Practice

Part 01: Fine tune your daily prayer rhythm

It can take a very long time to figure out your daily routine for prayer — so we're always fine tuning; what's working, what's not?

Here are two things to consider incorporating into what you started last session.

01 **Find an aid to "transition" in and out of prayer** — Think of this aid as a micro-ritual to begin and end your daily time. You could light a candle, sit in silence for a few minutes, take ten deep, slow breaths, go for a walk, or utilize music. It can be anything that helps you un-hurry and recenter on God's presence.

02 **Use your body in prayer** — We have an embodied faith and a wandering mind, so posture matters a lot in prayer. Biblically, the most common way to pray is not sitting or even kneeling, but standing up and lifting your hands. But you can also pray sitting on the floor, kneeling, lying face down, walking, or, like Jesus did, climbing a mountain.

Write down a micro-ritual and a posture or two you'd like to try.

Part 02: Begin and/or end your day with gratitude

While there's no "right" way to practice gratitude, we encourage you to use your imagination and creativity.

Here are a few ideas.

- Begin your daily prayer time by giving thanks for three gifts of the day.
- Give thanks during everyday moments like while you commute to work, take a shower, or walk your dog.
- Keep a gratitude journal.
- Write out three gratitudes on a small piece of paper each morning, and then carry them in your pocket all day long.
- Go around the table at dinner with your family, spouse, roommates, or community and say what you are thankful for.

What would you like to do? Try to get specific about what and when — what time of day — you'll give this a try.

Part 03: Ask

Step into petition and intercession, and ask on behalf of yourself and others. We have two recommended exercises to do this.

01 **Prayer Cards** — Make a deck of index cards with names or situations at the top of each card, including your enemies or those you are struggling to forgive. Flip through your cards and linger over each one for a few seconds to a few minutes, offering up specific prayers to our Father.

02 **"Pray the Room"**

- This is a form of imaginative prayer that combines intercession with waiting on and listening for God. The goal is to pray what the Spirit of Jesus is already wanting you to pray from deep within.
- Get to a quiet, distraction-free place if at all possible. Take 5-10 deep, slow breaths.
- Close your eyes and imagine yourself in a room with the Father or Jesus.
- Ask the Spirit to bring into the room anyone or anything that he wants you to pray for. Wait and see what comes into your field of vision.
- How do they look? Are they happy? Sad? Bruised? Tired? Scared? Lost? What else do you notice about their appearance or demeanor?
- Then, pray for that person. Make your intercession as specific as possible. If you don't know what to pray, just hold them before God with love.
- Consider reaching out to that person to check in or offer a word of encouragement or sense of God's heart for them.

Circle which exercise you'd like to try first.

Reflect

Before your next time together, take five to ten minutes to journal out your answers to the following three questions:

01 What aspect of last session's exercises were most difficult for you? Gratitude, lament, or asking?

02 Do you have any stories of answered prayer? Or unanswered prayer?

03 Where did I most experience God's nearness?

GO DEEPER

Optional resources to enhance your experience of this Practice:



Listen

Rule of Life podcast on Prayer
(Episode 02)



Read

Praying Like Monks, Living Like Fools
by Tyler Staton
(Chapters 04-05)