

Enriching Our Prayer Life - Ephesians 6:18 –

Led by the Yellowstone Presbytery Prayer Team: George Goodrich, Cheryl Banks, Gail Beckham, & Julie Boksich.

This workshop explores why we pray, ways to pray, and learning to pause and listen to God.



Here is the link to the recording for the Prayer Ministry's Teams workshop "Enriching our Prayer Life: Exploring why we pray, ways to pray and learning to pause and listen to God"

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/tna7pR-DeqA68Oxe3Yjh7ygaix0JqpXlefQJ_HXi2ZSsIi7kE5DkdgtI7Ir9eXGo.BGh02D-KJ5P0PIK0?startTime=1773436523000

Passcode: 4jg+6=#7

WORKSHOP HANDOUTS ARE FOUND ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES

- I. **Welcome, Purpose and Opening Prayer**
- II. **Dwelling in the Word: Genesis 32:22-32 Jacob Wrestles with God and Lectio 365 Handout on P.R.A.Y.**

P- Pause for moment of Silence and Focus

R- Reflect and Respond

A- Ask

Y- Yield in Prayer

- A. Praying in a challenge or crisis
- B. Facing uncertainty and fear
- C. Wrestling alone with God
- D. Wrestling until God (and we win)
- E. "Courage is Fear that has said it's prayers."

Why Pray?

A Definition: "Conversing with God" – Rosalind Rinker

"Prayer is a dialogue with God, where we communicate our hearts

and listen for His guidance, creating a personal and intimate relationship
."

- a. God invites us to pray... Matthew "Come to me..."
- b. Prayer is the privilege of a child / friend of God
"For prayer is nothing else than being on terms of friendship with God."
-- Teresa of Avila
- c. Prayer is born from a God-given yearning in our souls to connect with God.
- d. Prayer is when we share our hearts and God shares God's heart (for the world).
- e. Pray when we are in a place "beyond ourselves." Suffering, in need, alone...

III. How to Pray:

- a. "Sheep's prayer: "Help!"
- b. The Lord's Prayer, Matthew 6:9=13
- c. **A. C. T. S. – a model for prayer**

- i. Adoration – begin with the greatness of God
 - 1. Out of reverence...
 - 2. For perspective on the relationship and situation.

IV. **Adoration:** Psalm 103: 1-5

- a. Praise the Lord, my soul;
 all my inmost being, praise his holy name.
 ²Praise the Lord, my soul,
 and forget not all his benefits –
 ³who forgives all your sins
 and heals all your diseases,
 ⁴who redeems your life from the pit
 and crowns you with love and compassion,
 ⁵who satisfies your desires with good things
 so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

V. **Confession:** [Psalm 66:18](#): “If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear.

- A. Confession / Humility is the door to deep prayer
- B. Confession opens honest communication with God and the expectation of God answering.
- C. Nehemiah 1: After acknowledging God's greatness, Nehemiah confesses the his/ his family's / the people
- a. Example of Confession Prayer from the . 1928 Episcopal Prayer Book
 “ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father; We have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; And we have done those things which we ought not to have done; And there is no health in us. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare thou those, O God, who confess their faults. Restore thou those who are penitent; According to thy promises declared unto mankind In Christ Jesus our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake; That we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, To the glory of thy holy Name. Amen”

VI. **Thanksgiving:** [1 Chronicles 16:34](#): *Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!*

- a. Frames the prayer and relationship “To pray is to accept that we are, and always will be, wholly dependent on God for everything. Timothy Keller

- b. Luke 17:11-19 – Of the 1- Lepers only one returned to give thanks
- c. Ways to thank God?

VII. **Supplication:** To Make our Requests to God...

a. **Janis Joplin – tongue in Cheek:**

“Oh Lord, won't you buy me a Mercedes Benz?
My friends all drive Porsches, I must make amends
Worked hard all my lifetime, no help from my friends”
So Lord, won't you buy me a Mercedes Benz?”

- b. Philippians 4:6-7: ⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition(supplication), with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Why?

- c. Bible Prayers are likely to be answered: Paul prays for the Church in Col. 1:
⁹For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, ^[e] ¹⁰so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, ¹²and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you^[f] to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. ¹³For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

1. **Prayer builds community. Pray together** “ Nothing tends more to cement the hearts of Christians than praying together. Never do they love one another so well as when they witness the outpouring of each other's hearts in prayer. Charles Grandison Finney

2. **How God Speaks in Prayer**

- a. Visions
- b. Nudges in the Spir
- c. Other people
- d. Circumstances

e. Other?

3. **Expect God to Answer even the biggest prayers:** “Intercession is the truly universal work for the Christian. No place is closed to intercessory prayer: no continent, no nation, no city, no organization, no office. No power on earth can keep intercession out”. Richard Halverson, Chaplain of US Senate (1916-1995)

Helpful Advice on Prayer (what would you say?)

- A. Schedule daily time for prayer – Gail
- B. Helpful Prayer lists
- C. **Courage – by Karle Wilson Baker, 1921**

*Courage is armor
A blind man wears;
That calloused scar
Of outlived despairs;
Courage is Fear
That has said its prayers.*

- D. **Benediction and Closing Prayer** Jude ²⁴ To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy – ²⁵ to the only God our Saviour be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and for evermore! Amen.

Lectio 365 ---P.R.A.Y very simply each day (*This week has been focused on exploring the twin practices of solitude and silence with the ancient mothers and fathers of the Egyptian and Syrian deserts.*

Pausing to be still

Rejoicing with a Psalm and **R**eflecting on a Scripture

Asking God to help us and others

Yielding to his will in our lives

PAUSE

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly, to recenter my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and Pray

Prayer of Approach from Psalm 63:1 NIV

You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water.

REJOICE AND REFLECT

I choose to rejoice in God's provision of wilderness today, joining with the ancient praise of all God's people from:

Psalm 103:1,5 NLT

Let all that I am praise the LORD; with my whole heart, I will praise His Holy Name... He fills my life with good things. My youth is renewed like the eagle's!

Pause and Pray

Today I am reflecting on how the wilderness of solitude is a place of wrestling with God...

Genesis 32:24-32

So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. ²⁵ When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. ²⁶ Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak."

But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." The man asked him, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he answered. Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel,^[a] because you have struggled with God and with

humans and have overcome.” Jacob said, “Please tell me your name.” But he replied, “Why do you ask my name?” Then he blessed him there.

So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, “It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared.” The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip. Therefore to this day the Israelites do not eat the tendon attached to the socket of the hip, because the socket of Jacob’s hip was touched near the tendon.

Jacob wrestles alone, at night, in the wilderness...with God. And he finds it to be a place of transformation, and blessing. The anguish of that long night changes his whole life.

I am reminded of how many times I have wrestled alone in the dark with God, how many sleepless nights or too-early, anguished mornings I have experienced. Difficult as they were, God met me and changed me there. I am better for having entered these furnaces of transformation.

ASK

Loving God, I ask for the courage now to embrace the call to wrestle with you in the dark, and the strength to persevere until I find your blessing.

Pause and Pray

Jesus, as you left the wilderness full of the power of the Spirit (Luke 4:14), so this in this time of Lenten wilderness would you change me so that, filled afresh by the Spirit, I might bring the power of God to others.

Pause and Pray

YIELD

As I return to today’s passage, I look out for a particular word or phrase that the Holy Spirit seems to be highlighting to me today...

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was limping because of his hip. Therefore to this day the Israelites do not eat the tendon attached to the socket of the hip, because the socket of Jacob's hip was touched near the tendon.

I take a moment to reflect now on any word or phrase that the Holy Spirit is highlighting for me.

Pause and Pray

The word "till" stands out to me. Jacob and the angel wrestled "till daybreak" and----to my astonishment---the angel could not overpower him.

Jacob had more strength than he realized to face the challenges of his life. Encountering God in solitude drew it out.

I am reminded of Henri Nouwen's words when he wrote about the Desert Fathers and Mothers. He noted that solitude is "the place of conversion, the place where the old self dies and the new self is born."

Pause and Pray

Yielding Prayer

Lord, I see that I have more strength than I realize, and that when I wrestle with you in the dark, you draw out my strength. This Lent, I choose to trust that you can bring good, even out of my wrestling.

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me says in

2 Corinthians 3:18

And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full, being true to you in every way.

Jesus, help me to give myself away to others, being kind to everyone I meet.

Spirit, help me to love the lost, proclaiming Christ in all I do and say. Amen

Prayer Helpful Hints

Adoration Using Names or Attributes of God

Sovereign Omnipotent Omniscient Holy
Just Righteous Good Love Creator
Shepherd Faithful Unchanging Eternal
Great Physician Helper Glorious Patient
Merciful My Rock Redeemer Savior
Abba Elohim Almighty Jehovah
Yahweh Everlasting

Pause is Part of Prayer - Listen for God

Try rhythmic breathing with Be still...
and know that I am God. Two breaths
in, three breaths out.

OR

Come and find the quiet center in the
crowded life we lead, find the room
for hope to enter, find the frame
where we are freed: Clear the chaos
and the clutter, clear our eyes that we
can see all the things that really
matter, be at peace, and simply be.
by Shirley Erena Murray

October 1921, *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, "Three Small Poems," pg. 16:
COURAGE = By Karle Wilson Baker, 1878-1960

***Courage is armor
A blind man wears;
That calloused scar
Of outlived despairs;
Courage is Fear
That has said its prayers.***

BOOKS and Other Resources

**How to Pray - a simple guide for
normal people by Pete Greig**

**How to Hear God - a simple guide
for normal people by Pete Greig**

Lectio 365: Daily Bible Prayer app