

# A Guide for Extended Prayer Time

***“The only way to be successful in ministry is to be totally disinterested in ministry . . . and totally preoccupied with Jesus Christ.”***

—PARAPHRASED QUOTE FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS

Dear Friend:

I am thrilled that it is your intention to pursue extended time with the God who so deeply loves you. As I prayed about God’s desire for us, I became convinced that He was encouraging me to remind you how much He wants fellowship with His children.

As we have recently observed together on Sundays, it has always been God’s intention to shepherd us “by still waters” and to “restore our souls.” Jesus, our Good Shepherd, has told us to come and He will give us the fullness of life we long for and the rest our weary souls need. A perfect combination of adventure and peace.

His greatest desire for us. His greatest offer to us. The one thing that He has identified as necessary. The really good part of life. The one thing that has as its defining characteristic the means to eternal life (John 17:3), is to know God in the persons of the Father and the Son through the person of the Holy Spirit. I am confident that you will find your time with the Lord enriching, empowering, cleansing, revealing, refreshing, enlightening and transforming. Your cup will run over.

As you come to Him, seek to empty yourself of your agenda and be full of expectation as to what He will do with your yielded life. Move quickly from asking God to take care of the things that are breaking your heart to praying about the things that are breaking His heart.

Empty yourself of selfish and worldly concerns. James tell us that this is often the cause of the “quarrels and conflicts among us”. Dwight Moody once said, “God sends no one away empty except those who are full of themselves.” The story of Elisha and the widow in 2 Kings 4:1 6 teaches us the same principle. It would be a terrible thing to approach the throne of our gracious and benevolent God and to come away “empty.”

While it is necessary to warn you of the dangers of hardening your heart, it is good to be able to assure you that the Lord will fill every area of your life that you do yield to Him. Take comfort in knowing that it is His desire that you be filled (completely controlled by and yielded to) by Him (Ephesians 5:18). Don’t miss God’s good will toward you by denying Him access to any area of your life. Ask Him to fill you with His Spirit and the knowledge of His will.

Specifically, let’s put into practice the application of last’s week message. As we seek to regain control of what too often turns into hurried and haggard lives, we need to evaluate everything prayerfully, purposefully and not privately.

**Prayerfully:** Ask Him to search you and show you if there is any hurtful way in you (Psalms 139:123 24). Listen to Him. Spend much of your day letting Him speak silently to you through His word and by His Spirit. He is not a God of confusion and will never ask of you something inconsistent with how He has already revealed Himself in His word. Be open to God’s voice, but be wise in discerning it.

**Journal:** If this is something you are not used to doing, start today. Make sure you take a pen and notebook with you to record your thoughts, write out your prayers and note your observations from time in His word.

**Purposefully:** Ask yourself these questions. What is your life mission? Are you on it? Is it informed by the Good Shepherd? What are the things in your life that you value most? Does your schedule prove it? Who do you wish you were with and what do you wish you were doing on September 11, 2001? Why? Are you with them and doing it today? Ask the Lord to clearly show you His will and way.

**Not Privately:** Make a plan to share what the Lord has said to you with others. Ask God to have them confirm the wisdom of your time alone with Him. Share with them the changes you believe the Lord would have you make in your life. Ask them if they see any area you could ‘excel still more’ as a follower of Christ. Pray for them during your time alone. Ask the Lord to use their friendship in your life to spur you on to love and good deeds. Pray that God’s Spirit would be strong in them as they live alongside of you.

**A word of advice:** I’ve noticed that as I pursue extended times like this, I’m flooded with things I need to do, people I need to contact, errands I need to run, etc. This is not necessarily bad. In fact, I have often felt God used my time alone like this to help me remember many things I would have otherwise forgotten in the midst of a full life. I do however, often find myself distracted by the constant interruptions and the loud and ever-present “tyranny of the urgent.” One thing I’ve found that allows me to focus on Christ throughout my time is to take my “Treo” (or a separate pad of paper) on which I record each of these “impulses.” This way, I don’t need to worry about remembering to do something or contact someone God has allowed to come to mind. I can write down the impulse, thought or responsibility on my “to do” list and later even use that list as a part of my days prayers. Lorne Sonny’s “worry list” mentioned in the following article can serve a similar purpose.

Enjoy your time with the Lord. Remind yourself that Christ is a Living Lord. He’s alive and longs for intimacy -- an abiding relationship and communion with you. He is not only dying for you to turn your heart’s affections towards Him, He died to make it possible. Remember the words of His servant Paul: “He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?” Romans 8:32.

I pray that today is the first of many regular and extended times of silence and solitude with your Lord, who loves you, desires for you to walk at all times in His presence and who holds the fount of every good thing. I look forward to hearing from you how you were encouraged, challenged, transformed and/or comforted by this time.

Awed by our access to the throne of grace (Hebrews 4:14-16),



At the end of Lorne Sanny’s article, I included a sample of how to pray through Scripture. This is similar to what we do at Raise the Mark (our time of communion, prayer and fellowship at Watermark). I believe it is the best way to keep your prayer life fresh, deepen your passion for God’s word and increase the likelihood that your prayers are “in His name.” There is no better way to know you’re praying as God intended than to pray God’s word into your life. The Lord reminds us in John 15:7: “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.” Know that I am praying for you and would love to hear how God used your time with Him to “restore your soul” and to lead you “beside still water.” E-mail me at [pastoraloffice@watermark.org](mailto:pastoraloffice@watermark.org).



WATERMARK  
COMMUNITY CHURCH

# A Guide for Praying Through Psalm 63

A Psalm of David when he was in the wilderness of Judah

**Praise God if you are not in the middle of a wilderness experience right now;** praise Him for the many blessings that you as an individual enjoy, for all the comforts, material and immaterial blessings that you have in abundance.

**Praise Him if you are in the middle of the wilderness** believing that He “causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28).

**Pray specifically and by name for those who are a part of our body and who are in the wilderness right now.** Pray for those in the wilderness of sorrow, solitude, sickness or sin, that they would find their comfort and relief in the Jesus Christ alone. Pray that they would turn confidently and completely to Him and experience relief, hope and comfort.

**1 O God, Thou art my God; I shall seek Thee earnestly; My soul thirsts for Thee, my flesh yearns for Thee, In a dry and weary land where there is no water.**

**Pray that every true believer at our church would have the discipline, confidence and wisdom of David** and thus be able to turn fully toward the Lord (their personal Savior, their God) whatever their circumstance.

**Pray that there would be “no desert in their heart though their heart may be in a desert”.** Pray that God would use our joy even in difficult circumstances to draw others to Him (Psalm 71:7; 1 Peter 3:15).

**Pray that we would allow the difficult circumstances -- “the wildernesses” -- to cause us to thirst for a deeper and more abiding relationship with Christ.** Spurgeon said, “When the bed is softest we are most tempted to rise at lazy hours; but when the comfort is gone and the couch is hard, if we rise earlier to seek the Lord, we have much for which to thank the wilderness.” Thank the Lord now for the difficult times in your life, for how He has sustained you and brought increased faith and maturity into your life as a result.

**Pray that we would seek God earnestly, consistently,** with discipline through time in His word, in prayer, and with His people.

**Pray that we would seek God Himself rather than a change in circumstance.** Pray that we could say with Paul, “I know how to get along with humble means,

and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need” (Philippians 4:12).

**Pray that our souls would yearn for communion with Christ** as much as our body yearns for water in a dry and weary land.

**2 Thus I have beheld Thee in the sanctuary, To see Thy power and Thy glory.**

**3 Because Thy lovingkindness is better than life, My lips will praise Thee.**

**Thank the Lord that, as a result of His grace, you have beheld God for who He really is.** Thank Him that “we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God” (1 Corinthians 2:12); things which include His peace, protection, power for living a holy life, and the promise of continued access to His throne of grace.

**Pray that we would believe and live like we know that His lovingkindness (His will and way for us) is better than the emptiness found in sin and self-indulgence.** Pray that we would be bold in our sharing and consistent in our praising the goodness and mercies of God our Father and our savior Jesus Christ.

**4 So I will bless Thee as long as I live; I will lift up my hands in Thy name.**

**Pray that we would focus on the privilege of living another day** so we might declare the grace and manifold attributes of God to a lost and lonely world.

**Pray that we would praise God,** not only “as long as we prosper” but rather as long as we live.

**Pray that we would joyfully and passionately use our hands, giftedness, and material resources** to further the work and good name of Jesus Christ.

**5 My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness, And my mouth offers praises with joyful lips.**

**Pray that our soul would find its satisfaction only in praising,** worshipping, serving and fellowshiping with Christ and living according to His will for us.

**Pray that we would not be silent in our witness.** Pray for specific friends and family that you need to be bold

in sharing the good news of the Gospel with. Pray that God would use your joyful life and words to bring them to faith in Him.

**6 When I remember Thee on my bed, I meditate on Thee in the night watches,**

**7 For Thou hast been my help, And in the shadow of Thy wings I sing for joy.**

**8 My soul clings to Thee; Thy right hand upholds me.**

Pray that we would often reflect upon the many kindnesses God has made known to us through His Son and that we would meditate on them and find renewed strength and hope in His concern for us.

Pray that we would follow hard after Christ. Pray that we would not be distracted by the deceitfulness of riches or the worries of the world. Pray that we would not be double-minded people, unstable in all our ways, but rather that each of us individually and all of us corporately would be steadfast and immovable in our pursuing and clinging to God and His word.

**9 But those who seek my life, to destroy it, Will go into the depths of the earth.**

**10 They will be delivered over to the power of the sword; They will be a prey for foxes.**

Pray for those who are antagonistic toward us, hostile toward the Gospel, evil and perverted in deed, enemies of the truth. Pray that they would repent and find mercy in this day of grace. Pray that we would love and serve them in a biblical way. Pray that we would maintain an eternal perspective and trust the Lord to be our protector and perfect one who will not be mocked but will render perfect justice. Again pray for your enemies specifically and by name that they would repent and find forgiveness for their Godless attitudes and actions.

**11 But the king will rejoice in God; Everyone who swears by Him will glory, For the mouths of those who speak lies will be stopped.**

Praise the Lord that the glorious day is approaching when heaven will be opened, He shall be revealed, justice rendered, the faithful rewarded, the wicked silenced, the oppressed relieved and everyone who has sworn by Him will glory at His great power, justice and grace forever and ever. AMEN!

## Psalm 63

A Psalm of David when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

**1 O God, Thou art my God; I shall seek Thee earnestly; My soul thirsts for Thee, my flesh yearns for Thee, In a dry and weary land where there is no water.**

**2 Thus I have beheld Thee in the sanctuary, To see Thy power and Thy glory.**

**3 Because Thy lovingkindness is better than life, My lips will praise Thee.**

**4 So I will bless Thee as long as I live; I will lift up my hands in Thy name.**

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**9 But those who seek my life, to destroy it, Will go into the depths of the earth.**

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# How to Spend a Day in Prayer

By Lorne C. Sanny

*Prayer is a powerful thing, for God has bound and tied Himself thereto.*

**Martin Luther**

*Avail yourself of the greatest privilege this side of heaven. Jesus Christ died to make this communion and communication with the Father possible.*

**Billy Graham**

*God acquaintance is not made hurriedly. He does not bestow His gifts on the casual or hasty comer and goer. To be much alone with God is the secret of knowing Him and of influence with Him.*

**E.M. Bounds**

**I never thought a day could make such a difference," a friend said to me. "My relationship to everyone seems improved. Why don't you do it more often?"**

**Comments like these come from those who set aside a personal day of prayer.**

With so many activities—important ones—clamoring for our time, real prayer is considered more a luxury than a necessity. How much more so spending a day in prayer!

The Bible gives us three time guides for personal prayer. There is the command to “pray without ceasing” -- the spirit of prayer keeping so in tune with God that we can lift our hearts in request or praise anytime through the day.

There is also the practice of a quiet time or morning watch seen in the life of David (Psalm 5:3), of Daniel (6:10), and of the Lord Jesus (Mark 1:35). This daily time specified for meditation in the Word of God and prayer is indispensable to the growing, healthy Christian.

Then there are examples in Scripture of extended time given to prayer alone. Jesus spent whole nights praying. Nehemiah prayed “certain days!” upon hearing of the plight of Jerusalem. Three times Moses spent 40 days and 40 nights alone with God.

## LEARNING FROM GOD

I believe it was in these special times of prayer that God made known His ways and His plans to Moses (Psalm

103:7). He allowed Moses to look through a chink in the fence and gain special insights, while the rank and file Israelites saw only the acts of God as they unfolded day by day.

Once I remarked to Dawson Trotman, founder of The Navigators, “You impress me as one who feels he is a man of destiny, one destined to be used of God.”

“I don't think that's the case,” he replied, “but I know this. God has given me some promises that I know He will fulfill.” During earlier years, Dawson spent countless protracted times alone with God, and out of these times the Navigator work grew not by methods or principles, but by promises given to him from the Word.

In my own life one of the most refreshing and stabilizing factors, as well as the means for new direction or confirmation of the will of God, has been those extended times of prayer in the neighborhood park in Seattle, on a hill behind the Navigator home in Southern California, or out in the Garden of the Gods here in Colorado Springs.

These special prayer times can become anchor points in your life, times when you “drive a stake” as a landmark and go on from there. Your daily quiet time is more effective as you pray into day by day reality some of the things the Lord speaks to your heart in protracted times of prayer. The quiet time in turn is the foundation for praying without ceasing; going through the day in communion with God.

Perhaps you haven't spent a protracted time in prayer because you haven't recognized the need for it. Or maybe you aren't sure what you would do with a whole day on your hands just to pray.

## WHY A DAY OF PRAYER?

Why take this time from a busy life? What is it for?

**1. For extended fellowship with God - beyond your morning devotions.** It means just plain being with and thinking about God. God has called us into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 1:9). Like many personal relationships, this fellowship is nurtured by spending time together. God takes special note of times when His people reverence Him and think upon His Name (Malachi 3:16).

**2. For a renewed perspective.** Like flying over the battlefield in a reconnaissance plane, a day of prayer gives opportunity to think of the world from God's

point of view. Especially when going through some difficulty, we need this perspective to sharpen our vision of the unseen, and to let the immediate, tangible things drop into proper place. Our spiritual defenses are strengthened while “we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For... what is unseen is eternal” (2 Corinthians 4:18).

**3. For catching up on intercession.** There are non-Christian friends and relatives to bring before the Lord, missionaries on various fields, our pastors, our neighbors and Christian associates, our government leaders to name a few. Influencing people and changing events through prayer is well known among Christians but too little practiced. And as times become more serious around us, we need to reconsider the value of personal prayer, both to accomplish and to deter.

**4. For prayerful consideration of our own lives before the Lord, personal inventory and evaluation.** You will especially want to take a day of prayer, when facing important decisions, as well as on a periodic basis. On such a day you can evaluate where you are in relation to your goals, and get direction from the Lord through His Word. Promises are there for you and me, just as they have been for Hudson Taylor or George Mueller or Dawson Trotman. And it is in our times alone with God that He gives inner assurance of His promises to us.

**5. For adequate preparation.** Nehemiah, after spending “certain days” seeking the Lord in prayer, was called in before the king. “Then the king said unto me, ‘For what dost thou make request?’ So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said unto the king, ‘If it please the king ...’” and he outlined his plan (Nehemiah 2:4 5, KJV). Then Nehemiah says, “I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem” (2:12). When did God put in his heart this plan? I believe it was when he fasted and prayed and waited on God. Then when the day came for action, he was ready.

I heard a boy ask a pilot if it didn’t take quick thinking to land his plane when something went wrong. The pilot answered that no, he knew at all times where he would put down if something went wrong. He had that thought out ahead of time.

So it should be in our Christian life. If God has given us plans and purposes in those times alone, we will be ready when opportunity comes to move right into it. We won’t have to say, “I’m not prepared.” The reason many Christians are dead to opportunities is not because they are not mentally alert, but they are simply unprepared in heart. Preparation is made when we get alone with God.

**“I love the LORD, for he heard my voice;  
he heard my cry for mercy.  
Because He turned his ear to me, I will call on  
Him as long as I live....  
I will sacrifice a thank offering to you  
and call on the name of the LORD.”**

**Psalms 116:1 2,17**

## PRAY ON THE BASIS OF GOD’S WORD

Daniel said, “In the first year of his reign (the reign of Darius), I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the Lord given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with Him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the Lord my God and confessed” (Daniel 9:2-4).

He understood by the Scriptures what was to come. And as a result of his exposure to the Word of God, he prayed. It has been said that God purposes, therefore He promises. And we can add, “Therefore I pray the promises, so that God’s purposes might come to reality.” God purposed to do something, and He promised it, therefore Daniel prayed. This was Daniel’s part in completing the circuit, like an electrical circuit, so that the power could flow through.

Your day alone with the Lord isn’t a matter of sitting out on a rock like the statue of “The Thinker” and taking whatever thoughts come to your mind. That’s not safe. It should be a day exposed to God’s Word, and allowing His word lead you into prayer. You will end the day worse than you started if all you do is engage in introspection, thinking of yourself and your own problems. It isn’t your estimate of yourself that counts anyway. It’s God’s estimate. And He will reveal His estimate to you by the Holy Spirit through His Word, the open Bible. And then the Word leads into prayer.

## HOW TO GO ABOUT IT

How do you go about it? Having set aside a day or portion of a day for prayer, pack a lunch and start out. Find a place where you can be alone, away from distractions. This may be a wooded area near home, or your backyard. An outdoor spot is excellent if you can find it; but don’t get sidetracked into nature studies and fritter away your time. If you find yourself watching the squirrels or the ants, direct your observation by reading Psalm 104 and meditating on the power of God in creation.

Take along a Bible, a notebook and pencil, a hymnbook,

and perhaps a devotional book. I like to have with me the booklet *Power Through Prayer* by E.M. Bounds and read a chapter or two as a challenge to the strategic value of prayer. Or I sometimes take Horatius Bonar's *Words to Winners of Souls*, or a missionary biography like *Behind the Ranges* by Mary C. Taylor, which records the prayer victories of J.O. Fraser in inland China. Even if you have all day, you will want to use it profitably. So lose no time in starting, and start purposefully.

## DIVIDE THE DAY INTO THREE PARTS

### 1. WAIT ON THE LORD

To realize His presence.  
To be cleansed.  
To worship Him.

### 2. PRAY FOR OTHERS

Ask specific things for them.  
Use Paul's prayers for others.  
Ask for others what you are praying for yourself.

### 3. PRAY FOR YOURSELF

Guidance and wisdom.  
Godliness.  
Concerns and needs.

## WAIT ON THE LORD

Divide the day into three parts: waiting on the Lord, prayer for others, and prayer for yourself.

**As you wait on the Lord, don't hurry.** You will miss the point if you look for some mystical or ecstatic experience. Just seek the Lord, waiting on Him. Isaiah 40:31 promises that those who wait upon the Lord will renew their strength. Psalm 27:14 is one of dozens of verses which mention waiting on Him. Psalm 62:5 says, "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him."

**Wait on Him first to realize His presence.** Read through a passage like Psalm 139, grasping the truth of His presence with you as you read each verse. Ponder the impossibility of being anywhere in the universe where He is not. Often we are like Jacob when he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not" (Genesis 28:16, KJV).

**Wait on Him also for cleansing.** The last two verses of Psalm 139 lead you into this. Ask God to search your heart as these verses suggest. When we search our own hearts it can lead to imaginations, morbid introspection, or anything the enemy may want to throw before us. But when the Holy Spirit searches, He will bring to your attention that which should be confessed and cleansed. Psalms 51 and 32, David's songs of confession, will help you. Stand upon the firm ground of I John 1:9

and claim God's faithfulness to forgive whatever specific thing you confess.

**If you realize you've sinned against a brother, make a note of it so you won't forget to set it right.**

Otherwise, the rest of the day will be hindered. God won't be speaking to you if there is something between you and someone else that you haven't planned to take care of at the earliest possible moment.

**As you wait on God, ask for the power of concentration.** Bring yourself back from daydreaming.

**Next, wait on God to worship Him.** Psalms 103, 111, and 145 are wonderful portions to follow as you praise the Lord for the greatness of His power. Most of the psalms are prayers. Or turn to Revelation, chapters 4 and 5, and use them in your praise to Him. There is no better way to pray scripturally than to pray Scripture. If you brought a hymnbook you can sing to the Lord. Some wonderful hymns have been written that put into words what we could scarcely express ourselves. Maybe you don't sing very well then be sure you're out of earshot of someone else and "make a joyful noise unto the Lord." He will appreciate it.

**This will lead you naturally into thanksgiving.**

Reflect upon the wonderful things God has done for you. Thank Him for your own salvation and spiritual blessings, for your family, friends and opportunities. Go beyond that which you thank the Lord for daily and take time to express appreciation to Him for countless things He's given.

## PRAYER FOR OTHERS

Now is the time for the unhurried, more detailed prayer for others that you don't get to ordinarily. Remember people in addition to those for whom you usually pray. Trace your way around the world, praying for people by countries.

## HOW TO STAY AWAKE AND ALERT

**1. Get adequate rest the two nights before your day in prayer.**

**2. Change positions: sit awhile, walk around, etc.**

**3. Have a variety in what you do. Read the Scriptures awhile, pray awhile, plan or organize awhile, and so on.**

**4. Pray aloud in a whisper or soft voice. Sometimes thinking aloud also helps.**

## CHECKLIST FOR A DAY IN PRAYER

### ESSENTIALS:

**A Bible perhaps the one you read regularly**

**A notebook or paper for taking notes**

**Pens or pencils**

**A clock or watch**

You might also take a favorite devotional book or a cd of a message you want to listen to again and be challenged by.

If you have some favorite worship cds that help you meditate on the greatness of the God you seek, they also can be useful.

The most important thing you can bring is a broken and contrite heart. You bring that and your day will be a source of great intimacy, strength and encouragement.

### Here are three suggestions as to what to pray:

**First, ask specific things for them.** Perhaps you remember or have jotted down various needs people have mentioned. Use requests from missionary prayer letters. Pray for spiritual strength, courage, physical stamina, mental alertness, and so on. Imagine yourself in the situations where these people are and pray accordingly.

**Second, look up some of the prayers in Scripture.** Pray what Paul prayed for other people in the first chapter of Philippians and Colossians, and in the first and third chapters of Ephesians. This will help you advance in your prayer from the stage of “Lord, bless so and so and help them to do such and such.”

**Third, ask for others what you are praying for yourself.** Desire for them what the Lord has shown you. If you pray a certain verse or promise of Scripture for a person you may want to put the reference by his name on your prayer list, and use this verse as you pray for that person the next time. Then use it for thanksgiving as you see the Lord answer.

### PRAYER FOR YOURSELF

The third part of your day will be prayer for yourself. If you are facing an important decision you may want to put this before prayer for others.

Again, let your prayer be ordered by Scripture and ask the Lord for understanding according to Psalm 119:18. Meditate upon verses of Scripture you have memorized or promises you have previously claimed from the Word. Reading a whole book of the Bible through, perhaps aloud, is a good idea. Consider how it might apply to your life.

In prayer for yourself, I Chronicles 4:10 is one good example to follow. Jabez prayed, “Oh that You would bless me and enlarge my territory! Let Your hand be with me, and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain.” That’s prayer for your personal life, for your growth, for God’s presence, and for God’s protection. Jabez prayed in the will of God and God granted his request.

“Lord, what do You think of my life?” is the attitude of this portion of your day of prayer. Consider your main objectives in the light of what you know to be God’s will for you. Jesus said, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work” (John 4:34). Do you want to do God’s will more than anything else? Then consider your activities what you do in the context of your objectives. God may speak to you about rearranging your schedule, cutting out certain activities that are good but not best, or some things that are entanglements or impediments to progress. Strip them off. You may be convicted about how you spend your evenings or Saturdays, when you could use the time to your advantage and still get the recreation you need.

As you pray, record your thoughts on your activities and use of time, and plan for better scheduling. Perhaps the need for better preparation for your Sunday school class or a personal visit with an individual will come to your mind. Or the Lord may impress you to do something special for someone. Make a note of it.

During this part of your day, bring up any problems or decisions you are facing and seek the mind of God on them. It helps to list the factors involved in these decisions or problems. Pray over these factors and look into the Scriptures for guidance. You may be led to a promise or direction from the passages with which you have already filled your mind during the day.

After prayer, you may reach some definite conclusions upon which you can base firm convictions. It should be your aim in a day of prayer to come away with some conclusions and specific direction- some stakes driven. However, do not be discouraged if this is not the case. It may not be God’s time for a conclusive answer to your problem. And you may discover that your real need was not to know the next step but to have a new revelation of God Himself.

In looking for promises to claim there’s no need to thumb through looking for new or startling ones. Just start with the promises you already know. If you have been through the Topical Memory System, start by meditating on the verses in the Rely on God’s Resources section. Chew over some old familiar promises the Lord has given you before, ones you remember as you think back. Pray about applying these verses to your life.

I have found some of the greatest blessings from a new

realization of promises I already knew. And the familiar promises may lead you to others. The Bible is full of them.

You may want to mark or underline in your Bible the promises the Lord gives during these protracted times alone, and put the date and a word or two in the margin beside them.

Variety is important during your day of prayer. Read awhile, pray awhile, then walk around. A friend of mine paces the floor of his room for his prayer time. Rather than get cramped in one position, take a walk and stretch; get some variety.

As outside things pop into your mind, simply incorporate those items into prayer. If it's some business item you must not forget, jot it down. Have you noticed how many things come to mind while you are sitting in church? It will be natural for things to occur to you during your prayer day that you should have done, so put them down, pray about them and plan how you can take care of them and when. Don't just push them aside or they will plague you the rest of the day.

At the end of the day summarize in your notebook some things God has spoken to you about. This will be profitable to refer to later.

## Two Questions

The result of your day of prayer should be answers to the two questions Paul asked the Lord on the Damascus

road (Acts 22:6-10). Paul's first question was, "Who are you, Lord?" The Lord replied, "I am Jesus." You will be seeking to know Him, to find out who He is. The second question Paul asked was, "What shall I do, Lord?" The Lord answered him specifically. This should be answered or reconfirmed for you in that part of the day when you unhurriedly seek His will for you.

Don't think you must end the day with some new discovery or extraordinary experience. Wait on God and expose yourself to His Word. Looking for a new experience or insight you can share with someone when you get back will get you off the track. True, you may gain some new insight, but often this can just take your attention from the real business. The test of such a day is not how exhilarated we are when the day is over but how it works into life tomorrow. If we have really exposed ourselves to the Word and come into contact with God, it will affect our daily life.

Days of prayer don't just happen. Besides the attempts of our enemy Satan to keep us from praying, the world around us has plenty to offer to fill our time. So we have to make time. Plan ahead—the first of every other month, or once a quarter.

God bless you as you do this and do it soon! You too will probably ask yourself, "Why not more often?"

## HOW TO MAKE A WORRY LIST

*Problems and concerns can preoccupy our minds. Preparing a worry list can help to free us from the distraction of our concerns and help us move toward their resolution. Try the following suggestions in preparing your own worry list.*

**1. Give some thought to current conflicts, problems, concerns, or frustrations. List anything that is "bugging" you.** Number each of these items. No matter how small an item is, if it is of concern to you, list it. Ask God to reveal to you anything else which is a point of concern.

**2. Every worry that you have in the world should be on that piece of paper.** Nothing else should concern you if it is all there! When you are satisfied that all of your concerns have been listed, go on to step 3.

**3. Go through the list item by item.** On each item you will conclude that you can do nothing about it because it is past or beyond your control, or that you can do something to resolve that issue. If there is nothing you can do about a given item, then spend some time in prayer about it. If you feel that you can take action on a particular item, you should also pray about it, then make a "do list" of things you plan to do specifically to help resolve it. After you have gone through many of these concerns, you will have several items on a "do list."

As a result of your day in prayer, you will also come up with other things which should go on this "do list."

**4. You may want to dispose of your "worry list" if it has some rather personal or pointed items which could be embarrassing or awkward if others read them.** It is not uncommon for an individual to have around 20 items on a "worry list" when it is compiled on a monthly basis.