

EMPHASIS: PRAYER • OCTOBER 2026

UNDERSTANDING THE DAILY OFFICE

“The more we connect, the more we are connected.”

ACTS 2:42 • ESV

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.”

ACTS 3:1 • ESV

“Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.”

ACTS 10:9 • ESV

“Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray.”

THE ERA OF CHECKING IN

For most of history, when people left each other, they left. You went to work and didn’t hear from your family until you got home. Then, around 1999–2000, cell phones became normal, and we moved into the era of *checking in*: a call at lunch, a text before you head home, a quick “need anything from the store?”

None of those calls are of great importance. But they add up to something deeper: we’re on the same page, we’re a unit. **The church has always believed this too**, and so it built a structure for exactly this kind of connection with God.

NOTES



WHAT IS THE DAILY OFFICE?

The Daily Office is a rhythm of fixed hours of prayer through the day. It traces all the way back to the days of the apostles. From the beginning of our faith until now, believers have practiced this spiritual discipline for **more than 2,000 years**.

DISCIPLINE IS NOT LEGALISM

Over the last 50 years, the church has let a fear of legalism keep us from being disciplined believers, as if anything planned, ordered or consistent must be legalism. *That is simply not true.*

LEGALISM

The belief that if I don't do this act, God is angry, or that the act itself will make me holy.

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE

Practicing disciplines in an ordered, rigorous way to place ourselves in the best position to encounter the Holy Spirit.

🍀 **Ordered spiritual practice is not legalism. It's wisdom, love, and devotion.**

Anything the early Christians thought was valuable is worth looking into, and often worth adopting.

NOTES

WHAT THE EARLY CHURCH WROTE

The *Didache* was written in the time of the apostles and the early church. Before the New Testament was canonized, it was used to teach new believers the foundations of the Christian faith.

THE DIDACHE • CONCERNING PRAYER

Do not pray as the hypocrites either, but pray as the Lord commanded in His Gospel: *Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one; for thine is the power and the glory unto ages of ages.*

PRAY THIS WAY THREE TIMES EACH DAY.

“Touching the time, however, the extrinsic observance of certain hours will not be unprofitable—those common hours, I mean, which mark the intervals of the day—the third, the sixth, the ninth—which we may find in the Scriptures to have been more solemn than the rest.”

— TERTULLIAN, ON PRAYER 25 (C. AD 200)

THE APOSTOLIC HOURS

Like baptism and communion, the New Testament gives us nuggets rather than a full order. The early church built its rhythm around these apostolic examples, tied to the Trinity and to key moments in the story of Jesus and the Spirit.

3RD HOUR

ABOUT 9 AM

The descent of the Spirit at Pentecost

6TH HOUR

ABOUT NOON

Christ’s passion • Peter prays on the housetop (Acts 10:9)

9TH HOUR

ABOUT 3 PM

Christ’s passion • Peter and John go to pray (Acts 3:1)

THREE REASONS

WHY SHOULD WE DO THIS NOW?

1. YOU NEED MORE

One of the great lies that has plagued the church is the idea that one hour of devotion equals a day of union with God. If you think your morning devotional is the fullness of the relationship Jesus wants with you, you are fooling yourself. Who would spend 30 minutes a day with their kids and think they have something deep?

🍃 **“Transformation comes from deeper connection.”**

To become the people we desire to be, we must give the Holy Spirit space to interrupt our day, and give ourselves space to recenter on him.

2. WE UNIFY AS ONE VOICE

In a world of “self-importance,” we’ve moved away from relying on the power of community. But there is something biblical about the power of the church when it comes together. Three times a day, you can pray knowing that voices all across our city and county are praying alongside you. **Imagine the power of a church that joins its voices together three times a day.**

“The church is not merely a roster of individuals who pray privately.”

— MEGAN HILL, PRAYING TOGETHER

NOTES

3. YOU WON'T DO IT WITHOUT STRUCTURE

You will not accidentally be formed into Christ. You won't pray more without structure, you won't read more without structure, and you won't become a person of love without structure. All of church history, from the apostles on, shows a deep dedication to structure and training.

"Grace is not opposed to effort, it is opposed to earning."

— DALLAS WILLARD

1 CORINTHIANS 9:24-27 • ESV

²⁴ Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. ²⁵ Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. ²⁶ So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. ²⁷ But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

WHERE WE LAND

HOW MUCH DO YOU VALUE THE PRESENCE OF GOD IN YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE?

If you value it, you have to structure your day around it.

NOTES

OUR RULE OF LIFE • NEW PRACTICE

THE DAILY OFFICE

As a church, we are adding a new practice to our Rule of Life: **pray three times a day**, once in the morning, once in the afternoon, and once in the evening.



MORNING

Begin the day by turning your heart toward God.



AFTERNOON

Let the Spirit interrupt your day and recenter you on him.



EVENING

Close the day in his presence.

Not sure where to start? Do what the early church did and **pray the Lord's Prayer**. And remember, at each hour, voices across our church are praying with you.

TRACK YOUR WEEK

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
MORNING	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
AFTERNOON	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
EVENING	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

FOR THE WEEK • REFLECT & DISCUSS

- 01** Where have you avoided structure because it felt like legalism? What's the difference?
- 02** When in your morning, afternoon and evening can you set aside time to pray?
- 03** Looking at how you spend your day, what does it say about how much you value God's presence?