

Re-Learning The Discipline of Prayer

A Prayer Strategy



From 60 Seconds to 60 Minutes in Prayer

Intimacy With God Workbook

Biblical Steps of Intercession

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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, you 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.

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 in 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 Thanks</u> for all His creation and blessings.	Psalm 139 is an excellent meditation to prime your thanksgiving pump.
<u>Specific Thanks</u> for blessings and benefits to you.	Psalm 103 is a good starting place.
<u>Tearful 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

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

Bad Things That Have Happened

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

Present Circumstances & Blessings

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

Promises of What Will Happen

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

*Faith is seeing what is not yet visible to the rest,
but what God has already 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)

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Selfish desires | _____ | James 4:3 |
| 2. Secret sins | _____ | Psalms 66:18 |
| 3. Idle words | _____ | Matthew 12:36 |
| 4. Lustful fantasies | _____ | Matthew 5:28 |
| 5. Marriage conflicts | _____ | 1 Peter 3:7b |
| 6. Ingratitude | _____ | Philippians 4:4-8 |
| 7. Unforgiving Attitudes | _____ | Mark 11:25-26 |
| 8. Unresolved conflicts | _____ | Matthew 5:23 |
| 9. Doubt | _____ | Hebrews 11:6a |
| 10. Prayerlessness | _____ | Hebrews 11:6b / Jeremiah 2:32 |
| 11. Indecision & doubt | _____ | James 1:6 |
| 12. Bitterness | _____ | Hebrews 12:15 |
| 13. Rebellion of heart | _____ | 1 Samuel 15:23 |
| 14. Known disobedience | _____ | James 4:17 |
| 15. Temper | _____ | Ephesians 4:26-27 |
| 16. Anger | _____ | Ephesians 4:26, 31 |
| 17. Impatience with others | _____ | Ephesians 4:32 |
| 18. Murmuring/complaining | _____ | 1 Corinthians 10:10 |
| 19. Lying/saying half-truths | _____ | Colossians 3:9 |
| 20. Strife in your heart | _____ | James 3:14 |

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!)

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

Step 5 – Clothe In His Armor

Believe God For Your Position In Christ

I Am...

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

I Have Been ...

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

I Can...

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

I Have...

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

I Cannot...

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

My Sins Have Been...

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

SPIRITUAL WARFARE CHECKLIST

(JUST DO IT ! Check when you have done it)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. <u>PUT ON THE ARMOR OF GOD</u> | _____ Eph. 6:11-18 |
| 2. <u>BE STRONG IN THE LORD!</u> | _____ Eph. 6:10 |
| 3. <u>BIND THE ENEMY</u> | _____ Matt. 18:18-20 |
| 4. <u>RESIST THE DEVIL</u> | _____ James 4:7 |
| 5. <u>CLAIM THE BLOOD</u> | _____ Rev. 12:11 |
| 6. <u>LOOSE THE CAPTIVES</u> | _____ Luke 4:18 |
| 7. <u>PULL DOWN STRONGHOLDS</u> | _____ II Cor. 10:3-5 |
| 8. <u>PUT A HEDGE OF PROTECTION</u> | _____ Ezekiel 22:30 |
| 9. <u>COMMAND HIM TO LEAVE</u> | _____ Matt. 10:1 |
| 10. <u>REBUKE HIM IN JESUS</u> | _____ Matt. 17:18 |

IDENTIFY THE ENEMY'S STRONGHOLDS

(Obstacles, hindrances, sicknesses, oppression, fears, torments, etc.)

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

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 on to Him.
Frustrations	Begin with your marriage and your relationship. Are their 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
