

Journey Course Three: How to Pray **#4 – Outward Prayer**

About the early church, we know they were persecuted, we know they were bold about their faith, we know they were enthusiastic, and we know they prayed.

Acts 2:42

All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer.

Life Truth: Our prayers today are the same prayers of God's people since the early church and before.

Outward (Pretty Much with Others) Prayer

Saying a _____.

2 Corinthians 13:14, "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." Matthew 26:26, "As they were eating, Jesus took some bread and blessed it..." Luke 10:5-6, "Whenever you enter someone's home, first say, 'May God's peace be on this house.' If those who live there are peaceful, the blessing will stand; if they are not, the blessing will return to you." This can be the habit of thanking God for the food, as well as asking God's blessing on someone, on a home, as a greeting or a goodbye "Lord bless you," or "May the peace of Christ be with you." When you put a "May" before what you say, it's prayer.

Spiritual _____.

Galatians 5:25, "Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives." While the lines can be fuzzy, spiritual direction is not counseling or therapy. The goal is to be prayerful in search of how God is working, calling, prodding, and inviting us to new ways of being with Jesus in our circumstances.

Prayer _____.

Acts 2:42, "All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer." Any time more than one person wishes to get together to accomplish anything, you need a plan. One way to have a plan when it comes to worship is to have a "liturgy," which is either the worship plan itself which says like, this happens, then this, then this, or it means the content of some worship activity itself.

Prayer.

James 5:13-15, "Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray. Are any of you happy? You should sing praises. Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven." This healing is of all kinds: mental, physical, relational and spiritual. Anything we don't receive in this body while we are physically alive will be completed in eternity.

Sacred Reading - _____ .

Luke 11:28, "...More blessed are all who hear the word of God and put it into practice." There are no absolutes to this, but here's a simple way: Read it a few times, maybe three or four. Each asks God's Spirit to point out words or a phrase on which to dwell. Different readers? Slow down. If you know the passage already, ask God that you might set aside preconceptions. Listen. Pray. It's not about analysis. At the end, the group shares with each other. It is an encounter with God as we listen to what he is saying to us in the text.

Fixed _____ Prayers.

Psalms 119:164, "I will praise you seven times a day because all your regulations are just." Acts 10:9, "The next day as Cornelius's messengers were nearing the town, Peter went up on the flat roof to pray. It was about noon..." The people of God have always prayed alone and together at prescribed times of day as well as year.

Phone or Computer _____ .

It is profoundly difficult to consult these devices without getting distracted and involved with other things, but with self-control, they can be helpful. Two recommended options: *Pray as You Go*, produced by the Jesuits and *Lectio365* from 24-7 Prayer. Both can be excellent tools for prayerful meditation.