

The Three-Minute Timer



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.

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>