



Make Room



CHRIST
ADULTS

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MAKE ROOM

FOR SPIRITUALLY HEALTHY HABITS

“When you pray...”

These words, repeated multiple times throughout the Sermon on the Mount, may not seem like much, but they carry a great deal of weight in them. Jesus is preaching to tell people how citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven should act, and in Matthew 6 He spends several verses talking about how God’s people ought to pray. Notice that Jesus uses the word *when*, not *if*. Jesus assumes that those who are part of God’s kingdom will pray. To Him, it is a natural part of having a relationship with God and is a given reality for those who seek to follow Him.

Looking at our own lives, this reality of Jesus’ view on prayer can be incredibly challenging! Nearly all of us would agree that prayer is important, and many of us would even go as far as to say that we want prayer to be a more significant part of our lives and our walks with Christ. Yet the reality is that in the hustle and bustle of our daily lives, many of us struggle to find the time – to make room – in our schedules to pray consistently.

Why is it so hard for many of us to make room for prayer in our daily lives? Perhaps you don’t know why it should be considered so important. Maybe you aren’t sure if prayer really accomplishes anything or if it does any good. You might even be worried about praying the “right way” or be unsure of how to pray. This journal will help you to gain a deeper understanding of what prayer is, why it’s important, and how to develop a healthy practice of daily prayer. We have also included different prayer models and exercises that you can use in your own prayer life.

While prayer is incredibly simple (we’re just talking to God!), it isn’t always easy for us to do well. To make things a little easier, here are some helpful tips that can get you started on the path toward developing a healthy practice of prayer.



Take Time

If you want to do something consistently, it helps to schedule it out in advance! Just like taking medicine or going to the gym, it can be easy to forget to pray if we don't set an appointed time each day to do so. While this might seem like it takes the life out of prayer, scheduling time for prayer is a great way to add some consistency and accountability to your spiritual life. Praying at the same time each morning can help you start the day on a solid foundation. Taking time to pray in the afternoon can provide a needed respite from the hustle and bustle of the day. Ending each day with prayer can help you to reflect on the successes and struggles of the day and give you things to work on moving forward. Look at your schedule and your own spiritual needs and come up with a plan of when to pray each day!

Another way to make room for prayer in an already busy schedule is to utilize times you are operating on "cruise control" – moments where you are busy but mentally available. Driving, mowing the lawn, doing laundry or other chores all present great opportunities to "make the most of your time, because the days are evil" (Eph 5:16) and *Make Room for Prayer*.

Make Space

There is no shortage of devices and screens vying for our attention. With all the beeps, buzzes, and it can be hard to focus on even your own thoughts, much less a conversation with God! It's important, then, that you carve out a physical space where you can be free of all external distractions – screens, sounds, or even people! Jesus encouraged His followers to go into their homes and into a closet so that they could be alone in the presence of God (Matt 6:6). While you don't necessarily have to use your actual closet to pray, you should create a space where you can be alone with God.

When choosing a space to use for prayer, take into consideration how much room you have to move in this space. There may be times where you feel led to pray from your knees to outwardly reflect the stature of your heart – which is a great thing! You may consider having a padded stool or bench for you to kneel upon in order to have this bodily congruity in your prayer.

7 Seek Community ↓

Not all your prayers should be made alone! The Christian life is one lived in community, and prayer is no exception to this. Bringing others into your prayer life can provide the encouragement and support you need to keep going. Sometimes this looks like maintaining accountability as your close supporters check in to see if you have been praying. Other times this looks like asking others to pray with you, whether for specific requests or just to enter a time of fellowship and worship with brothers and sisters in Christ.

You might also consider practicing the “Divine Hours” where specific prayers are offered at specific times. This is a great way to join believers all around the world in prayer. It is important to remember that God is the God of all the earth, not just of us as individuals. Our prayer time can remind us that we are part of something much grander than ourselves!

Write it Down!

Journaling your prayers can help you to focus on the time spent in prayer, giving special attention to specific needs and causing us to meditate on important truths and characteristics of God. Writing down what you are praying about can also allow you to look back and see how God has answered prayers and changed your heart over time. Imagine having a notebook that shows you all the ways that God showed up, even if it wasn't how you expected!

Prayer is an essential part of the Christian life and should define us individually and corporately. It is how we communicate with God and, most importantly, one of the ways that He communicates with us and draws us to Himself. By being a people of prayer we can have closeness and intimacy with the God who created us and loves us, and through this oneness with God we can better serve Him as His church.

WHAT IT'S NOT...

There are lots of misconceptions about prayer that show up in the way we talk about, think about, and practice prayer. To sort through these misconceptions and find the truth about what prayer really is, it is helpful to talk about what it is not.

Prayer Is Not a Grocery List

When you and I need to pick up groceries, it's helpful to make a list of all the things we need for the week. We go to the store, put items in the cart and cross them off the list one by one. You might even open your handy HEB app and schedule a curbside pickup, listing all the items you want and just showing up to get the goods! When you take care of groceries this way, do you feel a close personal connection to your piece of paper? Would you say that oneness is what defines the relationship between you and the grocery attendant who brings your items to your car?

Many times when we pray, we simply list all the problems in our lives and ask God to handle them – and most of the time these problems are really important! We pray for God to bring healing, to cause reconciliation, to draw our friends and loved ones into a relationship with Himself. These are all huge needs that we absolutely should bring before the Lord! But if all we do is pray when we have problems, we are just treating God like the grocery store. God is not the grocery store, so prayer cannot be our grocery list.

Prayer Is Not a Voicemail

Have you ever gotten caught on the phone with someone you care about but who just drones on and on? We can all think of someone we love who we know we should call to check in on, but we dread making the call out of fear that what should have only been a fifteen-minute conversation will turn into an hour-and-a-half slog through the mud. You might find yourself dialing the phone while hoping to just hear that recorded message so that you can say that you called and avoid the conversation.

Do you find yourself leaving voicemails for God when you pray? It's something you might feel like you need to do, but you might not feel like you have the time or the emotional bandwidth to actually talk to God, so you just check the box and leave a little message and go on about your day without ever listening to see what God had to say. Don't just leave a message after the tone, engage with your Creator in REAL CONVERSATION!



Prayer Is Not a Magic Spell

Computer and tech wizards everywhere know that to get a desired outcome, you need proper input. Whether it is developing code to facilitate complex processes or basic commands in Microsoft Excel, conditions and language must be perfect for you to arrive at the desired result.

How many of us treat prayer the same way? Unlike with Excel, there's no perfect formula for getting the exact response you want from God. No matter how precise you make your words, how you position yourself, how much feeling you use in your voice, you cannot manipulate God into giving you the answer you want.

So... WHAT IS PRAYER?

If it isn't a grocery list, a voicemail, or a magic spell, what exactly is it? Prayer, at its core, is simply talking to God! Yet prayer is unlike any other conversation you or I may enter. When we pray, we engage in three activities that all occur simultaneously: we are approaching the throne of God, conversing with our Heavenly Father, and communing with the Holy Trinity.

When We Pray, We Are Entering Into The Presence of God and Approaching His Throne

You may be picturing a medieval castle where peasants line up to air their grievances before an uncaring monarch holding court. They might wait all day – or even longer – to make their request to the king just to be dismissed without care. Yet this is *not* our experience when we pray. Scripture tells us that God cares deeply for us and knows our needs (Matt 6:25-27). Our Ruler wants to hear our requests.

Coming before the King is no small matter! We should not discount the significance of the moment when we pray. When Isaiah came in a vision to the throne of God, his first reaction was one of despair – he recognized that he could not stand before the holiness of God (Isaiah 6:1-13). Likewise, the preacher in Ecclesiastes warns us not to be too casual with the King, showing proper reverence to His position in heaven (Eccles 5:2).

Yet while we show reverence, we do not need to be afraid to come before God in prayer. Because of the finished work of Christ on the cross, we can step boldly and confidently before the throne of God and seek Him there (Heb 4:16). Where Isaiah despaired because of his sin, we have already been made clean by the blood of Jesus and so are welcomed into the presence of God.



God so desires for us to approach His throne that He provides help for us as we do so! Jesus as our great High Priest is constantly interceding on our behalf (Heb 7:25). The Holy Spirit also intercedes for us in our weakness, asking on our behalf the things we may not recognize that we need (Rom 8:26-27). When we come before the throne of grace, we do not go alone.

When We Pray, We Are Conversing With Our Heavenly Father

God is not some far-off ruler or uninvolved deity. He is deeply interested in the world He has created, and He is involved in the lives of each and every one of His children. And we are His children! When we were saved by blood of Christ and received the Holy Spirit, we were sealed as sons and daughters of God and given the right to call Him our Father (Rom 8:14-17).

Scripture tells us that God is intimately acquainted with all our ways (Psalm 139:1-6) and that He truly and deeply knows us. We can tell our heavenly Father anything and everything and know that He genuinely cares about what we tell Him – not because He does not know already, but because He delights in us! Just like a child can talk nonstop about seemingly trivial details, we can speak to God through prayer all our thoughts, needs, and desires.

Like any conversation, though, prayer should involve both speaking AND listening. God desires to communicate also with us, so as we pray we should be mindful of the Holy Spirit's guidance! When we pray, we not only have an opportunity to speak to our Father, but we are given an opportunity to listen to Him through His Spirit.

When We Pray, We Are Communing With the Holy Trinity

When we pray, we are communing with the Holy Trinity. As we've already seen, the three persons of the Trinity are each active when we pray. We converse with God the Father because we have been adopted into His family, we approach the throne of grace in the name of the Son who gives us access to the presence of the Father, and we pray by the power of the Holy Spirit who intercedes on our behalf and makes up for our weaknesses. Prayer is talking to God and communing with all three persons of the trinity.



WHY SHOULD WE PRAY?

Knowing what prayer is, you might still be left asking yourself, why is prayer so important to the Christian life? Many people seem to be getting on just fine without praying, so what's the big deal? God's people ought to be people of prayer because of three reasons:

- ***we are commanded to pray***
- ***prayer benefits us***
- ***prayer works!***

We Are Commanded to Pray

Throughout the Bible, God has commanded His people (both Israel and the Church) to pray. These commands not only tell us that we need to pray, but also tell us some of the things we need to pray for!

- For our wants, needs, and desires (Phil 4:4-7)
- For the people around us (Jer 29:7)
- For governing authorities (1 Tim 2:1-4)
- For everything all the time! (1 Thess 5:16-18)

No one who is a member of the family of God is exempt from these commands. We, as a local expression of the universal Church, must be characterized both individually and corporately by prayer!

Prayer Benefits Us

Simply engaging in the activity of prayer brings with it several spiritual blessings. God promises these blessings to us to encourage our obedience to Him, so we should seek to have these blessings!

Praying about our anxieties brings us peace.

Paul writes that we should not be anxious but should pray instead, promising that when we pray, we can experience the peace of God that surpasses even what we can understand (Phil 4:6-7). Our God is the source of peace and wants us to have access to the peace that He provides.

Praying brings us closeness and intimacy with the Father.

When we pray, we enter God's presence and draw near to Him. We are promised in Scripture that as we continually draw near to God, He will also draw near to us (James 4:8). We can daily experience the love that God has for us as we come into His presence through prayer.



Prayer makes us aware of the Holy Spirit's leading and corrections.

Because prayer is a dialogue with the Father through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can receive the instruction and correction of the Spirit. As we search our hearts for sin to confess, the Holy Spirit brings to our minds what is distancing us from God. As we seek to praise God and thank Him for all He has done, His Spirit moves us to recognize God's blessings.

Each of these spiritual blessings comes from and produces a closer relationship with God, which should not come as a surprise. What relationship does not develop or deepen as communication increases? The more we talk and listen to God through prayer, the closer we will be with Him and the more we will experience His blessings!

Prayer Works

Prayer works because God hears us, He is in control of the universe, and because the Holy Spirit empowers our prayers. This does not mean that God is in any way obligated to give us anything that we pray for – many of us have experienced requests that have gone unmet. However, we can trust that as we pray for that which is God's will, it will certainly be accomplished.

Prayer works because God hears our prayers.

We have all heard stories of God bringing about the healing, restoration, and reconciliation that others have prayed for. Jesus tells a parable in Luke 18 about an unjust judge who finally relents to the petitions of a persistent widow – how much more so will God who is perfectly just hear the cries of His people? James tells us that the effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much (James 5:16), and we have been declared righteous by the blood of Jesus!

Prayer works because God is in control of all that happens to us.

God's sovereignty extends to every area of our lives, so we can trust that when we pray for God to work on our behalf, He is able to deliver! In the book of Job we see that nothing happens without God allowing it, and ultimately He is able to bring restoration, and promises us as much in the resurrection. The same God who created the world and conquered death is the God to whom we pray, and we can trust that He will act on those prayers.

Prayer works because it is empowered by the Holy Spirit.

As we pray, the Holy Spirit leads us and guides us in what we should pray for as He reveals sins, highlights opportunities, and provides encouragement. In those moments when we do not know what to pray for, we are promised that the Holy Spirit intercedes on our behalf and brings our needs to the Father (Rom 8:26-27). If the Holy Spirit intercedes on our behalf, we can trust that the Father will respond to this intercession because God cannot deny Himself (2 Tim 2:13). In all these things we can trust that we are not wasting our time when we pray, but instead are seeking greater intimacy with God and being fashioned more into the image of His Son.



HOW SHOULD WE PRAY?

Even when we accept the importance of prayer, it can be hard to know how to start praying regularly. Our culture and the world around us have made us fearful of “saying the wrong thing” or “not getting the words right.” Thankfully, God allows tremendous freedom in how, when, and where we offer our prayers to Him. The Bible offers numerous examples of prayer that differ widely in both context and content, allowing us to be flexible and gracious in how we teach others to pray. Our prayers can be:

- Vocal (Psalm 142:1-2)
- Silent (1 Sam 1:13)
- Planned (Daniel 6:10)
- Spontaneous (Nehemiah 2:1-4)
- Individual (Matthew 6:6)
- Corporate (Acts 4:24-30)

Whether we are alone in our car, sitting as a group before a meal, or in a prayer meeting, we can come before God and offer our prayers to Him without fear of being rejected. Yet while we have liberty in the context and content of our prayers, Scripture does indicate that our prayers must be both authentic and intentional.

Our Prayers Need To Be Authentic

If we are just going through the motions, just saying the words without meaning them, then our prayers are of no benefit to us. God reprimanded His people Israel because they honored Him with their lips but were distant from Him in their hearts (Isaiah 29:13-14). There will be seasons where we feel distant from God, whether by sin or by the circumstances of our lives. In those moments, we still should pray – yet we should take care to be honest with God about how we are feeling. If we feel distant, we should be authentic with God and tell Him that we desire to be closer to Him, confessing and repenting of any sin that might be causing the distance. It does us no good to lie to ourselves or to God as we pray, so we need to be vulnerable and authentic as we come into God’s presence!

Our Prayers Need To Be Intentional

Many of us have had days where we were driving some familiar route only to realize that we arrived at our destination without any recollection of what happened during the trip. Particularly as activities become more habitual, there is a tendency for us to “check out” mentally. In our prayer life, we can get lost in recitation and habitual practices. Jesus warned us to avoid turning prayer into a mindless ritual when He gave us the Lord’s Prayer, saying “when you are praying, do not use thoughtless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words” (Matt 6:7). Just like we wouldn’t want to mentally disengage in an important conversation with a dear friend, we need to be intentionally engaged as we converse with God through prayer.



PRAYER EXERCISES

To Use During This Journal

With the tremendous freedom that you and I have in the way that we approach the Father in prayer, you may be feeling some *decision paralysis* at the number of options and not know where to start. In what follows, we will learn about six different models of prayer that you can use as you seek to cultivate a healthy habit of daily prayer.

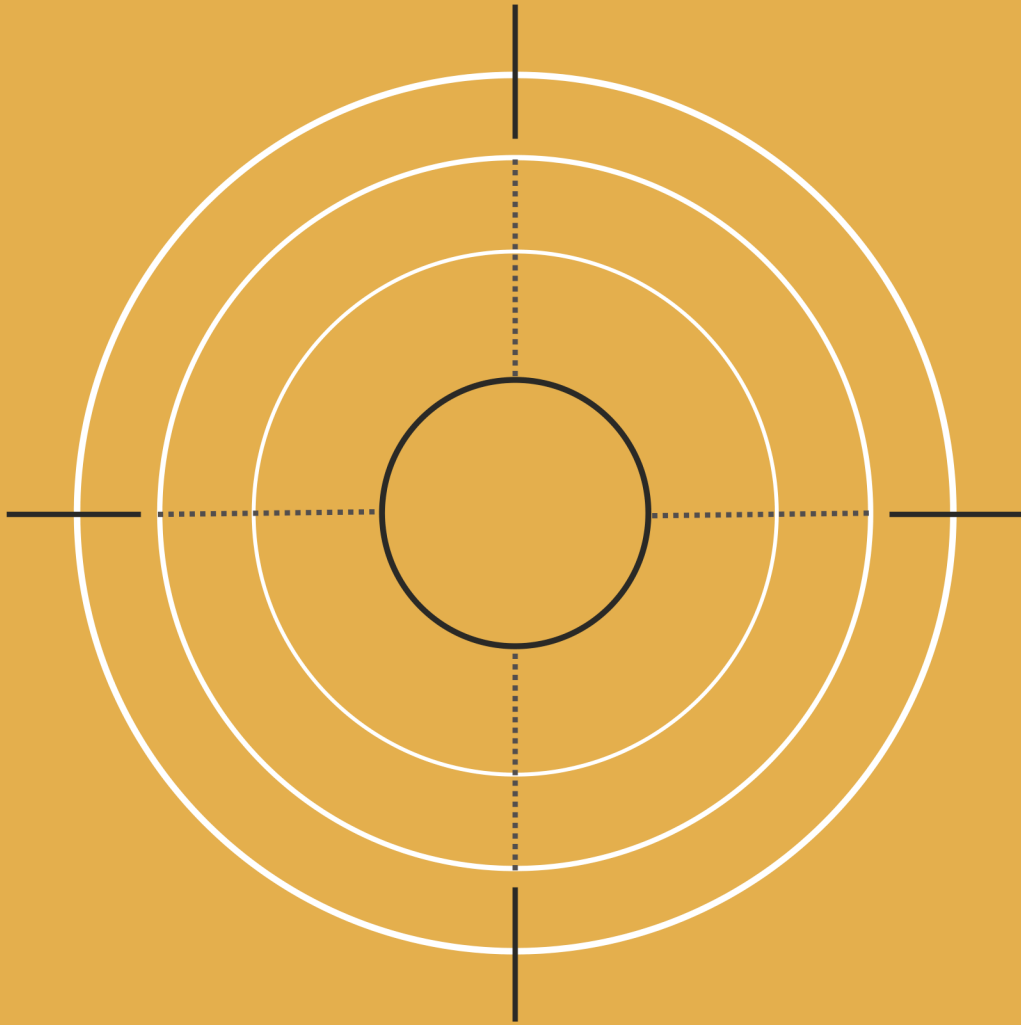
Some of these prayer exercises will take more time than others and each will have a different focus in their approach. While there is no one right way to pray, it is important that we try to vary our approach to prayer so that we stretch ourselves to authentically interact with God. Prayer is a conversation! If you and a friend only ever talked about one thing and always talked about it in the same way then the relationship will likely not get very deep. Pursuing the depths of intimacy with God through your prayers will take work, vulnerability and humility.

Regardless of which model of prayer you use, remember to incorporate times of listening for God's response to our prayers through the leading of the Holy Spirit!

The different models of prayer that we will be covering in this journal are...

- PRAYER STRATEGY TARGETS
- PRAYER THROUGH THANKSGIVING
- RECITING PRAYERS
- "ACTS" PRAYER FORMULA
- PRAYING THROUGH THE PSALMS
- PRAYING WITH OTHERS

PRAYER STRATEGY TARGETS

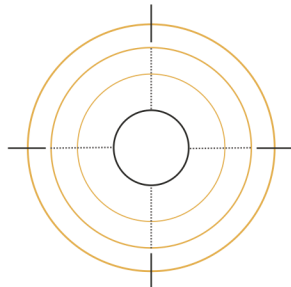


A tool we want to provide you with for this devotional is a **Prayer Strategy Target**, and more importantly we want to teach you how to use it.

The prayer strategy target comes from the book, “The Battle Plan for Prayer, written by Stephen and Alex Kendrick, and inspired by the feature film, “The War Room”. It is designed to increase the intentionality and specificity of your prayers through writing your prayers and scriptures that align God’s ability to answer those prayers in each section of the target before praying aloud.

PRAYER STRATEGY TARGETS

THE MEANING OF THE CROSSHAIRS SYMBOL



THE CROSS IN THE MIDDLE :

Reminds us that successful prayer begins with a relationship with God through Jesus Christ and faith in His shed blood on the cross.

(John 14:6, Eph. 3:12; Col. 1:15-20)

THE VERTICAL LINES IN THE CROSS :

(As well as those above and below it) – Remind us to stay vertically aligned with God and His Word in prayer.

(John 14:13; John 15:7; 1 John 5:14)

THE HORIZONTAL LINES IN THE CROSS :

(And on both sides) – Remind us to stay right with others. This includes forgiving, apologizing, and also praying in agreement with others.

(Matthew 5:23-24; Matthew 18:19-20; Mark 11:25)

THE INNER CIRCLE :

Means to maintain a pure heart in prayer. When you pray, you should keep no unconfessed sin or bitterness in your heart, and you should approach God humbly, repentantly, submissively, and in faith.

(Psalm 66:18; Mark 11:24; James 5:16)

THE CROSSHAIRS:

Remind us to aim our intercession and to pray specifically, strategically, and persistently.

(Matthew 7:7-8; John 15:7; James 5:16)

PRAYER STRATEGY TARGETS

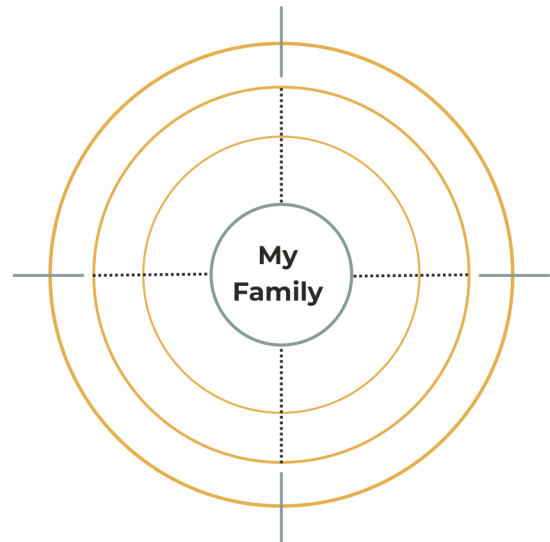
HOW TO USE A PRAYER STRATEGY TARGET

In the Center of the Target :

Choose the focus of your prayer target, and write it in the center circle. Your target will be the overarching subject of your prayer session.

Some examples may include:

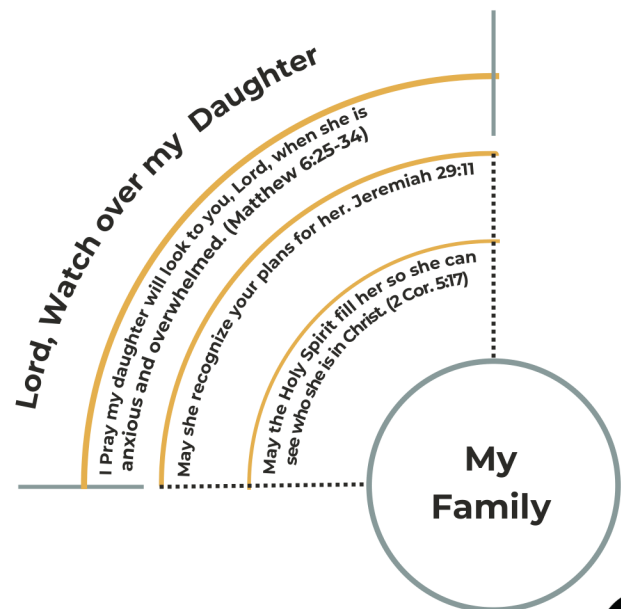
- Your Family
- Your Coworkers
- Our Nation
- Your Soul.



In the Rings :

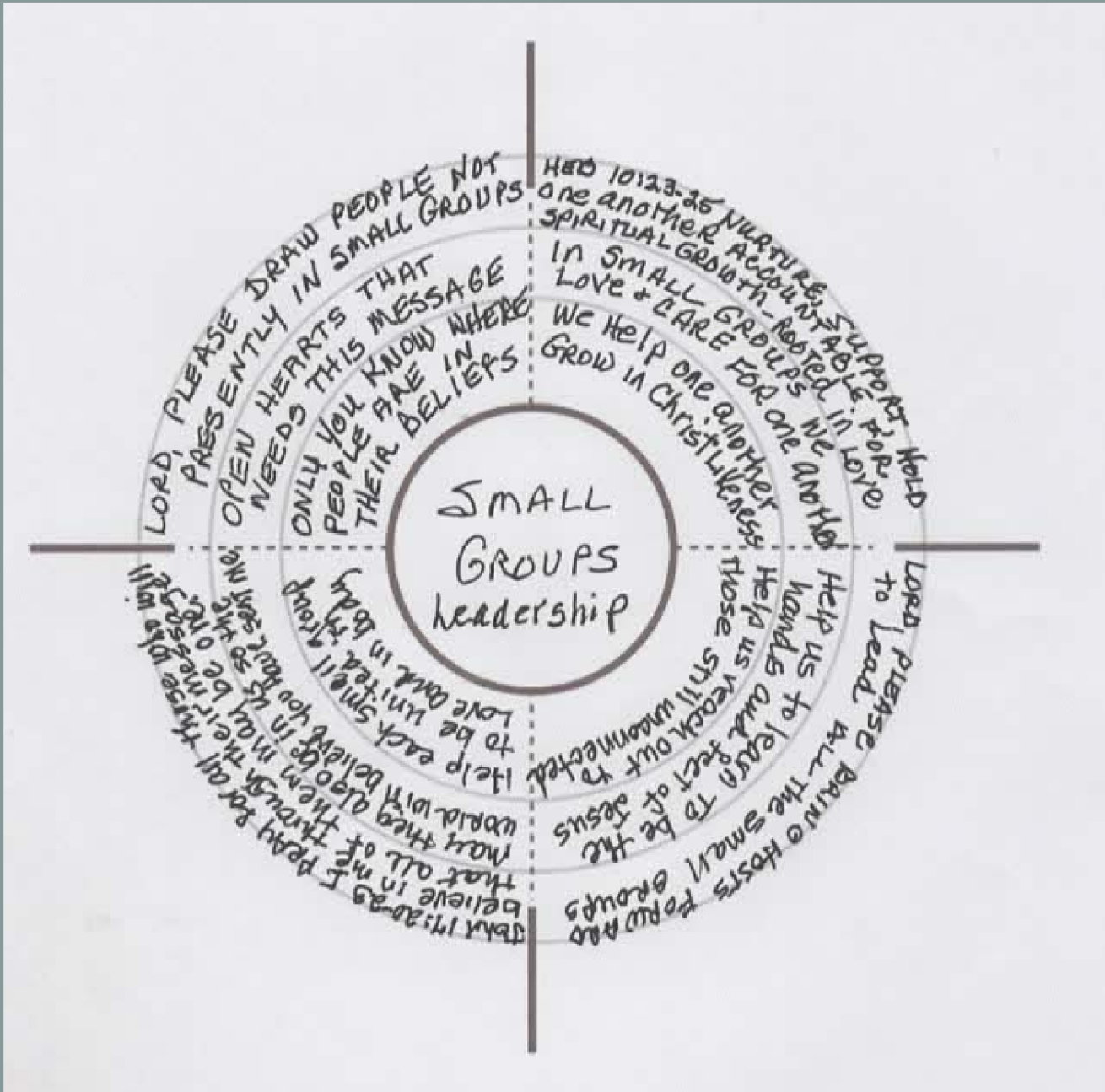
Starting in the top left section of the crosshairs, begin to write down specific things you are asking God to heal. "My Family" is a great example because it demonstrates how each section should be specific prayers for different parts of your target. In this case, the top left section will be about the daughter of "My Family".

As you write down your prayers, search for scripture that reinforces God's authority over your troubles, and write the chapter & verse beside the prayer.



PRAYER STRATEGY TARGETS

A completed prayer target may look something like this:



PRAYER THROUGH THANKSGIVING

“Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.”

Colossians 4:2 (ESV)

As we begin to pray, it's important for us to exercise our gratitude muscle by thanking God for what He has done. One way we can do this is by making a gratitude list that reminds us of things we are grateful for. As it so often happens, we may not start out feeling grateful as we begin praying and thanking God, but as we pray, our whole perspective changes.

You may want to keep a running tab of all the ways that God has blessed you so that you can look back and remember His faithfulness to you. Or perhaps you would rather list each day the things that you have to look forward to that day so that you can begin the day with gratitude. No matter how you want to approach it, so long as you recognize that every good and perfect gift comes from God (James 1:17) and that He gives freely because of His own good pleasure, then you will have the right mindset.

There will be seasons of life where it seems like nothing is going the way we would hope, or where it seems like God is far off, or that we have nothing to be thankful for. In these seasons, it is helpful to remember that even as they composed songs of lamentation, the psalmists almost always close with a call to praise God and thank Him for His goodness and lovingkindness (Psalm 31:19-21). Even as we lament our surroundings, we can pray to God and thank Him for His many blessings - perhaps there is no greater time to give thanks than when we feel like there is nothing to be thankful for.

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (ESV)



RECITING PRAYERS

Sometimes, we don't know what to pray and that's okay. The Bible says that the Holy Spirit Himself intercedes for us with wordless groans. Even the disciples asked Jesus about prayer - not how to pray - they already knew how to pray; but, how to pray powerfully as He did. So, He gave them a model prayer to use.

We don't have to pray these exact words all the time since our prayers are basically about our relationship with Jesus. But when we don't have any words to pray, or we need to pray in unity with others, we can borrow this prayer from Jesus Himself.

***“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be Your name,
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today, our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors,
and lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from the evil one.”***

Matthew 6:9-13 (NIV)

As we recite prayers, we cannot lose sight of the fact that prayer is a conversation between us and God. If we do not actively engage with the prayer we recite and look for how the prayer ties in with our lives and our relationship with God, then we are missing the point of prayer!

Remember: *there is no magic in the recitation, but there is tremendous value in echoing in our hearts the prayers of others.*



Scripture and Church History have countless other examples of how God's people authentically and intentionally approached Him in prayer. These prayers take on a variety of topics, carry a wide range of emotions, and occur in unique contexts. God has recorded these prayers for our benefit, not only showing us what we ought to pray about, but also to teach how we can pray to Him. Here are a few such prayers that you can use for recitation or inspiration in your own prayer life!

The Old Testament

- Habakkuk's Prayer of Adoration (Habakkuk 3)
- Daniel's Confession for the Nation (Daniel 9:1-19)
- David's Prayer of Thanksgiving (1 Chron 17:16-27)
- Hannah's Prayer of Supplication (1 Sam 1:10-16)

Jesus

- The High Priestly Prayer (John 17)
- The Prayer in the Garden (Matt 26:39-44)

The Apostles and Church Fathers

- Peter and John's Prayer for Confidence (Acts 4:24-30)
- Paul's Prayer for Spiritual Growth (Eph 3:14-21)
- "Prayers of the Early Church" (free online e-book)



THE ACTS PRAYER FORMULA

A prayer formula that you many people use is ACTS:

A = Adoration of God - For who He is

C = Confession - Admitting sin and asking forgiveness

T = Thanksgiving - For what God has done

S = Supplication - your needs as well as the needs of others

ACTS is a great reminder that prayers are not lists of “I wants”. Prayer involves worshiping God and acknowledging that only He is powerful enough to forgive us of our sins and perform miracles. This model helps us to focus on God and what He has done - both for us and for His own glory - while still leaving room for us to ask for help from our Heavenly Father.

It may be helpful to distinguish between “adoration” and “thanksgiving”. While both movements are acts of worship, they begin from different places. Adoration is glorifying God for who He is, independent of how that benefits us. To pray in adoration is to praise God for His character, His power, and His immutable aspects. On the other hand, to pray in thanksgiving is to take stock of the many blessings and mercies that God has given to us and to say “thank you”.

While praying with a formula like ACTS is helpful, don't feel pressured to make all of your prayers overly formulaic - feel the freedom to talk to God in a way that is natural! This formula is simply designed to help you remember to pray in a way that isn't always just asking for things.



PRAYING THROUGH THE PSALMS

Since the time of David, the Book of Psalms has served as the prayer book of the people of God. In it are found the heartfelt expressions of people experiencing both life's great mountaintops and devastating valleys. Through the Psalms we are able to see what it looks like to wrestle with every kind of circumstance from a posture of worship and a desire to honor God. By praying through the Psalms, we too can take the same posture of worship as we both celebrate great victory and mourn tremendous loss.

How do we "pray through" the book of Psalms? Similarly to reciting the prayers of others, we pray through the Psalms by meditating on the words as we see ourselves in them and challenge ourselves for not believing them as we should.

The book of Psalms naturally captures the deepest groanings of our souls and allows us to express our own thoughts and feelings even when we don't have the words ourselves. The Psalms will also challenge us as we recognize that we don't always share the same sentiments as the psalmist and are forced to consider how we need to change in order to reflect such a mindset. Because the Psalms cover a wide range of topics, they are incredibly relevant to our lives today. Whether we are struggling with sin and need to repent, confused by how so much evil is allowed to thrive in the world around us, or rejoicing in the wonders of creation, the book of Psalms provides prayers for every season and circumstance.

PRAYING WITH OTHERS

There's an old proverb of somewhat disputed origin that says, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." From our own personal experience we know this to be true: there are many things that are done more quickly if done alone, but often times working by oneself creates exhaustion and burnout. Whether it is a fitness routine, a home renovation, or the development of a new skill, one can almost always start faster if they are in it by themselves but usually end up falling behind or even giving up without help.

The same is true of our spiritual lives. When we set out to study the Bible or to practice a spiritual discipline, we can get started right away and work at our own pace when we go alone. Unfortunately, many Bible reading plans and prayer schedules have been given up after only a few weeks. This is not because the importance of the task or even the desire to perform was lacking, but many of these efforts lack one key aspect: *accountability*. The body of Christ, the church, exists in part to provide this community of faith to believers. It is primarily in this community of faith that spiritual growth takes place. Knowing this, it is extremely important that as we try to develop a healthy habit of daily prayer that we take time to pray with one another.

Schedule a time for you and one or two others to meet in person. Allow, if possible, for you all to be together for between 15 and 30 minutes. Use this time to ask those you are meeting with for ways that you can be praying for them - successes you can praise God for, failures that need to be confessed, needs that you can bring before God as an intercessor on their behalf. Share the same things from your own life and take turns praying out loud for one another. Praying together in this way serves not only to keep us accountable as we pursue healthy habits, but also offers encouragement and support in all areas of our lives and spiritual journeys.



7 DAY EXERCISE

INSTRUCTIONS

Now its time to put all we've learned into practice!

What follows is a guided prayer exercise using each of the six models we have just described. Over the course of the next six days, you will have the opportunity to interact with and engage in prayer using each of these models. Each day will have a prayer prompt that you may use to put the prayer model into practice. On the seventh day, you are free to choose whichever model you feel led to use as you pray through the given prompt and meet the Lord in prayer.

Note: You do not have to use our prompts! If there is something burdening your heart to bring before the Lord, please embrace the freedom to do so!

Some of these exercises may be foreign or uncomfortable to you, and that's okay! This prayer journal is not intended to make you an expert, nor does it assume that you already are one. Rather, this journal is meant to give you the tools to begin your own journey toward having a vibrant and thriving prayer life marked by authenticity, intentionality and intimacy with the Father.

Please know that having a healthy habit of daily prayer does not happen overnight! The Christian life is not a sprint, but a marathon, and we are all on the road together to encourage and spur one another on towards oneness with God (Heb 10:19-25). Consider working through this journal with your family, close friends, small group, or any group of like-minded believers who will hold you accountable as you pursue the Lord in this way.

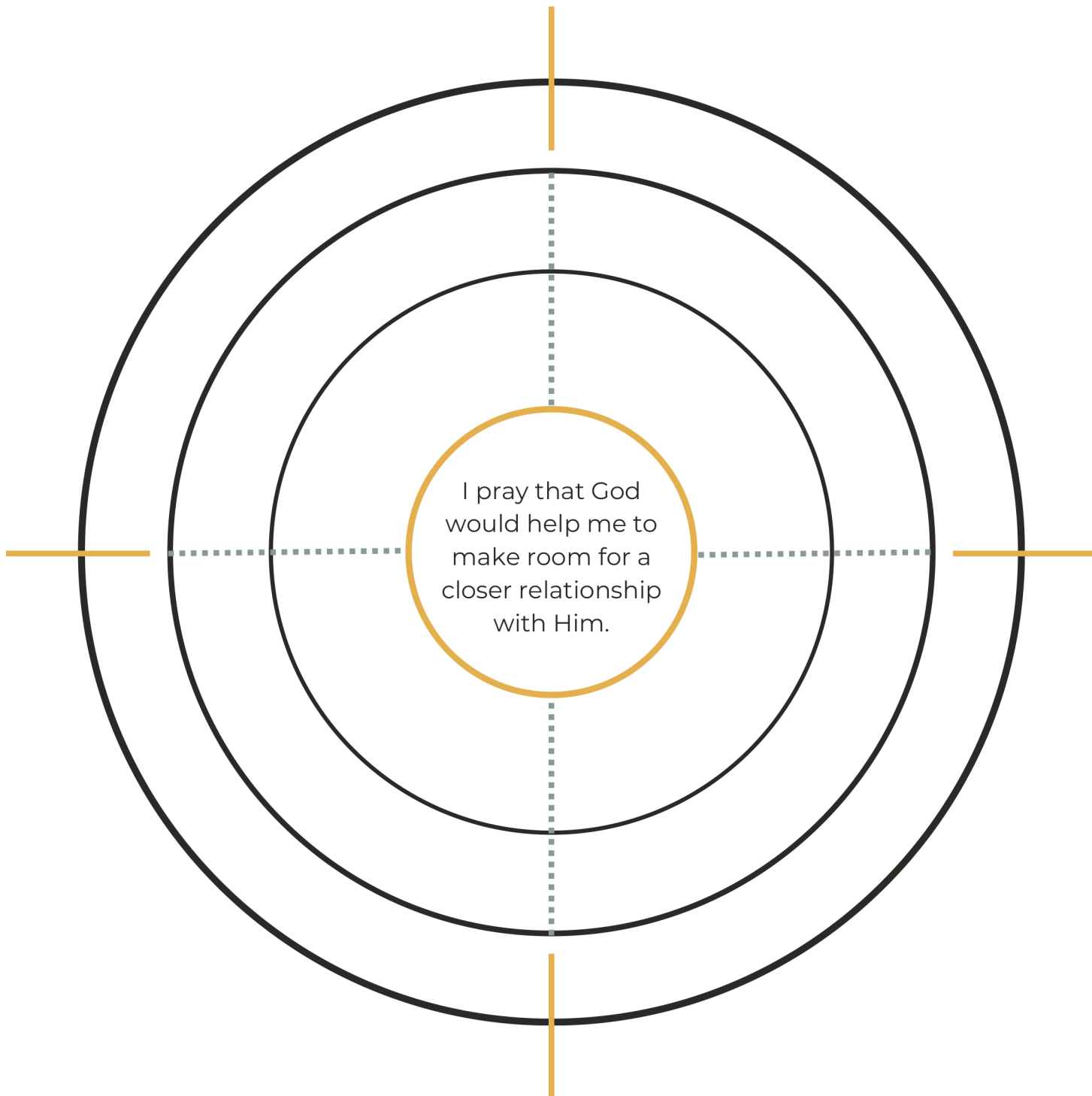
We all lead busy lives, only made more busy by all the good and important things that we recognize we need to do. If we do not intentionally carve out time and space in our busy days to come before the Lord in prayer, then many (if not all) of us will forget to make it happen. We must fight to create space to talk to our Heavenly Father.

This journal is designed to help you do just that. On average, it takes around 60 days to develop a habit. These first seven days will help you get started on that path, and afterwards we want to come alongside you as your pursue this habit of daily prayer! In addition to these seven days, we will have daily prayer prompts available to you for the remainder of the 60 days needed to form this habit.

Let's all Make Room for Prayer!



DAY 1 | PRAYER TARGET



DAY 2 | THANKSGIVING

Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise! Give thanks to Him; bless His name! For the Lord is good; His steadfast love endures forever...

Psalm 100:4-5

Write down five things that you are thankful for:

In this section praise & acknowledge God for giving you so many things to be thankful for.

DAY 3 | RECITE A PRAYER

Read the following prayer from the early church father, Irenaeus. See yourself in the words from another broken sinner saved by grace. Speak the words out loud and as you do, consider if you believe the words to be true. Afterward, write out your own thoughts and reflections on the prayer as part of your conversation with the Lord.

Prayer of Irenaeus

“O Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,
Look upon us and have mercy upon us;
You who are Yourself both victim and priest,
Yourself both reward and redeemer,
Keep safe all evil those whom You have redeemed,
O Savior of the world.
Amen.”



DAY 4 | "ACTS"

Adoration

Write down two or three statements of deep love, praise & respect for God.

Confession

Write down any sins or short comings you need God to lift from your heart.

Thanksgiving

In this section give thanks to God.

Supplication

In this section explain to God who/what needs prayer and why.



DAY 5 | PRAY THROUGH A PSALM

Read through Psalm 16 and meditate on each stanza, making the words your own and confessing where you feel your heart doesn't agree with the Psalm. Ask God to change you and mold you so that the words of this Psalm become true for you. After reading through the Psalm (perhaps more than once), write down your own request or confession to God based on this Psalm.

Psalm 16 - A miktam of David

- 1 Keep me safe, my God, for in You I take refuge.
2 I say to the Lord, "You are my Lord;
apart from You I have no good thing."
3 I say of the holy people who are in the land,
"They are the noble ones in whom is all my delight."
4 Those who run after other gods will suffer more and more.
I will not pour out libations of blood to such gods
or take up their names on my lips.
5 Lord, You alone are my portion and my cup;
You make my lot secure.
6 The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
surely I have a delightful inheritance.
7 I will praise the Lord, who counsels me;
even at night my heart instructs me.
8 I keep my eyes always on the Lord.
With Him at my right hand, I will not be shaken.
9 Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;
my body also will rest secure,
10 because You will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,
nor will You let Your faithful one see decay.
11 You make known to me the path of life;
You will fill me with joy in Your presence,
with eternal pleasures at Your right hand.

DAY 6 | PRAY WITH SOMEONE

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Hebrews 10:24-25

Write down the names of who you are praying with along with the date.

Write down victories that you and your partner can praise God for.

Write down failures that you and your partner need forgiveness for..

Write down needs that you and your partner want to bring before the Lord.



DAY 7 | YOUR TURN

You've learned and used several different ways to come before God in prayer, and now it's your turn to put these skills into practice! Using whichever model of prayer you wish and the prompt below as a guide, come before the Father and seek His presence.

Understanding the Will of God

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.

Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Ephesians 5:15-20

What is God's will for me in the workplace, in my home, and in my church?
Am I willing to follow God's will for me when I recognize it?

CHRIST CHURCH