it-all</i> • Your <u>T</u>houghts - <i>evil desires, lusts, doubts, fears, hatred, bitterness</i> • Your <u>A</u>ctions - <i>broken God's laws, trespassed on forbidden ground</i> <p><u>Clothe Yourself</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply God's forgiveness x 10 - <i>covered, forgotten, buried, etc.</i> • Reckon who you are in Christ - <i>I am...</i> • Raise the shield of faith against Satan - <i>resist, rebuke, command, etc</i> • Embrace a promise of God for this day - <i>I believe you God when you said...</i> <p><u>Cast your Care</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family - <i>each one by name and need</i> • Finances - <i>debts, needs, provisions, wisdom</i> • Frustrations - <i>with spouse, self, life, job, etc</i> • Fears, worries, <i>anxieties about tomorrow</i> • Failures - <i>faults, weaknesses, struggles, etc.</i>
--	--

Through the Day/Week

F O C U S O N O T H E R S	<p><u>Souls</u> (Monday)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That we establish an effective outreach and evangelism program. 2. That we constantly prioritize reaching lost people.(Kids, Youth, Adult) 3. That souls are saved every week & dramatic life-changing conversions. 4. That prayer meetings & partnerships labor, agonize, prevail, for souls. 5. That it becomes normal and expected that people get saved at church. <p><u>Saints</u> (Tuesday)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That God's people would grow faith-filled, and deep commitment. 2. That people would learn to <u>pray</u> and love to pray. 3. That <u>discipleship</u> would be a regular natural part of church life. 4. That openness and <u>fellowship</u> which shares Christ & struggles openly. 5. That people will have a hunger and thirst for God in <u>worship</u>. <p><u>Sick & Suffering</u> (Wednesday)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That people are regularly experiencing God's healing touch. 2. That we share openly what God is doing in healing. 3. That we as elders sincerely pray for healing of the sick. 4. That we have regular and special anointing services. 5. That we believe God for great-mighty things (healings, deliverance)
---	--

F O C U S O N W O R L D	<p><u>Ministries</u> (Thursday)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That leaders have passion to lead by shepherding example. 2. That we get leaders to support and be excited about ministries. 3. That leaders enthusiastically participate and lead prayer ventures. 4. That we establish a strong leadership training SEAN program. 5. That we effectively train 10-20% new Awana leaders annually. <p><u>Missionaries</u> (Friday)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That we be sending short-term missionaries annually. 2. That our missions giving excels. 3. That we pray passionately for "our" missionaries. 4. That we visually promote missionary highlights monthly. 5. That we have a strong children's & youth missions emphasis. <p><u>Magistrates & World</u> (Saturday)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That we pray diligently for National revival in America. 2. That we pray for Military personnel in harms way. 3. That we pray regularly for the President and cabinet. 4. Persecuted Church - God's imprisoned, persecuted, martyred 5. Yet Unreached Peoples - who have never heard of Jesus
--	--

Focus on God

1 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. 2 Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. 3 Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. 4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. 5 For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations. – Psalm 100

Make His Praise Glorious

Praise - Give Glory - Magnify - Worship -
Exalt/Extol - Sing - Ascribe - Bless - Declare
- Shout - Delight in - Honor - Behold - Love -
Clap - Lift up hands - Bow down -

Lord, You are _____ (attributes of God)
Lord, You are my _____ (Names of Jesus)
Lord, Your name is _____ (Jehovah-)

Jehovah Jireh-Provider / Jehovah Nissi--
Banner / Jehovah Shalom-Peace / Jehovah
Tsdkenu-Righteousness / Jehovah
Shammah-Present / Jehovah M'Kaddesh-
Sanctifier / Jehovah Rophe-Healer / Jehovah
Rohi-Shepherd

Be Thankful Unto Him

- His mercies new every morn
- His benefits
- His blessings
- His way and will is perfect
- Good, bad, and the ugly

“In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” – 1Thess 5:18

“I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. 2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. 3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. 4 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.” – Isaiah 6:1-4

Exalt His Name Together

Ancient of Days – Almighty – Alpha and Omega – Amen – Anchor – Author – Balm – Bread – Bridegroom – Brightness of glory – Bright Morning Star – Captain – Cornerstone – Counselor – Creator – Deliverer – Defense – Door – Eternal God – Everlasting Father – Fortress – First and Last – Immanuel – Hiding Place – High Tower – Judge – King of kings – King Eternal – Lamb of God – Lilly of the Valley – Lord Mighty in Battle – Lion of Judah – Life – Lifter of my head – Light – Living Bread – Living Way – Lord Strong Mighty – Love – Mediator – Mighty God – Omnipotent – Only Potentate – Prince of Peace – Potter – Redeemer – Refiner – Refuge – Rock – Rose of Sharon – Savior – Shelter – Shepherd – Shield – Sun of Righteous – Truth – Victor – Vine – Way – Wonderful

He Has Made

- Earth by his great power
- Me, I am fearfully and wonderfully made
- All things small and great
- All things richly to enjoy
- This day
- Good and evil

“Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?” – Ecclesiastes 7:13

Focus on Yourself

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. 9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. 10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. – James 4:7-10

Cleanse Your Heart

- Words - have you spoken evil of anyone, criticized, sharp words
- Attitudes - complaining spirit, depressed, grouchy, know-it-all
- Thoughts - evil desires, lusts, doubts, fears, hatred, bitterness
- Actions - broken God's laws, trespassed on forbidden ground

My Sin, Oh, The Bliss

- paid in full – Romans 5:11
- forgiven / pardoned – 1 John 1:9
- laid on Jesus – Is 53:6
- washed whiter than snow – Is 1:18
- covered – Ps 32:1
- cleansed by blood of Jesus – Heb 9:22
- blotted out (swept away) – Is 44:22
- removed east from west – Ps 103:12
- cast in depths of sea – Micah 7:19
- forever forgotten – Jeremiah 31:34.

Resist the Devil

- Bind the enemy Mat 18:18-20
- Resist the devil James 4:7
- Claim the blood Rev 12:11
- Declare loosing of captives Luke 4:18
- Pull down strongholds II Cor. 10:3-5
- Put a hedge of protection Ezk 22:30
- Command him to leave Mat 10:1
- Rebuke him in Jesus Mat 17:18

Stand Firm on the Promises of God.

Reckon Self To Be In Him

- I am...
- complete in him Col 2:10
 - free from sin's power Rom 6:14
 - sanctified wholly 1 Cor 6:11
 - meet for the Master's use 2 Tim 2:21
 - loved eternally 1 Pet 1:5 /
 - safe in the palm of his hand
 - kept from falling Jude 1:24
 - kept by the power of God 1 Pet 1:5
 - not condemned Rom 8:1-2
 - seated in heavenly places Eph 1:3
 - the head and not the tail Deut 28:13
 - protected from the evil one 1 Jn 5:18
 - secure in Christ Jn 10:28-29
 - set upon a Rock Ps 40:2
 - more-than-a-conqueror Rom 8:37

“Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. 6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: 7 And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. 8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.” – Isaiah 6:1-4

Who I Am In Christ

I AM GOD'S...

- possession Gen 17:8/ 1Cor 6:20
- child Jn 1:12
- workmanship Eph 2:10
- friend James 2:23
- temple 1 Cor 3:16/ 6:16
- vessel 2 Tim 2:2
- co-laborer 1 Tim 5:18
- witness Acts 1:8
- soldier 2 Tim 2:3
- ambassador 2 Cor 5:20
- building 1 Cor 3:9
- husbandry 1 Cor 3:9
- minister/instrument Acts 26:16 / 1 Tim 4:6
- chosen Eph 1:4
- beloved Rom 1:7/ 2 Thess 2:13
- precious jewel Mal 3:17
- heritage 1 Pet 5:3

I HAVE BEEN...

- redeemed by the blood Rev 5:9
- set free from sin /condemnation Rom 8:1-2
- set free from Satan's control Col 1:13
- set free from Satan's kingdom Eph 2
- chosen before foundation of world Eph 1:4
- predestined to be like Jesus Eph 1:11
- forgiven of all my trespasses Col 2:13
- washed in the blood of the Lamb Rev 1:5
- given a sound mind 2 Tim 1:7
- given the Holy Spirit 2 Cor 1:22
- adopted into God's family Rom 8:15
- justified freely by his grace Rom 3:24
- given all things pertaining to life 2 Pet 1:3
- given great and precious promises 2 Pet 1:4
- given ministry of reconciliation 2 Cor 1:22
- given wisdom Eph 1:8

I AM...

- complete in him Colossians 2:10
- free forever from sin's power Rom 6:14
- sanctified 1 Cor 6:11
- meet for the Master's use 2 Tim 2:21
- loved eternally 1 Pet 1:5 /
- eternally kept in his palm Jn 10:28
- kept from falling Jude 1:24
- kept by the power of God 1 Pet 1:5
- not condemned Rom 8:1-2
- on my way to heaven Jn 14:6
- quickened by his mighty power Eph 2:1

- seated in heavenly places Eph 1:3
- the head and not the tail Deut 28:13
- light in the darkness Mat 5:14
- candle in a dark place Mat 5:15
- city set on a hill Mat 5:14
- salt of the earth Mat 5:13
- his sheep Ps 23 / Ps 100:3/ Jn 10:14
- a citizen of heaven 1 Pet 2:11
- hidden with Christ in God Ps 32:7
- protected from the evil one 1 Jn 5:18
- kept by the power of God 1 Pet 1:5
- secure in Christ Jn 10:28-29
- set upon a Rock Ps 40:2
- more-than-a-conqueror Rom 8:37
- a victor, an overcomer 1 Jn 5:4
- healed by his strips Is 53:6
- hidden and sheltered under his wing Ps 91:4

I HAVE...

- access to the Father Rom 5:2 /Eph 3:12
- a home in heaven waiting for me Jn 14:1-2
- authority over the power of enemy Lk 10:19
- all things in Christ 2 Cor 5:17
- a living hope 1 Pet 1:3
- an anchor to my soul Heb 6:19
- a hope that is sure and steadfast Heb 6:19
- authority to tread on serpents Lk 10:19
- power to witness Acts 1:8
- the tongue of the learned Is 50:4
- the mind of Christ 1 Cor 2:16
- boldness and access Heb 10:19
- peace with God Rom 5:1
- faith as a grain of mustard seed Lk 17:6

I CAN...

- do all things through Christ Phil 4:13
- find mercy and grace to help Heb 4:16
- come boldly to the throne of grace Heb 4:16
- quench all the fiery darts Eph 6:16
- tread on the serpent Lk 10:19
- declare liberty to captives Is 61:1
- pray always and everywhere Lk 21:36
- chase a thousand Joshua 23:10
- defeat the enemy 1 Jn 2:14, 4:4

I CANNOT...

- be separated from God's love Rom 8:35-39
- be lost Jn 10:28
- be moved Ps 16:8
- taken out of the Father's hand Jn 10:29

What God Did With My Sin

1. They were paid in full – Romans 5:11. Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.
2. They were forgiven/pardoned – I John 1:9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.
3. They were laid on Jesus – Is 53:6. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.
4. They were washed whiter than snow – Is 1:18. "Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.
5. They were covered – Ps 32:1. Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.
6. They were cleansed by blood of Jesus – Heb 9:22. In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.
7. They were blotted out (swept away) – Is 44:22. I have swept away (blotted out) your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you." (Ps 51:1)
8. They were removed as far as east from west – Ps 103:12. as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.
9. They were cast in depths of sea – Micah 7:19. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.
10. They were forever forgotten – Jeremiah 31:34. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

Promises In Prayer

PRAYER

- Isaiah 65:24
- Psalm 37:4
- Psalm 37:5
- Jeremiah 33:3
- Jeremiah 32:17-18
- Matthew 18:19

PEACE

- Isaiah 26:3
- Isaiah 32:17
- Jeremiah 29:11
- Psalm 37:37

PROTECTION

- Psalm 91:3
- Isaiah 54:17
- Isaiah 43:2
- Jeremiah 15:20
- Psalm 5:11-12

SUPPLY

- Psalm 34:10
- Psalm 37:25
- Philippians 4:19
- 2 Corinthians 9:8

SUCCESS

- Joshua 1:8
- Psalm 1:3
- Romans 8:28

STRENGTH

- Isaiah 40:29
- Isaiah 40:31
- Isaiah 41:10
- Isaiah 41:13
- 2 Corinthians 12:9

DELIVERANCE

- Psalm 34:17,19
- Psalm 34:7,8
- Isaiah 59:19

LEADING

- Proverbs 3:6
- Isaiah 30:21
- Proverbs 16:3,9
- Psalm 37:23
- Isaiah 58:11
- Psalm 32:8

FEARS

- 2Timothy 1:7
- Isaiah 41:10
- Isaiah 41:13
- Psalm 34:4

SOULS

- Psalm 2:8
- Psalm 126:6
- 2 Peter 3:9

CHILDREN

- Isaiah 54:11-13
- Psalm 127:3
- Isaiah 59:21
- Isaiah 44:3
- Proverbs 22:6

WISDOM

- Isaiah 50:4
- Psalm 19:7
- Proverbs 1:7
- James 1:5

FORGIVENESS

- Psalm 86:5
- 1 John 1:9
- Isaiah 1:18
- Isaiah 43:25

GROWTH

- Philippians 1:6
- Acts 20:32
- Ephesians 3:20
- Jude 24

HEALING

- Exodus 15:26
- Psalm 103:3-4
- James 5:15
- Matthew 8:17

SLEEP

- Proverbs 3:24
- Psalm 4:8
- Psalm 127:2

WORD OF GOD

- Isaiah 55:11
- Jeremiah 23:29
- Acts 20:32
- Hebrews 4:12
- 2 Timothy 2:9
- 2 Timothy 3:16

A One Day Prayer Retreat

Extended prayer retreats alone with God are both biblical and helpful in developing an intimate relationship with God. God longs to walk with you in the cool of the day as he did with Adam. The problem is we are rarely there and when we are we are in a hurry to get on to some other busy plans. Take time to be holy. Set aside one day a month for extended prayer.

8:30 am – FOCUS ON GOD

- 9:00 am – Be Still (1)
- 9:30 am – *Journal to God about this day*

10:00 am – Be Worshipful (2)

10:30 am – *Walk and enjoy God's beauty*

11:00 am – Be Thankful (3)

11:30 am – *Smile, count blessings, study nature*

12:00 pm – Lunch

12:30 pm – FOCUS ON SELF

- 1:00 pm – Confession (4)
- 1:30 pm – *Walk & listen to sermon tape/music, etc*

2:00 pm – Cover Yourself in Armor (5)

2:30 pm – *Read, meditate, memorize*

3:00 pm – Cast all Cares on Him (6)

3:30 pm – Nap time / read / sleep / listen

4:00 pm – SCHEDULE YOUR NEXT PRAYER TIME!

4:30 pm – Adjournment

Remember prayer is fellowship with God, not just bending God's ear with a list of requests. It is those who "know their God" that shall be strong and do exploits. Get to know God in prayerful listening, whispering, singing, worshipping, reading, meditating, memorizing his word, etc.

This is my personal style for an ordered and disciplined time of extended prayer. There will be some who find it difficult or unrewarding to be so disciplined. In that case you need to develop your own style. Just be sure that it keeps you praying.

Promises are to be used, not just acknowledged and appreciated. Claim the truth of the promise in prayer. Lay hold of it by faith. Believe God for it.

Pray Songs and Hymns

There is great satisfaction in learning to “minister to the Lord.”

Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and [spiritual songs](#), singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; - Ephesians 5:19

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and [spiritual songs](#), singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. – Colossians 3:16

Preparation

Sweet Hour of Prayer
More Love to Thee
My Jesus, I Love Thee
Holy Ground
As the Deer

Hymns

Holy, Holy, Holy
All Hail the Power
To God Be the Glory
How Great Thou Art
Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing
O Worship the King

Exaltation

Holy Holy (chorus)
Holy, Holy, Holy (hymn)
He is Lord
We Worship and Adore You
I Love You, Lord
Bless the Lord O My Soul
Be Exalted, O God

Thanksgiving

Great Is Thy Faithfulness
And Can it Be
All Hail King Jesus
Glorify Thy Name
It is Well With My Soul
Thank You Lord for Saving My Soul

Examination

Jesus, I Come
Just as I Am
Search Me O God
Be Thou My Vision
Take Time to Be Holy
Open Our Eyes Lord
Change My Heart O God

Consecration

Take My Life and Let it Be
In My Life (Be Glorified)
Dear Lord and Father of Mankind
Refiners Fire (Purify My Heart)
Change My Heart O God
Create In Me A Clean Heart
Draw Me Closer

Burdens

I Cast All My Cares Upon You.
Burdens Are Lifted At Calvary
No One Understands Like Jesus
What a Friend We Have in Jesus

Adoration

I Exalt Thee
My Jesus, I Love Thee
I Love You Lord
Thou Art Worthy
Blessed Be The Name of the Lord
His Name Is Wonderful
As the Deer

Pray the Scriptures

A marked and well-used Bible can be a wonderful asset to prayer. Take the time to review the Scriptures listed below. Mark them in your Bible, even copy this list to the fly leaf. Then salt your corporate prayer times with God’s word.

Thanksgiving	Psalm 103, 104, 105, 107, Psalm 111, 118, 124, 126, 136, 139
Adoration	Psalm 111, 112, 113, 117, Psalm 134, 144, 145, 147, 148, 149, 150
Confession	Psalm 51, Psalm 139, Isaiah 6:1-6, Daniel 9:4-19, I John 1:5-10
Exaltation	Philippians 2:6-11, Rev. 4:8-11, Rev 5:6-14, Rev 7:9-12, Rev 19:16
Encouragement	Isaiah 40:28-31, 43:1-7, 44:1-3, 44:21-24, Isaiah 51:11-16, 54:7-17, 55:6-13 Isaiah 59:16-21, 61:1-3, 64:1-4, 62:1-7, Malachi 3:16-18
Longing After God	Psalm 27:1,4-8, Ps 42:1-5, Psalm 62:1-4, Ps 84:1-4, 9-12
Promises to Seekers	2 Chronicles 7:14-16, Jeremiah 29:11-14, Hosea 10:12, Isaiah 55:1-3, Isaiah 55:6-13
God’s Presence	Exodus 33:12-23, 34:5-8, Ex 40:32-35, 2 Chron. 5:11-14, 2 Chron. 7:1-3
Doxologies	Heb 1:3, I Tim 1:17, I Tim 6:15-16, Col 1:13-19, Philip 2:9-11, Eph 1:20-22, Rev 1:8, 1:13-18

Hints For Better Praying

1. Don't be in a hurry - Waiting on God is just that, "waiting."
2. Order your thoughts - Make your requests to God in an orderly way, topic by topic. Limit the time you spend on one topic. Refuse to be scatter-brained.
3. Surrender yourself to Him - Give the Lord verbally all your body, hands, eyes, feet, lips, ears,
4. Wait on the Lord - Just be quiet.
5. Behold the Lord - Worship and praise the Lord
6. Be thank-filled - Cultivate a thankful mind. Literally give God thanks for every thing.
7. Drink deeply from the well of salvation - Read from a devotional guide.
8. Minister to the Lord - Sing a song to the Lord
9. Let God talk to you - Read the Word quietly
10. Believe God's promises - Arm yourself with God's might

Actions In Prayer

Often in our praying we often adopt certain ways and stick to that pattern the rest of our lives. In studying the Word of God we find that prayer was not the passive event that we so often experience. The prayers and the pray-ers of the Bible were active in prayer.

A wonderful way to rejuvenate your Prayer Life is to begin exercising yourself in prayer as God intended. Take the Word seriously, not just the commands but the examples as well. Here are a few activities to practice as you pray.

- Lay the thing before God
- Write your prayer
- Cry out loud
- Move lips but no voice
- Kneel, bow down
- Lift up hands
- Stand in His presence
- Lay prostrate before Him
- Lay hands on someone needy
- Touch things you mention to God
- Agree together with another
- Walk around
- Look up to heaven
- Talk out loud to God (not to others)
- Sing to the Lord
- Raise a rod of authority
- Put on a praise garment
- Anoint with oil
- Grab onto a promise (remind God)
- Lay down on back
- Curl up in fetal position on knees

Positions & Actions In Prayer

In praying we often adopt certain ways and stick into that pattern the rest of our lives. In studying the Word of God we find that prayer was not the passive event that we so often experience. The prayers and the pray-ers of the Bible were active in prayer. A wonderful way to rejuvenate your Prayer Life is to begin exercising yourself in prayer as God intended. Take the Word seriously, not just the commands but the examples as well. Here are a few activities to practice as you pray.

1. Eyes open - John 11:41 / John 17:1
2. Tears shed - I Samuel 7-10/ Psalm 126:5-6
3. Shout/applaud/cheer - Ezra 3:11-14/ Ps 47:1
4. Sing - Psalm 100:4/ Ephesians 5:19
5. Loud voice - Acts 7:60
6. Unison - rush together making same noise - Acts 4:24
7. Speak to obstacle - Joshua 10:12 "Sun stand still"/ Mat. 21:21
8. Speak with no sound - I Samuel 1:7-10
9. Say "Amen" to others prayers - I Cor. 14:16
10. Fast - 2 Samuel 12:16/ Isaiah 58:6
11. Stand up - Nehemiah 9:3-5
12. Kneel - Eph. 3:14/ Philip.2:9-11
13. Lay down on bed - 2 Kings 20:2
14. Lay face on ground - 2 Chronicles 7:3
15. Walk (pace) - 2 Kings 4:33-35
16. Squat/bow down 2 Kings 18:42/ Ps. 95:6
17. Dance - 2 Samuel 6:14-16
18. Walk away, be restored - Mat. 5:23-24
19. Sackcloth & Ashes - 2 Kings 19:1
20. Sit - Mt. 26:36 / Mark 14:32,37-38
21. Bow head - Isaiah 58:5
22. Raise hands in praise - Psalm 134:2/ 143:6
23. Raise hands in authority - Exodus 17 8-15/Heb.12:11-12
24. Touch together the thing - Mat. 18:19 (sumphoneo)
25. Lift hand in blessing - Luke 24:50
26. Lay hands on (for commissioning) - Hebrews 6:2/ 1 Tim. 4:14
27. Anoint - Mark 6:13/ James 5:13-15
28. Spread it before the Lord - 2 Kings 19:14-15

Places of Prayer

Where Do You Pray?

Be careful not to make prayer a thing limited to your secret closet or at church. Praying is to be done everywhere. Paul exhorts us to prayer everywhere, and for all men. What would happen if we actually did that?

Try this: Instead of praying for people, pray with people. Instead of telling people we will pray for them, stop right then and there and pray **WITH THEM**. Whether you are in an office or factory floor, in the supermarket, or on a street corner. Practice praying **EVERYWHERE** by praying with people. Lay your hand on them as you do. You will find it exciting and transforming.

OUTDOORS

Mountain top - Luke 9:28-29
Wilderness - Mark 1:35
Desert place - Mark 1:35
Riverside - Acts 16:13
Garden - Mat 26:39-42
Hillside - Mat 14:23
On camping trip - Gen 32:24-30
Under a tree - 1 Kings 19:5
In a cave - 1 Kings 19:9
Beside a brook - 1 Kings 17:3-5
In a chariot - Acts 8:36-37
Up a tree - Luke 19:3
On the street - Acts 3:1-6
Street corners - Mt 6:5
Apart about a stone cast - Luke 22:41
By a brook - 1 Kings 17:3-5
On a walk - Luke 24:32

INDOORS PLACES

In a closet - Mt 6:6
In a home - Acts 12:12-13
Bed room - Daniel 6:10
Upper room - Acts 1:13-14
In synagogues - Mt 6:5
Roof top - Acts 10:9
At the table - Acts 27:35
In the Temple - Acts 4

PLACES OF TROUBLE

In a fiery furnace - Dan 3:25
On a boat - Jonah 1:6,14
Tossed at sea - Mark 4:8
Lions den - Daniel 6:22
Bottom of a well - Jer 38:6
In a dungeon - Acts 16:24-25
Isle of Patmos - Rev 1:1-2
Hanging on a cross - Luke 23:42
While being stoned - Acts 7:59-60
From belly of whale - Jonah 2:1

Music In Prayer

1. Sing for joy to God our strength; shout aloud to the God of Jacob! 2. Begin the music, strike the tambourine, play the melodious harp and lyre. 3. Sound the ram's horn at the New Moon, and when the moon is full, on the day of our Feast; 4. this is a decree for Israel, an ordinance of the God of Jacob. 5. He established it as a statute for Joseph when he went out against Egypt, where we heard a language we did not understand. 6. He says, "I removed the burden from their shoulders; their hands were set free from the basket. 7. In your distress you called and I rescued you, I answered you out of a thundercloud; I tested you at the waters of Meribah. (Psalm 81)

We usually do not equate prayer with music, but the Jews do. Did you ever listen to a Jewish worship service? The priest intones his prayers in music. Music is a gift of God and in prayer is a gift to God. Both Old and New Testaments are full of examples and commands for individuals and groups to sing unto the Lord. The key here is not just sing, but to whom we sing - sing unto the Lord. It is the most intimate of fellowships with God.

Sing unto the Lord

Sing unto the Lord is a command of Scripture in both Old and New Testaments. It will be part of our joys in heaven. Let us rehearse for heaven's courts and learn to practice the truth of Psalm 100.

"Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing."

David exhorted people everywhere to sing to the Lord... with psalms, with praises, with loud shouts, with dancing, with instruments, and much more. He made it a personal commitment stating "I will sing" again and again throughout the Psalms. He gives us his personal reasons for such singing too: "because it is good, pleasant, comely, and because He has... triumphed gloriously, dealt bountifully with me, redeemed my soul, done marvelous things, gotten the victory, done wondrous works, done excellent things, has great power, and He is a refuge in trouble. He also tells us how he does this singing ...with my whole heart, while

I have my being, upon his bed, in the congregation, in the night seasons, daily performing his vows.

Psalms, Hymns, Spiritual Songs

The New Testament is no less emphatic about singing to the Lord in prayer. In Revelation 15:3 it is the Song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. God reveals the victory that believers have over the powers of Satan, even after he is thrown down to earth with great wrath. The secret is in "the blood of the Lamb," but how often we forget the second part of that "the word of their testimony." That testimony is the song of the redeemed. Paul exhorts the church individually and corporately to sing unto the Lord. In Ephesians 5:19 he says, "*Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;*"

Then again in Colossians 3:16 he repeats: "*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*" Singing to the Lord is the badge of the believer. It is the "living water" flowing out of our bellies for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."

HINT:

One of my favorite activities in a personal prayer retreat is to carry along a Walkman with earphones and tapes of acapella worship music. It is simple, un-embellished, Christ-centered worship, and best of all I can sing along addressing each song from my heart to the Lord. You may choose to use music with instrumentation but be careful that it does not overpower, call attention to itself, or interrupt your communion with the Lord. If you play an instrument, harmonica, piano, flute, recorder, or even whistle use it to play skillfully to the Lord.

Use Songs In Prayer

Try singing on each step of Intimacy with God. Each of the steps lend themselves easily to hymns and songs that are reverent, worshipful and expressive of what we are praying about. Remember, these are not hymns and choruses about God but songs addressed to Him. Try it. Remember too, there are many more choruses, hymns and spiritual songs than we can suggest here.

- ⇒ **Be Still** - Be Still My Soul; I Come to the Garden Alone; Open My Eyes Lord; I Want to See Jesus I Will Keep My Mind Stayed on You
- ⇒ **Be Worshipful** - As the Deer; I Love You Lord; In Moments Like These; Jesus; Name Above All Names His Name is Wonderful; Be Exalted; Father I Love You; Isn't He?
- ⇒ **Be Thankful** - Give Thanks; God Is So God; In His (Your) Time; Allelujah - Thank you Jesus; Thank You Lord for Saving My Soul
- ⇒ **Confession** - Cleanse My Heart O God; Create In Me A Clean Heart; Spirit of God Descend Upon My Heart; Hide Me In Your Holiness; According To Thy Loving Kindness Father
- ⇒ **Clothe in Armor** - A Shield About Me; Fill Me Now; I Surrender All; Spirit of the Living God Fall Fresh On Me; Mighty Warrior
- ⇒ **Cast Cares** - Burdens are Lifted At Calvary; I Cast My Every Care Upon You; / No One Understands Like Jesus / What a Friend We Have in Jesus / Take Your Burden to the Lord and Leave It There

There are many old and new choruses that lend themselves to ministering to the Lord in songs of worship and adoration. The criteria for a worship song is that it must be addressed to the Lord as a prayer of worship, not just about the Lord or one's personal experience. They should be of simple melodies easily sung without instrument, as opposed to songs of difficult and complex meters. Choruses these days are changing faster than one can keep track. Here are a few suggestions to get you started.

Choruses of Worship

You should be careful to minister to the Lord, not just bombard him with requests. Refresh yourself in the Lord's presence by "singing songs, hymns, spiritual songs to the Lord." Use a chorus book or hymn book as offerings to the Lord.

Exaltation	His Name
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All Hail King Jesus - As the Deer - Be Exalted, O God - Bless the Lord O My Soul - Father I Love You - Holy Holy (chorus) - Holy, Holy, Holy (hymn) - Holy Ground - He is Lord - I Love You, Lord - I Exalt Thee - In Moments Like These - Majesty - Open My Eyes Lord - Thou Art Worthy - We Worship and Adore You 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alleluia, He's my Savior - Emmanuel - His Name Is Wonderful - Isn't He? - Jesus Is the Sweetest Name - Jesus, Name Above All Names - More Precious Than Silver - My Jesus I Love Thee - O Come Let Us Adore Him - Something About That Name - Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus - Spirit of Living God
Thanksgiving	Examination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - And Can it Be - All Hail King Jesus - Give Thanks - Glorify Thy Name - Great Is Thy Faithfulness - In His (Your) Time - It is Well With My Soul - Thank You Lord for Saving - God Is So God 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - According To Loving Kindness - Be Thou My Vision - Change My Heart O God - Create In Me A Clean Heart - Just as I Am - Hide Me In Your Holiness - Open Our Eyes Lord - Refiners Fire (Purify My Heart) - Search Me O God - Take Time to Be Holy
Surrender/Trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fill Me Now - He Is Able - I Surrender All - Learning To Lean - Open Our (My) Eyes Lord 	Burdens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Burdens Are Lifted At Calvary - I Cast All My Cares Upon You. - No One Understands Like Jesus - What a Friend We Have in Jesus

Intimacy with God

Retreats and Concerts

Biblical Steps to Intimacy With God

by Richard W. LaFountain

Personal Prayer Retreats

Have you ever had a prayer vacation? That's right, "A Prayer Vacation." It is really a personal prayer retreat. Several years ago I began the discipline of scheduling regular (and irregular) times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

Elijah discovered the value of such extended times with the Lord during his misadventures with Jezebel (I Kings 19). Jesus often went on such retreat into "a mountain apart to pray" and he invited his disciples to "come apart and rest." Paul practices the discipline of prolonged times of prayer as well. In fact every man or woman of God throughout the history of the church has found this to be a secret to spiritual strength and refreshing.

Wesley Duewel, in his wonderful book, Touch the World Through Prayer, testifies of the strength this discipline has brought to his own life and ministry even in times when his schedule seemed too busy for it. (The book is available free of charge in our church office.)

I have been encouraged recently when several friends in ministry, men and women of God, shared with me that they too have begun to set apart periodic times for personal prayer retreats. I would encourage you to do it as well.

Devotional Books for Prayer Retreats

- Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire - Jim Cymbala
- 7 Basic Steps to Successful Fasting & Prayer - Bill Bright
- Touch the World Through Prayer - Wesley Duewel
- Binding and Loosing - Neil Foster
- Authority of the Believer - J.A. MacMillan
- God Chasers - Tommy Tenny

(Often your pastor or church library has these books available to loan. Otherwise get them at a discount from Christian Book Distributors 1-)

Hints

1. Schedule it with God just as you would any other appointment. Write it into the calendar.
2. Find a secluded place where you can be alone with God and your thoughts.
3. Meet God alone. If you have a young family to care for ask a friend or relative to care for them for a day so you can meet with God alone.
4. Make it an overnight experience to give yourself plenty of time. Don't rush it. Make it two nights if you are really hungry for God.

What to Do

1. Read the Bible. Perhaps target to read one of the Gospels, the book of Romans, or an Old Testament Book like Genesis or Kings.
2. Discipline yourself in a pattern of prayer. Use the six steps of preparation the pastor taught and then six topics for intercessory prayer. I do 45-50 minutes of prayer on each step throughout the day - 12 hours of prayer - sounds impossible but it works.
3. Fast or at least drink lots of juices. It is not a time for feasting. Take along some crackers or snacks if you are not an experienced faster. But don't let fasting distract you from prayer. It is more important to pray than to fast. There are no "brownie points" for endurance.
4. Go for a walk with God. Enoch did.
5. Sing songs to the Lord. Choruses or hymns from memory or from a songbook. God is listening and enjoying fellowship with you. (Ephesians 5: 19 and Colossians 3:16)
6. Take a nap. Elijah did. It's OK. "He gives his beloved sleep." "Rest in the Lord."
7. Read a good devotional book on prayer or the deeper life. Don't try reading it all at once. Read a chapter each hour or a couple of reading periods during the day.

Resources:

1. Touch the World Through Prayer, by Wesley Duewel.
2. Take a familiar Bible, a notebook for journaling your thoughts, a devotional book to read, a clock, comfortable walking shoes, a Walkman and earphones and worship music.

Places to Go:

Most of us find it difficult to go away from people. People and noise are everywhere. Yet there are places specifically set apart as Retreat Centers dedicated to prayer and silence. Seek out such a place. If you have a pop-up camper or a trailer or RV you could go just about anywhere to camp in the off-season and get alone with God. *(Perhaps it could be a worthy ministry to loan your cabin, camper or RV to other believers that want a private place to get away.)*

Here are some Retreat Centers. Usually the cost is nominal to very reasonable most around \$20-25 per night some allow a stay on a freewill offering basis.

For many more retreat locations:

www.retreatsonline.com/usa/pennsylvania/all_retreats.htm

Prayer Seminars and Retreats:

College of Prayer - a three day seminar retreat is conducted quarterly with specialized training in prayer disciplines and ample time alone to pray. Beulah Beach Conference Grounds - 6101 West Lake Road, Vermilion, Ohio 44089, Phone: 440-967-4861 (it is 2 hours from Grove City, PA and 2.5 hours from Pittsburgh) Cost: \$75 registration and \$75 for food and lodging. Web site: www.BeulahBeach.org/cop.html

Want more details about a Prayer Retreat? Check out our web site:

WWW.PRAYERTODAY.ORG

A Quiet Retreat

Peace and quiet are rare birds recently placed on the endangered species list. The Lord commands us to *“Be still and know that he is God.”* Yet most of us have no clue what this “stillness” is like in our hyperactive culture. God sadly scolds his tired people in Isaiah, *“In quietness and confidence would be your strength... but you would not.”* Jesus invited his weary soldiers to *“come away with me and rest awhile.”*

Be Still?

“Be still” is a command, not a suggestion! Stillness is a virtue seldom sought in our success-driven, hyper-active, church-growth culture of evangelical Christendom. I often feel like I am wearing a red flag in the yearly “running of the bulls” – or is the “running of the fools”? I’m pushed by the stampede of ever-necessary, never-ending, well-meaning church to do’s. In our breathless drive to achieve we seldom see a break in the endless merry-go-round where we can jump off to catch our breath and get a new, calmer perspective on life.

Purposeful Pauses

If you don’t incorporate purposeful pauses in your conversations you are probably wearying your listeners with your endless droning. These is not a panic pause of “Help, I lost my place!”) Purposeful pauses let you take a breath and listen. It is deliberate rest to let God’s Word sink in. It is time to give the Spirit room to speak in silent moments. It is the “pause that refreshes.”

Peaceful Prayer Pauses

I call them my personal prayer retreats. They are one or two night get-aways to be alone with God in silence. It’s “a quiet rest, far from the noise and pace, where God can soothe your troubled heart.” God invites you In fact He is calling you. *“Be still and know that I am God.”*

A Silent Retreat

We want to encourage everyone to go on a personal prayer retreat three times per year. You will find it refreshing. Finding adequate time to get away is always a chore. Give yourself lots of time to pray. Plan your own pace and schedule. Try alternating each hour between prayer and prayerful activities. Make it your goal to enjoy the Lord in all that you do.

A few years ago I began a new discipline of quarterly Personal Prayer Retreats. Through a friend I found a Catholic Retreat Center in Wexford, PA, where for a donation pastors were welcome to enjoy their facilities to spend time in a private prayer retreat. Since donations fit my budget I signed up. The day I arrived they welcomed me warmly, howbeit in whispered voices. The director clarified that I was welcome to stay on one condition; “That you speak to no one but God while here.” She explained that I had arrived in the midst of their annual Retreat of Silence where there were ten other people dedicating the week to prayer alone. So I was introduced to three days of holy silence. Wow! What a wonderful experience! I came away craving for more and was forever addicted to “Jesus Alone” prayer retreats.

For the past nine years I have tried to maintain the discipline of a Personal Prayer Retreat at least three times a year. All too often I fail because I find myself addicted to my ministry instead of to my Savior. Over the past three years I have attended the College of Prayer at Beulah Beach as part of that discipline. But I find it too much talk and teaching for my tastes, so I beg out of many meetings to meet with Jesus alone. They are gracious enough to ignore my absence at all the meetings knowing I have a higher appointment. These times at the Beach have enabled me to meet with brothers and sisters of like mind, to learn their prayer disciplines, and to share our prayer experiences together. It has been a life-changing experience. I am sure it will be for you too.

Schedule to Pray

Most of us find that we need a daily planner and a calendar so we can schedule our lives. Without a schedule we'd never get anything done. So it is with prayer. Without a schedule you probably will not get it done. Put God into your day-timer and on your calendar just as you would any other appointment with important people.

What's On Your Agenda?

An important item on all of our agendas is prayer – or so we say. Yet how many of us really schedule God appointments with the care and precision of a meeting with a new boss? God laments the forgetfulness of his own people in Jeremiah 2:32. *“Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number.”* Unfortunately, it is not the occasional one-time appointment that we miss, but too often it is “days without number.” We prioritize our jobs, our careers, our families, our friends, and even our churches, but when do we prioritize our appointments with God? Do we even have marked appointments with God? It is very embarrassing to forget an important one-time meeting with your boss, but to frequently miss your appointment with the King of Kings says something about our priorities and first-love.

Pray-Timer

God must have first place, not in words or rhetoric but in reality. Appointments with him are really more important than any other meetings on our bulging Day-Timers, and over-filled calendars. Over the years I have learned (and continue to learn) that I must schedule in my appointments with God just like any other appointment. God is not to be the God of my leftovers. He is Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. Let him be that in reality in my day-timer. Here are some of my yet imperfect calendared events with the Savior.

A Prayer Schedule

An Hour a Day

Jesus question to his weary disciples was, *“Could you not watch one hour?”* It echoes in my ears. I am sure the Lord does not have a chronometer running while we pray to see if we can pray for sixty minutes. But at the very best one hour each day ought to be annexed from all other activity to give our attention and focus to the Lord. This may included my Bible reading, singing, journaling, and on-you-knees prayer time. The point is to spend unhurried time with God alone. Prayer is listening to God, and talking to God.

Half-Day Each Week

For me Thursday works best. Often it is a half-day (or four hours) of fasting and prayer in which my morning until noon is spent in prayer time alone with God. Now obviously this is a pastoral discipline and cannot be practiced by the average working person. But it can be done by pastors, retired people, and people with flexible schedules. It could also be done as a four-hour period by anyone if you choose to use a Saturday or Sunday, or a week night of prayer. Again, I often use my Prayer Plan to guide me and keep me focused during this time.

A Day Each Month

I look forward to a day each month as a prayer day. The entire day is dedicated to being alone with God in a place apart from my normal routine. It must be away from phones, books, and the clamor of routine duties. For me it has worked best at the end of each month usually a Monday or Tuesday. I do not mind taking my day off to do this pleasurable task. A friend of mine goes to a university library and finds a quiet corner in which to read, pray, journal, and uses the campus to walk and worship. He also uses the day to evaluate his life and ministry according to a set pattern.

Three Days Each Quarter

I begin the year by marking these days on my calendar before anything else can crowd them out. These are days spent at a retreat center, camp, or other lonely place away from the daily clamor of activities. It is a time of great refreshing from the Lord. I spend huge amounts of time slowing down and being still before the Lord. Sometimes I spend the days with a group of people such as the College of Prayer or a Prayer Summit but much time is designated as time alone with God. I take along my prayer journal, my Prayer Plan, worship tapes and CDs, walking shoes, devotional readings on prayer, my Bible and verses to memorize. These days are the most precious day of my life.

A One-Day Retreat Schedule

Prayerful Activities

Think & Plan

Dream God's Visions
Plan Goals
Plan Yearly Calendar
Write Sermon/Lessons
Write Thoughts/Ideas
Journal to God
Evaluate Your Life
Evaluate Your Ministry
Make Family Plans
Do a Word Study

Rest

Take a Holy Nap
Go for a Walk
Sing to the Lord
Worship with Tapes
Converse With a Friend
Play an Instrument

Read and Study

Read Scriptures
Read on Leadership
Read on Prayer
Read Bible
Listen to Scripture
Listen to a Sermon
Study the Promises
Memorize Promises
Meditate on the Cross
Meditate on Creation
Meditate on Promises

8:30 am – **Talk:** Stillness: Alone With God

9:00 am – Be Still (1)

9:30 am – *Journal to God about this day*

10:00 am – Be Worshipful (2)

10:30 am – *Walk and enjoy God's beauty*

11:00 am – Be Thankful (3)

11:30 am – *Smile, count blessings,
study nature*

12:00 pm – Light Lunch as needed

12:30 pm **Talk:** Self Examination Preparation

1:00 pm – Confession (4)

1:30 pm – *Walk & listen to sermon tape/music*

2:00 pm – Cover Yourself in Armor (5)

2:30 pm – *Read, meditate, memorize*

3:00 pm – Cast all Cares on Him (6)

3:30 pm – Nap time / read / sleep / listen

4:00 pm – **Talk:** Planing Your Prayer Retreats

4:30 pm – Adjournment

Remember prayer is fellowship with God, not just bending God's ear with a list of requests. It is those who "know their God" that shall be strong and do exploits. Get to know God in prayerful listening, whispering, singing, worshiping, reading, meditating, memorizing his word, etc.

3-Day Retreat Schedule

Day 1 – Friday or Sunday Evening

5 pm – Early Bird Time (arrival and unwind)

6 pm – Supper and Orientation -
"A Strategy Alone With God"

7 pm – Quiet time to "be still," walk and pray

8 pm – Worship Together - no preaching

9 pm – Journaling -
"Tell God why you came."

10 pm – Free Time - Fellowship

Sleep 11:00 pm – 7:00 am

Day 2 – Saturday or Monday

7 am – Rise and Shine

8 am – Breakfast - Group: Morning Worship

9 am – *God time!*

10 am – *God time!*

11 am – *God time!*

12 am – Light Lunch (share experiences)

1 pm – Nap time

2 pm – *God time!*

3 pm – *God time!*

4 pm – *God time!*

5 pm – Supper - (share experiences)

6 pm – *God time!*

7 pm – *God time!*

8 pm – Worship: Sharing Insights on Prayer

9 pm – *Fellowship Time*

10 pm – *Whatever!*

Sleep 11:00 pm – 7:30 am

Day 3 – Sunday or Tuesday (half-day)

6 am - Rise and Shine

7 am – Breakfast

8 am – *Group Worship*

9 am – Communion & Anointing

10 am – Leave for Home

11 am – *Prayer or Study Time!*

12 am – *Prayer or Study Time!*

Prayerful Activities

Think & Plan

Plan & Dream God's Visions
Plan Goals
Plan Yearly Calendar
Plan Sermon Calendar
Write Sermon/Lessons
Write Your Thoughts/Ideas
Write or Journal to God
Evaluate Your Personal Life
Evaluate Your Ministry
Make Personal/Family Plans
Do a New Testament Word Study

Rest

Take a Holy Nap
Go for a Walk with God
Sing to the Lord
Worship with Tapes/CDs
Talk About Prayer, Ministry
Converse With a Friend
Play an Instrument to the Lord

Read and Study

Read Scriptures
Read a Book on Leadership
Read a Book on Prayer
Read the Prayers of the Bible
Listen to Scripture Tapes
Listen to a Sermon
Study the Promises of God
Memorize some Promises
Meditate on the Cross
Meditate on God's Creation
Meditate on God's Promises

Study and Preparations

Spend Time Reading on Vision
Plan your Yearly Preaching
Schedule
Envision What God Longs to Do
Read a Book for Sermon Prep

This is my personal style for an ordered and disciplined time of extended prayer. There will be some who find it difficult or unrewarding to be so disciplined. In that case you need to develop your own style. Just be sure that it keeps you praying.

Pastor's Prayer Retreat

We encourage serious pastors and ministry staff to go on retreat three times per year. You will find it refreshing. Finding adequate time to get away is always a chore. Give yourself lots of time to pray. Plan your own pace and schedule. Try alternating each hour between prayer and prayerful activities. Make it your goal to enjoy the Lord in all that you do.

Day 1 – Sunday Evening

5 pm – Arrival and Supper
6 pm – Prayer stroll - quite your heart
7 pm – Journaling – Tell God why you are here
8 pm – Joint Meeting – Share Your Retreat Plan
9 pm – Read Scripture / Book on Prayer
10 pm – BREAK: (whatever you like)
Sleep 11:00 pm – 7:30 am

Day 2 – Monday

7:30 am – Rise and Shine
8 am – Breakfast
9 am – God Focus – *Be Still, Worshipful, Thankful*
10 am – You Focus – *Confession, Clothe, Cast Care*
11 am – People Focus – *for burdens & ministry*
12 am – Light Lunch
1 pm – Nap time
2 pm – *Prayer and Planning - reading on Prayer*
3 pm – *Prayer and Planning - dream and journal*
4 pm – *Prayer and Planning - plan making / calendar*
5 pm – Supper - (use the time for sharing ideas)
6 pm – *Walk and Pray*
7 pm – *Worship Time - CDs or Tape*
8 pm – *Read on Leadership / Vision*
9 pm – BREAK: Free Time
Sleep 11:00 pm – 7:30 am

Day 3 – Tuesday

7 am – Rise and Shine
8 am – Breakfast
9 am – *Private Worship*
10 am – *Prayer for Church People*
11 am – *Prayer for Goals & Plans*
12 am – Lunch and Leave

Some pastors may find it convenient and helpful to stay the afternoon to continue their study and prayer.

Prayerful Activities

Think & Plan

Plan & Dream God's Visions
Plan Goals
Plan Yearly Calendar
Plan Sermon Calendar
Write Sermon/Lessons
Write Your Thoughts/Ideas
Write or Journal to God
Evaluate Your Personal Life
Evaluate Your Ministry
Make Personal/Family Plans
Do a New Testament Word Study

Rest

Take a Holy Nap
Go for a Walk with God
Sing to the Lord
Worship with Tapes/CDs
Talk About Prayer, Ministry
Converse With a Friend
Play an Instrument to the Lord

Read and Study

Read Scriptures
Read a Book on Leadership
Read a Book on Prayer
Read the Prayers of the Bible
Listen to Scripture Tapes
Listen to a Sermon
Study the Promises of God
Memorize some Promises
Meditate on the Cross
Meditate on God's Creation
Meditate on God's Promises

Study and Preparations

Spend Time Reading on Vision
Plan your Yearly Preaching
Schedule
Envision What God Longs to Do
Read a Book for Sermon Prep

Prayer Summit Retreat

The Prayer Summit is a Thursday evening, all day Friday and part of Saturday. It is dedicated to private prayer and geared to allow the participants to experience large and spacious times alone with God. We call it a God-soaking. It begins on a Thursday evening with a general orientation as to how to conduct your retreat schedule. Friday is dedicated entirely to prayer. Lectures on prayer begin on Friday evening and all day on Saturday.

Day 1 – Thursday Evening - “Slowing Down”

6 pm – Arrival and supper together
7 pm – Worship Together
8 pm – How to Hold a Personal Prayer Retreat
9 pm – Tell God why you are here. - journaling
10 pm – Personal Reading & Bedtime
Sleep 10:30 pm – 6:30 am

Day 2 – Friday - “Yearning for Him”

7 am – Simple Breakfast
8 am – *Be still, get a quiet heart (1)*
9 am – *Be Worshipful (2)*
10 am – *Confession and introspection (4)*
11 am – *Be Thankful (3)*
12 am – Lunch - soup and sandwich
1 pm – walk & listen to sermon tape/music, etc
2 pm – *Clothe yourself (5)*
3 pm – Nap time / read / sleep / listen
4 pm – *Cast Your Care on Him (6)*
5 pm – Supper
6:30 pm – Joint worship time
7:00 pm – Lecture 1
8:00 pm – Coffee Break
8:30 pm – Lecture 2
9:30 pm – Dismissed to travel home
10 pm – Fellowship Time
Sleep 10:30 pm – 6:30 am

Day 3 – Saturday - “Learning of Him”

7 am – Breakfast - and sharing
8 am – Lecture 3
9 am – Lecture 4
10:00 – *God Time!*
11 am – *God Time!*
12 am – Lunch & Close

This is an extended time for seeking God and learning to pray.

We have suggested that it be 3-times a year to coincide with long weekends when many might have Friday off. It could also be done on weekends when many have Monday off.

You may find it helpful to begin on Friday evening through Sunday noon, or even Monday noon, giving a maximum time for prayer and teaching.

Teaching done in the evenings and Saturday morning affords opportunity for people to drive in for the day.

The first orientation should be mandatory for everyone attending.

Saturday afternoon and evening and into Sunday are options for those who can stay for more lectures on prayer. We schedule the closing for Sunday a.m. early so that many may leave in time to participate in their local church services.

Concert of Prayer: Focus on God

Focus on God	BE STILL 10 minutes on each (Solo Time) Songs: Sweet Hour of Prayer Scripture: [Psalm 46:10, Psalms 27:13-14, Is 30:13-21, Is 40:28-31] In holy awe get alone with God for quieting your heart. Kneel before him, lay prostrate. Be still, keep silence, slow down and put away your list of to-dos. Sweep the cobwebs of your mind so you can focus only on the Lord. Wait on the Lord, and again I say, WAIT on the Lord. Listen for his still small whisper - "Peace be still." Songs: Open My Eyes Lord

Focus on God	BE WORSHIPFUL 10 minutes on each (Corporate Celebration) Songs - <i>Bless the Lord, I Love You Lord, Crown Him With Many Crowns</i> Scripture: [Ps 100, Rev. 1:12-17, 5:8-14] Adoration together lifting our eyes toward the Lord - "I saw the Lord high and lifted up." Praise his name together, tell of his excellent greatness, and sing to the Lord, and worship at his footstool. Make it a time of ministering to the Lord. Magnify him! Songs - <i>As the Deer, I Exalt Thee</i>

Focus on God	BE THANKFUL 10 minutes on each (Group Time) Songs: Great Is Thy Faithfulness Scripture: [Neh 12:27, 31, 40, 43 Ps 103,] Give thanks to God for everything! Literally exhaust all the possibilities of things to be thankful for. Tell the Lord. Thank Him! For Creation, for your body, life, health, for friends, for provisions, answers to prayer, your church, your ministry, your family. Then give thanks for the hard things - the trials, the sicknesses, the failures, the good, the bad, and the ugly. Songs: Give Thanks

Concert of Prayer: Focus on Self

Focus on You	CONFESS SIN 10 minutes on each (Solo & Group Time) Songs: <i>Change My Heart O God</i> Scripture: [Daniel 9:4-19, Is 6:1-8] Use half the time for personal introspection and confession of sin, self examination and surrender to God. The other half to share with each other. "Confess your faults (failures & frustrations) one to another and pray one for another." My Sin My Church My Nation Songs: <i>It Is Well (My sin O the bliss!)</i>

Focus on You	CLOTHE YOURSELF 10 minutes on each (Group & Corporate Time) Songs: <i>Spirit of the Living God Fall Fresh On Me</i> Scripture: [Eph 6:10-20, Matt 18:18] Spend half the time in groups identifying strongholds, areas of attack in your church. Then stand together in a large circle and apply the promises and principles of authority of the believer. "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." "Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven." "Stand in the gap...make up a hedge." <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reckon Your Sin Covered • Reckon Your Position in Christ • Resist the Devil Song: <i>A Mighty Fortress</i>

Focus on You	CAST YOUR CARE 10 minutes on each (Small Groups) Songs: I Cast All My Care Scripture: [1 Peter 5:7, Heb 4:16] Share personal burdens and heartaches to be laid down before the cross. Then either assemble (in sanctuary or in small groups) for a time of anointing, laying on of hands and prayer one for another for personal struggles, and physical needs. (Can be altogether or in groups of 3-4) Songs: Burdens Are Lifted At Calvary

Intimacy with God Workbook

A Prayer Strategy

Biblical Steps to Intimacy With God

by Richard W. LaFountain

Step 1 – BE STILL

On no other step is it more important to begin and continue to use the 3-minute timer. It is the only way I know of to make myself be still before the throne.

The secret is in the discipline of laying aside everything else until your heart, mind and spirit are quiet before God. God says, “Be still!” The choice to obey him or not is up to you. Obedience begins here.

Let go of “stuff”	Put off your hurry, your lists of things to do, or your anxiety over tomorrow. It is not time for those things. Put them off. Write them down if you must, but put them away. It is time to seek the Lord!
Present yourself	Once you have laid those things aside then you can surrender your empty hands and prepared mind for his use in prayer. Surrender yourself as a living sacrifice to God, holy and acceptable. Lay down on the floor if it helps you to surrender completely to him.
Wait ...	Now be still. Just wait. Listen for the sand falling in the hour glass. Can’t hear it can you? Shhh! Be still. Don’t speak. Don’t think words. Silence! Listen for the heartbeat of God.

Recognize at the start that until you have trained yourself in the discipline of stillness this will not be possible in three minutes. It is more likely to take 15 minutes for the first few weeks. For me as a hyperactive Type A personality, it took about 30 minutes per day during the first weeks. It is not a race. Don’t hurry in or out of the presence of God.

Remember God is waiting for you. God is more interested in this discipline than all the others combined. He wants time with you. This is the most important step. Learn it well. Learn it best. You’ll grow to love this time of stillness so much that you will long for it.

Rest in the Lord. Don’t go on to the next step until your heart is no longer hurried, your mind is quiet, and your will to do is broken, and you are basking in the sunshine of God’s presence. From there you will move naturally into the second step - worship.

Practical Disciplines

1. Make your mind a sanctuary. Make your mind stop its commotion and noise! Listen to the din of confused voices reminding you of duties, tasks and obligations. Then silence them! Your mind is not a noisy playground, it's a sanctuary. Make it obey you.
2. Slow down! Remember "relax" is the word for "be still" in Hebrew. Consciously loosen the tension of every muscle. It won't come naturally so work at learning to be quiet! 1 Thessalonians 4:11 "*Study (force yourself) to be quiet.*"
3. Fix your eyes on Jesus - behold the beauty of the Lord. Like the angels in heaven and all creatures before the throne present yourself to God in stillness. Imagine yourself prostrate at his feet before his throne.
4. Take a few deep breaths. At first take long slow deep breaths. Hold it a few seconds. Let it out slowly. Control it! You'll be amazed at how it begins to quiet your body, which in turn affects thoughts too.

Solitary Place

Silence Before Him

Slow Down

Stop Everything

Set aside to-do lists

Surrender self before Him

Step 2 – WORSHIP

Alpha and Omega Praise

Praise His name through the alphabet. Lift up and exalt God's names beginning with A and end with Z. (Alpha and Omega - 26 Praises) Do it together in the congregation. Attempt to give 3-5 on each letter. There are more than 600 names of God and the Lord Jesus Christ is Scripture.

A _____
B _____
C _____
D _____
E _____
F _____
G _____
H _____
I _____
J _____
K _____
L _____
M _____
N _____
O _____
P _____
Q _____
R _____
S _____
T _____
U _____
V _____
W _____
X _____
Y _____
Z _____

Group Exercise (10 minutes max)

Simply writing down God's names may or may not be worship. Worship is exalting His Names together. So let's do it. In groups of 3 begin to worship the Lord by telling him of his excellent greatness. Exalt his name together.

Discipline

Do not allow yourself to drift into confession, or thanksgiving or petition. This is a time solely to "behold His beauty."

Step 3 – GIVE THANKS

“Enter his gates with thanksgiving.”

Thankful Exercises

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise. Be thankful unto him and bless his holy name. (Psalm 100) Now it is time to celebrate His specific acts, mercies, faithfulness, kindness, benefits, blessings, answers to prayer, and goodness.

<u>General</u> <u>Thanks</u> for all His creation and blessings.	Psalm 139 is an excellent meditation to prime your thanksgiving pump.
<u>Specific</u> <u>Thanks</u> for blessings and benefits to you.	Psalm 103 is a good starting place. “All his benefits...” covers a lifetime of good things God has done and given to you. This is a good place to journal your thanks to God. Make a list on a sheet of paper 1-100. Begin the process of thanking God for 100 benefits. Refuse to leave thanksgiving until your heart is overjoyed at God’s goodness
<u>Tearful</u> <u>Thanks</u> for all things - the bad, the ugly, the unwanted.	Make a list of all the bad things you have been bemoaning. List them to God. Ask him to help you believe that he is using that for His glory and your good. Believe him! Read Romans 8:28 and put your heartache into the passage. Turn “all things” into, for example “My financial loss God is working together for good. Believe Jeremiah 29:11 Tell God you believe it! Rejoice in it! It is true!

Thank God for Past, Present, Future

Past Answered Prayers and Blessings

Bad Things That Have Happened

Present Circumstances & Blessings

Promises of What Will Happen

People God had placed in my life who are blessings.

Problems that are opportunities for God’s grace and goodness.

*Faith is seeing what is not yet
visibl e to the rest,
but what God has al ready promised.*

Step 4 – CONFESSION OF SIN

“If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” 1 John 1:9

CONFESSION CHECKLIST

(Check up on your own secret sins)

Selfish desires	_____	James 4:3
Secret sins	_____	Psalm 66:18
Idle words	_____	Matthew 12:36
Lustful fantasies	_____	Matthew 5:28
Marriage conflicts	_____	I Peter 3:7b
Ingratitude	_____	Philippians 4:4-8
Unforgiving Attitudes	_____	Mark 11:25-26
Unresolved conflicts	_____	Matthew 5:23
Doubt	_____	Hebrews 11:6a
Prayerlessness	_____	James 1
Indecision & doubt	_____	Hebrews 11:6b / Jer 2:32
Bitterness	_____	James 1:6
Rebellion of heart	_____	Hebrews 12:15
Known disobedience	_____	I Samuel 15:23
Temper	_____	James 4:17
Anger	_____	Ephesians 4:26-27
Impatience with others	_____	Ephesians 4:26, 31
Murmuring/complaining	_____	Ephesians 4:32
Lying/saying half-truths	_____	1 Corinthians 10:10
Strife in your heart	_____	Colossians 3:9

There are sins that *"easily beset us"* that serve only to weigh us down and cause us shame and hinder our fellowship with God. (Hebrews 12:1) Each of us has our own set of reoccurring sins. Confession is laying it out before the Lord... for *"all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."* (Hebrews 4:13)

MY BESETTING SINS

(Lord, these are areas I need cleansing and forgiveness!
They are sins in my heart and life that keep returning.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

My Sin Inventory

My Words

My Attitudes

My Thoughts

My Actions

Step 5 – CLOTHE IN HIS ARMOR

Believe God For Your Position In Christ

I Am...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

I Can...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

I Cannot...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

I Have Been ...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

I Have...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

My Sins Have Been...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Identify Enemy Strongholds

TRIALS Attacked & Sieges	TORMENTS Oppression of the enemy	TRAGEDIES Bondage to the enemy
<u>People</u> -	<u>Depression</u> -	<u>Drugs</u> -
<u>Finances</u> -	<u>Physical</u> -	<u>Sexual deviations</u> -
<u>Family</u> -	<u>Fears</u> -	<u>Abusive behavior</u> -
<u>Marriage</u> -	<u>Anger</u> -	<u>Insanity</u> -
<u>Problems</u> -	<u>Moral</u> -	<u>Occult involvement</u> -
<u>Physical</u> -	<u>Backslider</u> -	<u>Cults</u> -

Step 6 – CAST YOUR BURDENS

OK, now it is time to dump your load. What is on your mind and heart? It is not about a prayer list, but about your inner longings, your hurts, your pain, your worries, your fears, your anxieties, your family, your finances, your fun, your foolishness, your failures, etc.

Tell God all about it. Unload and leave it here at the foot of the cross. He cares about your worries, your fears, your troubles, your sicknesses, your temptations, your finances, your family, your children, your spouse, your marriage, your job, your tests, your trials, and your needs. There is nothing that you care about that God doesn't care about.

Family	Place each family member before the Lord. Name them by name. Tell God about their lives, needs, spiritual condition. Surrender each one to Him.
Frustrations	Begin with your marriage and your relationship. Are there frustrations? Is there anything that needs to change?
Fears	Tell God about your fears, worries, or anxieties.
Finances	Tell God about your financial concerns, goals, aspirations, debts, your needs, wants, wishes, worries.
Faults	Tell God about you. Your weaknesses. Your temptations. This is not confession, we have already done that.
Failures	It is time to be naked and honest before the throne.

Exercise (10 minutes max)

Confession is already past but "to one another" is not. It is also time to "bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ." No one can help you to bear a burden if they do not know what it is. Share your key burdens, worries and fears with your prayer partners as you are able.

Discipline

There will be no time after this point in your intercession to go back to self petitions. This is the time to lay them fully before God so as to NOT take them up again. Dumping on God is one thing. It is quite another to dump in faith knowing that you are doing it at his invitation because "He cares for you." So thank him for hearing, being touched with the feeling of your infirmities."

CLOSE YOUR TIME OF INTIMACY

Intimacy with God is very personal. It is a rich time of fellowship with God and personal inventory through the work of God's Spirit. It is a good thing to take a break at this point in your prayer time, unless of course you are doing the hour of intercession and not an extended time. Go for a walk. Give yourself a time of rejoicing. Listen to worship tapes and let your heart be glad in the Lord. He is with you. Enjoy basking in His presence.

Developing Intimacy with God takes time. There are no shortcuts, no quick fixes, no speed-praying techniques. Spending time with God is about s p e n d i n g t i m e w i t h G o d! God is not in a hurry. He never was and never will be. Slow down and get to know Him. Your journey is the journey of a lifetime.

Record What God Has Said

We really believe that God speaks in whispers to the soul. If you have spent 3 minutes or 3 days in retreat alone with God we believe he has spoken to your heart. His whispers are love letters to your soul. They are significant message of the Heavenly Father to one of his beloved children. Take the time at the end of your time of intimacy to remember and record what the Lord has whispered to you. We have provided a short space here, but a better tool is to record it in your daily prayer journal.

About Silence

About Worship

About Thanksgiving

About Sin

About Clothing

About Burdens

My Prayer Journal

Date: _____

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

16.

17.

18.

19.

20.

21.

22.

23.

24.

25.

26.

27.

28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

33.

34.

35.

36.

37.

38.

39.

40.

41.

Prayer Planning Calendar

Month _____						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat

Month _____						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat

Notes

Day of Prayer and Fasting -

Day of Intimacy & Intercession -

One-Day Retreat -

Two Day Retreat -

Personal Prayer Goals: