

Beginning a Life of Prayer

Practical Suggestions from the PrayerPower Radio Series

It doesn't matter whether you are a new Christian or have spent years waiting to get serious about your prayer life -- when you are ready, God is there to help. Ask Him to guide and strengthen you, to give you the discipline you need.

The important thing is to begin, and to be consistent. We're not talking about the kind of praying we do "on the run" -- for most of us that comes relatively easily as we send up prayers for help throughout the day. But a life of prayer is the essence of the personal love relationship with the Lord -- and that comes from giving Him undivided time and attention every day through prayer and reading His Word. There aren't any short cuts.

Daily Quiet Time

The encouraging thing is that we can all begin with just a few minutes a day. Decide on a few personal guidelines for your prayer life:

- when to have it (same time every day)
- how long to spend (be realistic; God will honor even a few minutes a day if you are consistent)
- where to have it (somewhere private, undisturbed)

Two essentials for quiet time

There are no rules for a quiet time, but there are two essentials -- a prayer of surrender and time in the Word. These elements will establish your communion with the Lord and set the state for prayer as you move through the day.

1. Prayer of surrender -- Begins with prayer, worshiping the Lord, telling Him how much you love Him and why. It includes confessing your sins and giving Him your life.
2. Devotional Bible reading -- Initially it's a good idea to follow a plan that will take you through the entire Bible, even if it takes a year or more. Ask the Lord to help you understand and apply what you read.

Petition and Intercession

We know that we are to ask the Lord for what we need [Matt. 6:9; James 4:3], and that we are to pray for others [Eph. 6:18, 1 Tim. 2:1]. If you have time for these prayers during your quiet time, that is ideal -- but if not, pray as you can during the day -- in the car, walking cleaning house -- any time your mind is free.

Growing in prayer

Our daily quiet time can be as brief as 15-20 minutes, but if we want to grow in our relationship with the Lord and our understanding of prayer it is essential that we find the discipline to be consistent. The best way to do that is to enlist God's help. He will take us from these beginning steps into depths of prayer we never dreamed possible. It just takes time.



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