The Contemplative Prayer Series

PRAYER SECRETS

A Simple Blueprint to Help You Walk in the Presence of God



Pablo Pérez

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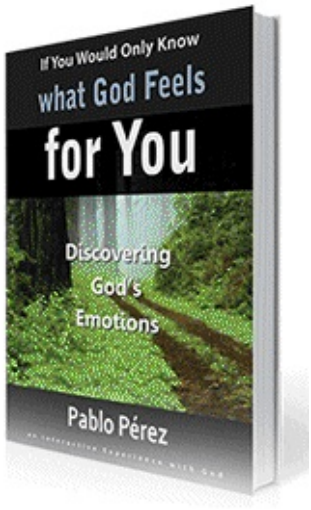


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CHAPTER 1

Prayer Secrets 101

It’s no secret that we live in a time of increasing darkness, moral decay and financial chaos. Most people around you have a severe infirmity of the soul—a cancer of the heart that few can even articulate or would be brave to admit—an *illness* revealed by clear symptoms: *daily choices, heart cravings and mindless actions.*

This "global epidemic" is like a dark virus—demonically engineered to replace the knowledge of God with intellectualism and the living flame of love with boring religion—leaving the soul defenseless before the *"alluring dullness"* of this age.

But hope is not lost. A ray of glowing light still shines among the nations*: you.*

Yes, you, and a growing number of *seekers* that hunger for God Himself—a company of people that longs to *behold* God's glory and *witness* the manifestation of His Kingdom.

Truth: you're far from perfect and struggling, but your heart yearns for more. You want a deeper relationship with God; you will not be content with plain words nor can a self-improvement (watered down) Gospel ever quench the thirst of your soul.

Plain and simple: you thirst for God, for His awareness and reality and, won't be satisfied until you have drunk deep from that Fountain of Living Waters.

If this is you, listen carefully…

In order to go deeper in God you must revisit your old ideas about *prayer*. That begins by understanding what prayer *is* and what *is not*.

Prayer is communing with God. It’s a dialogue among friends—where you *speak* and take the time to *listen to His voice*.

Prayer is the art of practicing the presence of God—the wonder of

discovering His thoughts and, experiencing the transforming power of His emotions.

Put differently, prayer is for your spirit what breathing is for your body: *the essential element that keeps you alive.*

But when you read PRAYER SECRETS you will discover way more than my definitions of prayer—I will show you how to *drink* from ancient wells, from the experts on *prayer* like: *R.A Torrey, Jean Guyon, Brother Lawrence* and some bright and shining lamps of today.

Prayer Secrets is a compilation of writings and quotes from my Heroes of prayer. If you just want a book where I'm the only one writing, you can read my "*Transcendent Majesty Series"*. You'll find them here: www.openheavenspublishing.com

But you will miss big time if you don't read this book, because it can help YOU understand how to pray effectively and how to walk in God's presence.

The journey ahead is of wondrous glory and eternal discovery but is not *free*… there is a price you have to pay: your full *attention*.

Ready? Let's get started!

CHAPTER 2

The Easiest Method of Prayer You Will Ever Learn

Jeanne Guyon is often credited as one of the most influential women in church history (even by her enemies)—she was an expert teaching *prayer* to simple and average people, like the rest of us.

In her own words, here is how she taught people to pray:

There are two ways of introducing a soul into prayer, which should for some time be pursued; the one is Meditation, the other is Reading accompanied with Meditation.

Meditative Reading is the choosing some important verse of the Bible: whatever truth you have chosen, read only a small portion of it, pursuing to taste and digest it, to extract the essence and substance thereof, and proceed no farther while any flavor remains in the passage.

When this subsides, take up your Bible again and proceed as before, seldom reading more than half a page at a time, for it is not the quantity that is read, but the manner of reading, that yields us profit.

Those who read fast reap no more advantage than a bee would by only skimming over the surface of the flower, instead of waiting to penetrate into it, and extract its sweets. Much reading is rather for scholastic subjects than divine truths: indeed, to receive real profit from spiritual

As I have described; and I am certain, if that method were pursued, we should become gradually habituated to, and more fully disposed for prayer.

Meditation, which is the other method, is to be practiced at an appropriated season, and not in the time of reading. I believe the best manner of meditating is as follows:

When, by an act of lively faith, you are placed in the Presence of God,

recollect some truth wherein there is substance and food; pause gently and sweetly thereon, not to employ the reason, but merely to calm and fix the mind: for you must observe, that your principal exercise should ever be the Presence of God; your subject, therefore, should rather serve to stay the mind, than exercise the understanding.

From this procedure, it will necessarily follow, that the lively faith in a God immediately present in our inmost soul, will produce an eager and vehement pressing inwardly into ourselves, and a restraining all our senses from wandering abroad: this serves to extricate us speedily from numberless distractions, to remove us far from external objects, and to bring us nigh unto our God, Who is only to be found in our innermost center, which is the Holy of Holies wherein He dwelled.

He hath even promised “to come and make his abode with him that doth his will” (John 14: 23). S. Augustine accuses himself of wasting his time, by not having from the first sought God in this manner of prayer.

When we are thus fully introverted, and warmly penetrated throughout with a living sense of the Divine Presence; when the senses are all recollected, and withdrawn from the circumference to the center, and the soul is sweetly and silently employed on the truths we have read, not in reasoning, but in feeding thereon, and in animating the will by affection, rather than fatiguing the understanding by study;

When I say, the affections are in this state, which, however difficult it may appear at first, is, as I shall hereafter show, easily attainable; we must allow them sweetly

To repose, and peacefully to drink in that of which they have tasted: for as a person may enjoy the flavor of the finest viand in mastication, yet receive no nourishment therefrom, if he does not cease the action and swallow the food; so, when our affections are enkindled, if we endeavor to stir them up yet more, we extinguish their flame, and the soul is deprived of its nourishment; we should, therefore, in stillness and repose, with respect, confidence and love, swallow the blessed food of which we have tasted: this method is, indeed, highly necessary, and will advance the soul farther in a short time, than any other in a course of years.

I have mentioned that our direct and principal exercise should consist in the contemplation of the Divine Presence: we should be also exceedingly watchful

and diligent in recalling our dissipated senses, as the most easy method of overcoming distractions; for a direct contest and opposition only serves to irritate and augment them; whereas, by sinking down under a sense and perception of a present God, and by simply turning inwards, we wage insensibly a very advantageous, though indirect war with them.

It is proper here to caution beginners against wandering from truth to truth, and from subject to subject: the right way to penetrate every divine truth, to enjoy its full relish, and to imprint it on the heart, is dwelling on it whilst its sense continues.

Though recollection is difficult in the beginning, from the habit the soul has acquired of being always from home; yet, when by the violence it hath done itself, it becomes a little accustomed to it, it will soon be rendered perfectly easy, and become delightful.

Such is the experimental taste and sense of His Presence, and such the efficacy of those graces, which that God bestows, Whose One Will towards His creatures is to communicate Himself unto them!

CHAPTER 3

The Kingdom is Within You

Jeanne Guyon continues:

You should first learn this fundamental truth, that *"the kingdom of God is within you"* (Luke 17:21), and that there it must be sought.

It is as mandatory for ministers to instruct their congregations in prayer, giving them sufficient instructions on how to live a life of prayer.

People should be taught to begin by an act of profound adoration and abasement before God; and closing the corporeal eyes, endeavor to open those of the soul: they should then collect themselves inwardly, and, by a lively faith in God, as dwelling within them, pierce into the Divine Presence; not suffering the senses to wander abroad, but withholding them as much as may be in due subjection.

They should then repeat the Lord's Prayer in their native tongue, pondering a little upon the meaning of the words, and the infinite willingness of that God Who dwells within them, to become, indeed, their Father. In this state let them pour out their wants before Him; and when they have pronounced the endearing word, Father, remain a few moments in a respectful silence, waiting to have the will of this their heavenly Father made manifest unto them.

Again, beholding themselves in the state of a feeble child, sorely bruised by repeated falls, and defiled in the mire, destitute of strength to keep up, or of power to cleanse himself, they should lay their deplorable situation open to their Father's view in humble confusion; now sighing out a few words of love and again sinking into profound silence before Him.

Then, continuing the Lord's Prayer, let them beseech this King of Glory to reign in them, yielding to His love the just claim He has over them, and resigning up themselves wholly to His divine government.

If they feel an inclination to peace and silence, let them discontinue the words of the prayer so long as this sensation holds; and when it subsides, go on with

the second petition, *"Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven!"* upon which these humble supplicants must beseech God to accomplish, in them, and by them, all His will; and must surrender their hearts and freedom into His hands, to be disposed of as He pleased.

And finding that the best employment of the will is to love, they should desire to love God with all their strength, and implore Him for His pure love; but all this sweetly and peacefully: and so of the rest of the prayer, in which the Clergy may instruct them. But they should not overburden themselves with frequent repetitions of set forms or studied prayers (Matt. 6:7) for the Lord's Prayer, once repeated as I have just described, will produce abundant fruit.

At other times they should place themselves as sheep before their Shepherd, looking up to Him for their true substantial food: *"O Divine Shepherd, You Feed Your flock with Yourself, and are indeed, our daily nourishment!"* They may also represent unto Him the necessities of their families: but all upon this principle, and in this one great view of faith, that God is within them.

The ideas we form of the Divine Being fall infinitely short of what He is: a lively faith in His presence is sufficient: for we must not form any image of the Deity; though we may of the Second Person in the ever-blessed Trinity, beholding Him in the various states of His Incarnation, from His Birth to His Crucifixion, or in some other state or mystery, provided the soul always seeks for those views in its innermost ground or center.

Again, we may look to Him as our Physician, and present to His healing influence all our maladies; but always without violence or perturbation, and from time to time with pauses of silence, that being intermingled with the action, the silence may be gradually extended, and our own exertion lessened; till at length, by continually yielding to God's operations, they gain the complete ascendancy; as shall be hereafter explained.

When the Divine Presence is granted us, and we gradually relish silence and repose, this experimental feeling and taste of the Presence of God introduces the soul into the second degree of prayer, which, by proceeding in the manner I have described, is attainable as well by the illiterate as the learned: some favored souls, indeed, are indulged with it, even from the beginning.

CHAPTER 4

The Prayer of Simplicity

Finally, Jeanne Guyon adds:

Some call it *"The Prayer of Contemplation," "The Prayer of Faith and Stillness,"* and others call it, *"The Prayer of Simplicity."* I shall here use the latter, which is a much more exalted state of prayer than that I am now treating of.

When the soul has been for some time exercised in the way I have mentioned, it finds that it is gradually enabled to approach God with facility; that recollection is attended with much less difficulty; and that prayer becomes easy, sweet and delightful; it knows that this is the true way of finding God; and feels *"his name is as ointment poured forth" (Songs 1-3).* But the method must now be altered, and that which I prescribe, followed with courage and fidelity, without being disturbed at the difficulties we may encounter therein.

First, as soon as the soul by faith places itself in the Presence of God, and becomes recollected before Him, let it remain thus for a little time in a profound and respectful silence.

But if, at the beginning, in forming the act of faith, it feels some little pleasing sense of the Divine Presence; let it remain there without being troubled for a subject, and proceed no farther, but carefully cherish this sensation while it continues: as soon as it abates, the will may be excited by some tender affection; and if by the first moving thereof, it finds itself reinstated in sweet peace, let it there remain: the smothered fire must be gently fanned; but as soon as it is kindled, we must cease that effort, lest we extinguish it by our own activity.

We must cease from self-action and self-exertion that God Himself may act alone: He said, through the mouth of His Prophet David, *"Be still, and know that I am God"* (Ps. 46. 10).

But humans are so infatuated with a love and attachment to its own workings, that it imagines nothing at all is done, if it does not perceive and distinguish all

its operations. It is ignorant that its inability to observe the manner of its motion is occasioned by the swiftness of its progress; and that the operations of God, in extending and diffusing their influence, absorb those of us.

The stars may be seen distinctly before the sun rises; but as his light advances, their rays are gradually absorbed and they become invisible, not from the want of light in themselves, but from the superior effulgence of the chief luminary.

The case is similar here; for there is a strong and universal light which absorbs all the little distinct lights of the soul; they grow faint and disappear under its powerful influence, and self-activity is now no longer distinguishable: yet those greatly err who accuse this prayer of idleness, a charge that can arise only from inexperience. If they would but make some efforts towards the attainment of this prayer, they would soon experience the contrary of what they suppose and find their accusation groundless.

This appearance of inaction is, indeed, not the consequence of sterility and want, but of fruitfulness and abundance which will be clearly perceived by the experienced soul, who will know and feel that the silence is full and unctuous, and the result of causes totally the reverse of apathy and barrenness.

There are two kinds of people that keep silence; the one because they have nothing to say, the other because they have too much: it is so with the soul in this state; the silence is occasioned by the superabundance of matter, too great for utterance.

To be drowned, and to die of thirst, are deaths widely different; yet water may, in some sense, be said to cause both; abundance destroys in one case, and want in the other. So in this state the abundance and overflowing of grace still the activity of self; and, therefore, it is of the utmost importance to remain as silent as possible.

The infant hanging at the mother's breast is a lively illustration of our subject: it begins to draw the milk by moving its little lips; but when the milk flows abundantly, it is content to swallow, and suspends its suction: by doing otherwise it would only hurt itself, spill the milk, and be obliged to quit the breast.

We must act in like manner in the beginning of Prayer, by exerting the lips of the affections; but as soon as the milk of Divine Grace flows freely, we have nothing to do but, in repose and stillness, sweetly to imbibe it; and when it ceases to flow, we must again stir up the affections as the infant moves its lips.

Whoever acts otherwise cannot turn this grace to advantage, which is bestowed to allure and draw the soul into *the rest of Love*, and not into the multiplicity of Self.

But what becomes of this child, who gently and without motion drinks the milk? Who would believe that it can thus receive nourishment? Yet the more peacefully it feeds, the better it thrives. What, I say, becomes of this infant? It drops gently asleep on its mother's bosom. So the soul that is tranquil and peaceful in prayer, sinks frequently into a mystic slumber, where all its powers are at rest; till at length it is wholly fitted for that state, of which it enjoys these transient anticipations. In this process the soul is led naturally, without effort, art, or study.

The Interior is not a stronghold to be taken by storm and violence, but a kingdom of peace, which is to be gained only by love.

If any will thus pursue the little path I have pointed out, it will lead them to intuitive prayer. God demands nothing extraordinary or difficult; on the contrary, He is best pleased by a simple and child-like conduct.

That which is most sublime and elevated in religion is the easiest attained: the most necessary Sacraments are the least difficult. It is thus also in natural things: if you would go to sea, embark on a river, and you will be conveyed to it insensibly and without exertion. Would you go to God, follow this sweet and simple path, and you will arrive at the desired object, with an ease and expedition that will amaze you.

O that you would but once try it! How soon would you find that all I have advanced falls short of the reality, and that your own experience will carry you infinitely beyond!

Is it fear that prevents you from instantly casting yourself into those arms of Love, widely extended on the Cross only to receive you? What risk do you run, in depending solely on your God, and abandoning yourself wholly unto Him?

CHAPTER FIVE

11 Reasons Why You Must Pursue a Life of Prayer

Be sure to read the previous three chapters again, (don't be bothered by the colloquial English writing style) there is a lot of valuable keys Jeanne unveiled. If you really listen, you learn how to position yourself to encounter God and hear His voice.

Next, we'll dive into another one of my heroes: *R.A. Torrey*—his words are filled with revelation from Scripture, sharp and easy to understand.

In Torrey's own words:

Ephesians 6:18 unveil words of tremendous importance for your life: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching there unto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

When you stop to weigh the meaning of those words and note the connection in which they are found, you can't help but say, *"I must pray, pray, pray. I must put all my energy and all my heart into prayer. Whatever else I do, I must pray."*

1) Wake Up! You Have a Powerful Enemy and He Wants to Finish You!

The devil is cunning, he is mighty, he never rests, he is ever plotting the downfall of the child of God; and if the child of God relaxes in prayer, the devil will succeed in ensnaring him. This is the thought of the context. Verse 12 reads:

"*For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*"

Then comes the 13th verse: "*Wherefore take up the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand.*"

Next follows a description of the different parts of the Christian's armor, which we are to put on if we are to stand against the devil. Then Paul brings all to a climax in verse 18, telling us that to all else we must add prayer—constant, persistent, untiring, sleepless prayer in the Holy Spirit, or all else will go for nothing.

2) Because Asking is God's Appointed Way of Obtaining Things

James brings this out very forcibly in the 4th chapter and 2nd verse of his epistle: "Ye have not because ye ask not." These words contain the secret of the poverty and powerlessness of the average Christian—neglect of prayer.

"Why is it," many a Christian is asking, "I make so little progress in my Christian life?" — "Neglect of prayer," God answers. "You have not because you ask not."

"Why is it," many a minister is asking, "I see so little fruit from my labors?" Again God answers, "Neglect of prayer. You have not because you ask not."

"Why is it," many a Sunday-School teacher is asking, "that I see so few converted in my Sunday-School class?"

Still God answers, "Neglect of prayer. You have not because you ask not."

"Why is it," both ministers and churches are asking, "that the church of Christ makes so little headway against unbelief and error and sin and worldliness?" Once more we hear God answering, "Neglect of prayer. You have not because you ask not."

3) The Most Important Business of Life

When the multiplying responsibilities of the early church crowded in upon them, they "called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the Word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But WE WILL GIVE OURSELVES CONTINUA-LLY TO PRAYER and to the ministry of the Word." Acts. 6:4

It is evident from what Paul wrote to the churches and to individuals about praying for them, that very much of his time and strength and thought was given to prayer. (Rom. 1:9, R.V.; Eph. 1:15,16; Col. 1:9, R.V.; 1 Thess. 3:10; 2 Tim. 1:3)

All the mighty men of God outside the Bible have been men of prayer. They

have differed from one another in many things, but in this they have been alike.

4) Prayer Was Very Important for Jesus

Turn, for example, to Mark 1:35. We read, *"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed."* The preceding day had been a very busy and exciting one, but Jesus shortened the hours of needed sleep that He might arise early and give Himself to more sorely needed prayer.

Turn again to Luke 6:12, where we read, "And it came to pass in those days that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." Our Savior found it necessary on occasion to take a whole night for prayer.

The words "pray" and "prayer" are used at least twenty-five times in connection with our Lord in the brief record of His life in the four Gospels, and His praying is mentioned in places where the words are not used.

Evidently prayer took much of the time and strength of Jesus, and a man or woman who does not spend much time in prayer, cannot properly be called a follower of Jesus Christ.

5) Prayer is what Jesus Ever Lives to Do

Christ's ministry did not close with His death. His atoning work was finished then, but when He rose and ascended to the right hand of the Father, He entered upon other work for us just as important in its place as His atoning work. It cannot be divorced from His atoning work; it rests upon that as its basis, but it is necessary to our complete salvation.

What that great present work is, by which He carries our salvation on to completeness, we read in Heb. 7:25, "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing HE EVER LIVES TO MAKE INTERCESSION FOR THEM."

This verse tells us that Jesus is able to save us unto the uttermost, not merely FROM the uttermost, but UNTO the uttermost, unto entire completeness, absolute perfection, because He not merely died, but because He also "ever lives."

The verse also tells us for what purpose He now lives, "TO MAKE INTERCESSION FOR US," to pray. Praying is the principal thing He is doing in these days. It is by His prayers that He is saving us.

The same thought is found in Paul's remarkable, triumphant challenge in Rom. 8:34—"Who is he that shall condemn? It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, WHO ALSO MAKES INTERCESSION FOR US."

If we then are to have fellowship with Jesus Christ in His present work, we must spend much time in prayer; we must give ourselves to earnest, constant, persistent, sleepless, overcoming prayer. I know of nothing that has so impressed me with a sense of the importance of praying at all seasons, being much and constantly in prayer, as the thought that that is the principal occupation at present of my risen Lord.

I want to have fellowship with Him, and to that end I have asked the Father that whatever else He may make me, to make me at all events an intercessor, to make me a man who knows how to pray, and who spends much time in prayer.

This ministry of intercession is a glorious and a mighty ministry, and we can all have part in it. The man or the woman who is shut away from the public

meeting by sickness can have part in it; the busy mother; the woman who has to take in washing for a living can have part.

But of course we must, if we would maintain this spirit of constant prayer, take time—and take plenty of it—when we shall shut ourselves up in the secret place alone with God for nothing but prayer.

6) It’s How We Receive Mercy and Obtain Grace In Times of Need

Heb. 4:16 is one of the simplest and sweetest verses in the Bible,—“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” These words make it very plain that God has appointed a way by which we shall seek and obtain mercy and grace. That way is prayer; bold, confident, outspoken approach to the throne of grace, the most holy place of God’s presence, where our sympathizing High Priest, Jesus Christ, has entered in our behalf. (Verses 14, 15.)

Mercy is what we need, grace is what we must have, or all our life and effort will end in complete failure. Prayer is the way to get them. There is infinite grace at our disposal, and we make it ours experimentally by prayer. Oh, if we only realized the fullness of God’s grace, that is ours for the asking, its height and depth and length and breadth, I am sure that we would spend more time in prayer. The measure of our appropriation of grace is determined by the measure of our prayers.

Who is there that does not feel that he needs more grace? Then ask for it. Be constant and persistent in your asking. Be importunate and untiring in your asking. God delights to have us “shameless” beggars in this direction; for it shows our faith in Him, and He is mightily pleased with faith. Because of our “shamelessness” He will rise and give us as much as we need (Luke 11:8). What little streams of mercy and grace most of us know, when we might know rivers overflowing their banks!

7) Prayer in the Name of Jesus is the Way to Access Fullness of Joy

He states this simply and beautifully in *John 16:24*, *“ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be fulfilled.” “Made full”* is the way the Revised Version reads. Who is there that does not wish his joy filled full? Well, the way to have it filled full is by praying in the name of Jesus.

We all know people whose joy is filled full, indeed, it is just running over, is shining from their eyes, bubbling out of their very lips, and running off their

fingertips when they shake hands with you. Coming in contact with them is like coming in contact with an electrical machine charged with gladness. Now people of that sort are always people that spend much time in prayer.

Why is it that prayer in the name of Christ brings such fullness of joy? In part, because we get what we ask. But that is not the only reason, nor the greatest. It makes God real. When we ask something definite of God, and He gives it, how real God becomes! He is right there! It is blessed to have a God who is real, and not merely an idea.

I remember how once I was taken suddenly and seriously sick all alone in my study. I dropped upon my knees and cried to God for help. Instantly all pain left me—I was perfectly well. It seemed as if God stood right there, and had put out His hand and touched me. The joy of the healing was not so great as the joy of meeting God.

There is no greater joy on earth or in heaven, than communion with God, and prayer in the name of Jesus brings us into communion with Him. The Psalmist was surely not speaking only of future blessedness, but also of present blessedness when he said, *"In Thy presence is fullness of joy." (Ps. 16.11.)* O the amazing joy of those moments when in our prayers we really press into the presence of God!

Does someone say. "I have never known any such joy as that in prayer"?

Do you take enough leisure for prayer to actually get into God's presence? Do you really give yourself up to prayer in the time which you do take?

8) Perfect Peace and Freedom from Anxiety

“Be careful for nothing,” says Paul, “but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 4:6,7.)

To many this seems at the first glance, the picture of a life that is beautiful, but beyond the reach of ordinary mortals; not so at all. The verse tells us how the life is attainable by every child of God: “Be careful for nothing,” or as the Revised Version reads, “In nothing be anxious.” The remainder of the verse tells us how, and it is very simple: “But in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”

What could be plainer or more simple than that? Just keep in constant touch with God, and when any trouble or vexation, great or small, comes up, speak to Him about it, never forgetting to return thanks for what He has already done. What will the result be? “The peace of God which passes all understanding shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.”

That is glorious, and as simple as it is glorious! Thank God, many are trying it. Don’t you know anyone who is always serene? Perhaps he is a very stormy man by his natural make-up, but troubles and conflicts and reverses and bereavements may sweep around him, and the peace of God which passes all understanding guards his heart and his thoughts in Christ Jesus.

We all know such persons. How do they manage it?

Just by prayer, that is all. Those persons who know the deep peace of God, the unfathomable peace that passes all understanding, are always men and women of much prayer.

Some of us let the hurry of our lives crowd prayer out, and what a waste of time and energy and nerve force there is by the constant worry! One night of prayer will save us from many nights of insomnia. Time spent in prayer is not wasted, but time invested at big interest.

9) It is the Way You Receive the Holy Spirit

Upon this point the Bible is very plain. Jesus says, “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?” (Luke 11:13.)

Men are telling us in these days, very good men too, “You must not pray for the Holy Spirit,” but what are they going to do with the plain statement of Jesus Christ, “How much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit TO THEM THAT ASK HIM?”

Some years ago when an address on the baptism with the Holy Spirit was announced, a brother came to me before the address and said with much feeling,

“Be sure and tell them not to pray for the Holy Spirit.” I said: “I will surely not tell them that, for Jesus says, ‘How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him’.”

“Oh, yes,” he replied, “but that was before Pentecost.” I said: “How about Acts 4:31? was that before Pentecost, or after?” “After, of course.” - “‘And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST, and they spoke the Word of God with boldness.’”

“How about Acts 8:15? was that before Pentecost or after?” He said: “After.” “‘Who, when they were come down PRAYED for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost.’”

It is plain as day in the Word of God that before Pentecost and after, the first baptism and the subsequent fillings with the Holy Spirit were received in answer to definite prayer. Experience also teaches this.

Doubtless many have received the Holy Spirit the moment of their surrender to God before there was time to pray, but how many there are who know that their first definite baptism with the Holy Spirit came while they were on their knees or faces before God, alone or in company with others, and who again and again since that have been filled with the Holy Spirit in the place of prayer!

I know this as definitely as I know that my thirst has been quenched while I was drinking water. Early one morning in the Chicago Avenue Church prayer

room, where several hundred people had been assembled a number of hours in prayer, the Holy Spirit fell so manifestly, and the whole place was so filled with His presence, that no one could speak or pray, but sobs of joy filled the place. Men went out of that room to different parts of the country, taking trains that very morning, and reports soon came back of the out-pouring of God's Holy Spirit in answer to prayer. Others went out into the city with the blessing of God upon them. This is only one instance among many that might be cited from personal experience.

If we would only spend more time in prayer, there would be more fullness of the Spirit's power in our work. Many and many a man who once worked unmistakably in the power of the Holy Spirit is now filling the air with empty shootings, and beating it with his meaningless gesticulations, because he has let prayer be crowded out. We must spend much time on our knees before God, if we are to continue in the power of the Holy Spirit.

10) It’s the Only Way to Escape the Snare of the Spirit of this Age

One of the most interesting and solemn passages upon prayer in the Bible is along this line. (Luke 21:34-36) “Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell in the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and PRAY ALWAYS, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”

According to this passage there is only one way in which we can be prepared for the coming of the Lord when He appears, that is, through much prayer.

The Second Coming of Jesus Christ is a subject that is awakening much interest and much discussion in our day; but it is one thing to be interested in the Lord’s return, and to talk about it, and quite another thing to be prepared for it. We live in an atmosphere that has a constant tendency to unfit us for Christ’s coming. The world tends to draw us down by its gratifications and by its cares. There is only one way by which we can rise triumphant above these things—by constant watching unto prayer, that is, by sleeplessness unto prayer. “Watch” in this passage is the same strong word used in Eph. 6:18, and “always” the same strong phrase “in every season.” The man who spends little time in prayer, who is not steadfast and constant in prayer, will not be ready for the Lord when He comes. But we may be ready. How? Pray! Pray! Pray!

11) Because a Daily Life of Prayer Accomplishes Much and Brings Much Fruit

Much has really been said upon that already, but there is much also that should be added.

1 - Prayer promotes our spiritual growth as almost nothing else, indeed as nothing else but Bible study; and true prayer and true Bible study go hand in hand.

It is through prayer that my sin is brought to light, my most hidden sin. As I kneel before God and pray, “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and

know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me," (Ps.139:23,24), God shoots the penetrating rays of His light into the innermost recesses of my heart, and the sins I never suspected are brought to view. In answer to prayer, God washes me from mine iniquity and cleanses me from my sin (Ps. 51:2).

In answer to prayer my eyes are opened to behold wondrous things out of God's Word (Ps. 119:18). In answer to prayer I get wisdom to know God's way (Jas. 1:5) and strength to walk in it. As I meet God in prayer and gaze into His face, I am changed into His own image from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:18). Each day of true prayer life finds me liker to my glorious Lord.

John Welch, son-in-law to John Knox, was one of the most faithful men of prayer this world ever saw. He counted that day ill-spent in which seven or eight hours were not used alone with God in prayer and the study of His Word. An old man speaking of him after his death said, "He was a type of Christ."

How came he to be so like his Master? His prayer life explains the mystery.

2 - Prayer brings power into our work. If we wish power for any work to which God calls us, be it preaching, teaching, personal work, or the rearing of our children, we can get it by earnest prayer.

A woman with a little boy who was perfectly incorrigible, once came to me in desperation and said:

"What shall I do with him?" I asked, "Have you ever tried prayer?"

She said that she had prayed for him, she thought. I asked if she had made his conversion and his character a matter of definite, expectant prayer. She replied that she had not been definite in the matter. She began that day, and at once there was a marked change in the child, and he grew up into Christian manhood.

How many a Sunday-school teacher has taught for months and years, and seen no real fruit from his labors, and then has learned the secret of intercession, and by earnest pleading with God, has seen his scholars brought one by one to Christ!

How many a poor preacher has become a mighty man of God by casting away his confidence in his own ability and gifts, and giving himself up to God to wait upon Him for the power that comes from on high! John Livingstone spent a night, with some others likeminded, in prayer to God and religious conversation, and when he preached next day in the Kirk of Shotts five hundred people were converted, or dated some definite uplift in their life to that occasion. Prayer and

power are inseparable.

3 - Prayer avails for the conversion of others. There are few converted in this world unless in connection with some one's prayers. I formerly thought that no human being had anything to do with my own conversion, for I was not converted in church or Sunday-school, or in personal conversation with any one. I was awakened in the middle of the night and converted. As far as I can remember I had not the slightest thought of being converted, or of anything of that character, when I went to bed and fell asleep; but I was awakened in the middle of the night and converted probably inside of five minutes.

A few minutes before I was about as near eternal perdition as one gets. I had one foot over the brink and was trying to get the other one over. I say I thought no human being had anything to do with it, but I had forgotten my mother's prayers, and I afterward learned that one of my college classmates had chosen me as one to pray for until I was saved.

Prayer often avails where everything else fails. How utterly all of Monica's efforts and entreaties failed with her son, but her prayers prevailed with God, and the dissolute youth became St. Augustine, the mighty man of God.

By prayer the bitterest enemies of the Gospel have become its most valiant defenders, the greatest scoundrels the truest sons of God, and the vilest women the purest saints. Oh, the power of prayer to 12reach down, down, down, where hope itself seems vain, and lift men and women up, up, up into fellowship with and likeness to God. It is simply wonderful! How little we appreciate this marvelous weapon!

4 - Prayer brings blessings to the church. The history of the church has always been a history of grave difficulties to overcome. The devil hates the church and seeks in every way to block its progress; now by false doctrine, again by division, again by inward corruption of life. But by prayer, a clear way can be made through everything. Prayer will root out heresy, allay misunderstanding, sweep away jealousies and animosities, obliterate immoralities, and bring in the full tide of God's reviving grace.

History abundantly proves this. In the hour of darkest portent, when the case of the church, local or universal, has seemed beyond hope, believing men and believing women have met together and cried to God and the answer has come.

It was so in the days of Knox, it was so in the days of Wesley and Whitfield, it was so in the days of Edwards and Brainerd, it was so in the days of Finney, it

was so in the days of the great revival of 1857 in this country and of 1859 in Ireland, and it will be so again in your day and mine.

CHAPTER 5

The Foundational Principle of the Kingdom

Wasn't *R.A. Torrey* great? There is much wisdom in his writings, much more than we have space here to cover.

Let's now move back to the future, to our times. Let's hear from another one of my heroes, a contemporary bright and shining lamp: *Mike Bickle*, the director of the International House of Prayer in Kansas City.

In Mike's own words:

It's a foundational principle in the kingdom of God: the Lord will give more strength to our inner man if we ask Him for it.

I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man. (Eph. 3:14–16)

In Ephesians 3:16, Paul asked the Lord to strengthen the inner man of the believers in Ephesus. It is vital for us to understand this prayer because it is one of the most important prayers we can pray. Our inner man is our soul, made up of our mind, emotions, and will. It is the place where we directly connect and interact with Jesus. It may sound unusual but it is necessary to focus some of our prayers on our own inner man by asking the Holy Spirit to strengthen us internally, in our heart.

It is biblical to pray for external things like our ministry, a breakthrough in finances, or help with situations and circumstances in our life. However, many never get around to praying for their internal life to be strengthened. Just as our physical strength can increase or decrease, so can our spiritual strength. We cannot always discern the specific times when the Spirit strengthens us because He usually does it in small measures. I compare it to taking vitamins. I have taken vitamins for years, but I cannot remember one precise day when I knew it was making a difference. If we take the right vitamins, they will strengthen us

physically over time. It is the same way in our spirit man: if we ask regularly, the Spirit will release His might little by little, and over time we will discern newfound strength.

A Vision to Go Deep in Prayer

The most important part of our life is our inner man; therefore it really should be our main focus when praying for our personal life. God longs to bless our inner man with strength and might, but He is waiting for us to ask Him. This strength is essential for our hearts—it will help us to walk uprightly before the Lord and to stand against compromise.

Here, I will share with you from two of my personal prayer lists that I have used over the years. They are practical tools to help you develop your own personal prayer life. In my experience, a prayer list is a simple tool that can help keep us focused in our prayer times. The first prayer list covers ten prayers to receive strength in our inner man; the second one offers five small phrases that have helped me when talking with the Spirit. Additionally, I have added three prayer principles that I use to pray over the descriptions of Jesus that I find in the Bible.

CHAPTER SIX

Establish Your Prayer Life

Mike continues:

A prayer life is not just about sincerely loving God; it also includes developing practical times and ways to talk to God on a regular basis. We must be intentional about developing a consistent prayer life. It will not just happen automatically. Part of my prayer life focuses on praying for others and part of it is focused on asking God to touch my personal life. I spend time praying for others, as well as for the release of revival on my city or the transformation of my nation. When I pray for myself, I think of three categories: my inner man, my circumstances, and my ministry.

I have developed specific prayer lists for each of these areas of my personal life. Our inner man is the most important part of our prayer life—it is the only part of your life that you will take to eternity. When some people pray, they only think of praying for people, places, or things, but a very valuable category of prayer is for our own heart. We need to be intentional about praying for the development of our heart in the power of God, and about growing in our connection with the Spirit.

You Must Ask

A simple truth that we all know is that God releases more blessing if we will just ask for it. In James 4:2 we are told, “You do not have because you do not ask.” He knows we have needs, but Scripture is clear that the Lord withholds many things until we ask.

When we talk to Him, it puts us in a position to connect with Him. God knows that connecting with Him will dynamically change our life. Therefore, He “starves us out” of our prayerlessness by withholding certain blessings until we actually ask or talk to Him about them. This is important to Him because He values fellowshipping with us.

Yes, we ask for financial blessing or a greater anointing on our ministry, but it does not stop there. We are also to ask for strength in our inner man. The Lord will increase the release of grace in our inner man if we will ask for it on a regular basis.

It is easy to think about our needs, without actually verbalizing them to the Lord. The Bible makes it clear that we must actually speak our request to God. Philippians 4:6 commands us, “In everything by prayer . . . let your requests be made known to God.” You can whisper your request, mutter it, or even groan it, but it is not enough to simply think about it without asking. Many fret and complain about their needs and even talk to others about them, but they do not actually speak them out to the Lord. He is waiting for us to approach Him. He longs to hear our requests and then to answer us.

Two Great Practical Tools

I have taught on prayer for over thirty years and I have clearly observed that people pray much more if they do two simple things: first, establish a schedule that designates when to pray, and secondly, develop a prayer list that focuses on what to pray. Scheduling regular prayer times is essential to a consistent prayer life. Without a schedule, we may sincerely intend to have an hour of prayer but we will often not get round to actually doing it. Yes, we will continue to offer our short prayers through the day as we groan in the car on the way to work, or whisper a short prayer when we feel anxious about something. By building our prayer times into our daily routine—by scheduling regular time for them—we will pray much more.

Of course, we will not keep our schedule 100 percent of the time, nor are we limited to praying only when we schedule prayer. However, by making prayer a part of our planned routine of life, we will pray much more consistently. A schedule is good, but it is not enough. Often when I sit down to pray, my mind is blank. I need a little jump-start to help get some focus in my prayer time, so I use my prayer list. I have found it invaluable. I recommend that everyone have a prayer list for the three areas of life that I mentioned earlier.

It is never too late to make one—I was eighteen years old when I made my first prayer list. The Lord has given me grace for prayer over the years, but I admit that without a prayer list I would have prayed significantly less. Today, I still use my prayer lists. I believe that most of us will pray ten times more over the next year if we will use these two practical tools of establishing a schedule

for regular prayer times and developing prayer lists. By putting these practical tools in place, you will be more equipped to pray with a focus and determination that will keep you steady for the long haul.

CHAPTER SEVEN

A Life Changing Acronym

I'm sure you will love this dynamite acronym! *Listen what Mike continues to reveal:*

Our highest calling in life is to live in fellowship with God, and our inner man is where fellowship with God occurs. My prayer list for my inner man has ten different areas. I use the ten-letter acronym:

F-E-L-L-O-W-S-H-I-P

To systematically pray through these ten areas. I try to pray through this acronym on a daily basis.

I pray them differently sometimes, but I use this acronym as the basis of my prayer list. All ten requests are based on promises or prayers that are in the Scripture. The foundational request for the ten prayers comes from Ephesians 3:16, where Paul prayed that the Spirit would strengthen believers with might on the inside.

Not all the promises in the Bible are a *guarantee* of increased blessings—they are *invitations* to receive them based on our responses. Thus, one important response is to ask for the release of these blessings. For example, the Lord promises to put the fear of God in our lives. The promise is sure, but it takes the supernatural activity of the Spirit for the fear of the Lord to actually grow in us.

The Holy Spirit waits for us to ask Him for more of the fear of God before He releases this great promise in us. God has made many promises related to our inner man, yet many believers continue, decade after decade, in unnecessary deficiency because they do not ask the Lord to release these great promises which will not operate without the Spirit's impartation to strengthen us. He waits for us to ask for His increased activity in our inner man. God will release far more if we consistently ask Him for it.

TAKE LIBERTY

During my prayer time, I do not hesitate to depart from my prayer list anytime that I feel the winds of inspiration leading me to pray in a different direction. Also, I often skip parts of my prayer list when I do not feel like praying that specific prayer. I encourage you to follow the winds of inspiration when you pray and skip parts of your prayer list anytime you want. The Lord does not mind. This prayer list is simply a road map to get you started in your prayer time. Feel free to start with my prayer list and change it in any way you want to make it your own. At the end of the day, *you learn to pray by praying*; as you pray more, your prayer list will grow and change over time as the Lord touches you and leads you in different ways.

F-E-L-L-O-W-S-H-I-P (REVEALED)

F: FEAR OF GOD

The Lord promised that He would put His fear into the hearts of His people (Jer. 32:40). He will do this much more as we ask Him to. Therefore, we must ask the Spirit to impart the fear of God into our heart as He unites our heart to His heart and Word (Ps. 86:11). It is far easier to resist sin and compromise when we feel even a small measure of the fear or awe of God in our heart. Therefore, I ask Him to cause me to delight in the fear the Lord (Isa. 11:3). Ask Him to strike your heart with the majesty, awe, and the dread of God (Isa. 8:13).

Scriptures

I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me. (Jer. 32:40) Unite my heart to fear Your name. (Ps. 86:11) His delight is in the fear of the LORD. (Isa. 11:3) The Lord . . . you shall hallow; let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. (Isa. 8:13)

Prayer

Father, release the spirit of the fear of God into my heart. Strike my heart with revelation of Your majesty, that I might live in awe before You. Release Your presence with holy dread that causes my spirit to tremble before Your glorious majesty. Unite my heart to Your heart and Word, and cause me to delight in the fear of God.

E: ENDURANCE

In the New Testament, the words “endurance” and “perseverance” and

“patience” are often interchangeable. All three speak of being faithful in your God-given assignments under pressure without quitting. The word patience means more than not being annoyed by someone or patiently driving within the speed limit. We must faithfully persevere for decades without ever quitting in our pursuit of the deep things of God’s heart. It takes the power of God touching our spirit to keep us from quitting or drawing back. Ask the Lord to give you endurance to be faithful even in the difficult and dry seasons of life. Ask the Spirit to impart endurance to you on your fasting days. Another way to ask for endurance is by asking God to impart zeal in your heart for His heart and His house (Jn. 2:17; Ps. 69:9).

Scriptures

Being strengthened with all power . . . so that you may have great endurance and patience. (Col. 1:11, NIV) May the Lord direct your hearts into . . . the patience of Christ.(2 Thes. 3:5) Zeal for Thy house will consume me. (Jn. 2:17, NAS)

Prayer

Father, strengthen my inner man with endurance, that I may do Your will with zeal and diligence, and that I might not quit pursuing the deep things of God. Impart endurance in me for fasting. Direct my heart into the patience or endurance in which Jesus walked. Give me strength to follow through in my commitments to You and to fulfill my ministry calling when it is difficult.

L: LOVE

It takes the influence of the Holy Spirit for us to love in the way God calls us to. As Paul wrote, “This is my prayer, that your love may abound still more and more” (Phil. 1:9). When we ask for our heart to abound in love, we are actually asking for the Holy Spirit to inspire us in four ways.

First, we are asking for understanding of God’s love for us to abound in our heart. *Second,* we are asking the Spirit to tenderize our heart so we can abound in love for Jesus. *Third,* we ask Him to help us love ourselves by seeing ourselves as God sees us. Many people despise themselves in a way that hinders their walk with God. *Fourth,* we ask the Spirit to cause love to abound in our hearts for others.

Scriptures

I pray, that your love may abound still more, in knowledge and all discernment. (Phil. 1:9) The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 5:5) May the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another. (1 Thes. 3:12) May the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God. (2 Thes. 3:5) You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought. (Ps. 139:13–15) 11 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. (Mk. 12:30) As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. (Jn. 15:9) That the love with which You loved Me may be in them. (Jn. 17:26) That you . . . may be able to comprehend . . . what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ. (Eph. 3:17–19)

Prayer

Father, pour out Your love into my inner man by the Holy Spirit, that my heart may overflow in love back to You and to others (Rom. 5:5). I also ask that You impart Your love for Jesus into my heart (Jn. 17:26). I ask for grace to love God with all my heart, soul, mind and strength (Mk. 12:30). Allow me to comprehend Jesus' love for me and to abide in it or stay connected to it (Jn. 15:9). Let me see myself through Your eyes and to love who You created me to be (Ps. 139:13-15).

L: LIGHT OF GLORY

On the day of Paul's conversion, he saw Jesus in a great light from heaven (Acts 22:6–11). Moses prayed to see God's glory (Ex. 33:18). Afterwards, his face shone with the light of glory.

Like Moses, we can also ask to encounter the realm of God's glory. Jesus said that His disciples would see an open heaven in which they would see the angels ascending and descending (Jn. 1:51). Ask the Lord for supernatural encounters that include seeing angels and experiencing His glory and presence in dynamic ways. Ask Him to shine the light of His countenance on your heart.

Scriptures

Suddenly a great light from heaven shone around me . . . And since I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of those who were with

me, I came into Damascus. (Acts 22:6,11) And he said, “Please, show me Your glory.” (Ex. 33:18) You shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending. (Jn. 1:51) “I pray, open his eyes that he may see.” Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man… The mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. (2 Kings. 6:17) Lord, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us. (Ps. 4:6) His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. (Rev. 1:16) Oh, send out Your light and Your truth! Let them lead me . . . bring me to Your holy hill. (Ps. 43:3)

Prayer

Father, let me see the light of Your glory. Give me Holy Spirit encounters—dreams, visions, angelic visitations, manifestations of Your light, fire, and wind—as You gave to Moses, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and John and the disciples on the day of Pentecost (Ex. 33–34; Isa. 6; Ezek. 1; Acts 2; Rev. 1). [13]

O: ONE THING

It is essential to consistently spend time before the Lord in His Word. In other words: to be a man or woman of one thing like David (Ps. 27:4), or Mary of Bethany, who sat at Jesus’ feet (Lk. 10:42).

Set your heart to be a person of one thing. Commit yourself regularly to be a person of one thing and ask the Holy Spirit to help you to not lose this focus. I ask the Lord to show me, to intervene and speak to me, when I start to drift away from this one thing lifestyle. I ask Him to speak to me from Scripture, by dreams, or just by His still small voice. As I pray this prayer regularly, I am far more sensitized to receiving the Lord’s help and correction when I lose my one thing focus.

Scriptures

One thing I have desired . . . that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord. (Ps. 27:4) But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part. (Lk. 10:42) One thing I do . . . reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:13–14) I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved. (Ps. 16:8)

Prayer

Father, I commit to live as a person of one thing. Help me to regularly sit at Your feet as Mary of Bethany did. Strengthen me to desire and maintain a lifestyle that has regular times before You in Your Word. When I lose this focus, send Your Word to deliver me, as You did for the saints in the early church (Rev. 2:4–5, 3:1–3, 3:15–20).

W: WORTHY

Paul wrote, *"We also pray always… that God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all… His goodness"* (2 Thes. 1:11).

Paul emphasized that he *always* prayed this for the saints because he understood how important it was. To walk worthy before the Lord is not the same as the idea of seeking to be worthy to earn our forgiveness. Rather, it is about having a worthy response to God that prepares us to walk in the fullness of our calling, referred to as "fulfill[ing] . . . all His goodness."

Too many believers come up short of what God has invited them to walk in because of their halfhearted choices. Jesus urged us to pray that we may receive grace to walk worthy of this calling to escape the compromises in the end times, so that we may stand in victory before Jesus (Lk. 21:36). Paul prayed that God would sanctify the disciples completely; and that they would walk in such a way as to be preserved blameless, or without compromise, until they met the Lord (1 Thes. 5:23)

Scriptures

We also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power. (2 Thes. 1:11)

Pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man. (Lk. 21:36) Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord. (1 Thes. 5:23) That He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God. (1 Thes. 3:13,15) Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. (Ps. 51:10) Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties. (Ps. 139:23) I have made a covenant with my eyes; why then should I look upon a young woman? (Job 31:1)

Prayer

Father, strengthen my inner man to walk in faith and obedience that is worthy to escape all compromise and to prepare me for the highest things that You have called me to. Help me to live free of compromise that I would walk blamelessly in body, soul, and spirit, and be able stand before You victorious, in full obedience.

S: SPEECH

Speech is a very significant issue in our spiritual lives. When our speech comes under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, our entire inner man will also come under His leadership (Jas. 3:2). Paul exhorted the saints to not speak any corrupt words, nor to grieve the Holy Spirit by filthy or foolish speech (Eph. 4:29–30; 5:4). The subject of speech was on David's "prayer list" as he also asked the Lord to help him control the words of his mouth until they were pleasing to God (Ps. 19:14). David purposed that he would not sin with his speech and that the Lord would set a guard over his speech (Ps. 17:3; 141:3).

Scriptures

If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. (Jas. 3:2) Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit… Let it not even be named among you… neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting. (Eph. 4:29–30, 5:4) Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight. (Ps. 19:14) Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips. (Ps. 141:3) I will guard my ways, lest I sin with my tongue; I will restrain my mouth with a muzzle. (Ps. 39:1)

Prayer

Father, set a guard over my lips and help me to speak only words that are pleasing to You. Free me from defensive, angry, and foolish speech. Keep me from quenching the Spirit with my words. I set my heart not to sin with my speech, that I could sustain unbroken communion with You.

H: HUMILITY

Jesus called us to learn from Him about walking in humility, or lowliness of heart (Mt. 11:29). He is willing to teach us about this vital subject, if we ask Him for understanding. Ask Him to teach you how to walk in humility.

Scriptures

Take My yoke . . . and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart. (Mt. 11:29) Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 2:3–5)

Prayer

Jesus, teach me how to walk in Your yoke of humility and lowliness. I set my heart to learn lowliness of heart from You that will transform my attitudes, speech, and actions. Give me wisdom on how to carry my heart in humility.

I: INSIGHT UNTO INTIMACY

The Holy Spirit desires to guide us into truth—to give us insight into His will for every area of our life. He will teach us how to walk in agreement with His heart so that we enjoy intimate partnership with Him. He will give us creative wisdom for our money, time, relationships, career, and ministry activities; in the specific ways that we pursue purity and health in our body; and so on. He will also give you insight into what is on His heart for your city, nation, and generation.

Scriptures

The Spirit of truth . . . will guide you into all truth . . . He will tell you things to come. (Jn. 16:13) The Holy Spirit . . . will teach you all things. (Jn. 14:26) Show me Your ways… teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth… The secret of the LORD is with those who fear Him. (Ps. 25:4–5, 14) That God may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. (Eph. 1:17) Ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord. (Col. 1:9–10) Epaphras… always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. (Col. 4:12)

Prayer

Father, give me insight into Your Word, will, and ways. Give me wisdom on how to walk in intimacy with You in every area of my life, including my finances, schedule, emotions, circumstances, physical body (diet, health), relationships (in the home, office, ministry), my future, fears, addictions, etc. Let

me know the secrets of Your heart (Ps. 25:14). What are You thinking and feeling about my city, nation, and generation? 19

P: PEACE AND JOY

The Holy Spirit will guard your heart and mind with supernatural peace (Phil. 4:7). In this verse, our heart speaks of our emotions. We do not have to live with a heart filled with jealousy, rejection, anxiety, or fear, nor with a mind filled with turmoil, confusion, and indecision. If we ask for peace and joy in specific areas of our life, we will actually receive more of it.

Scriptures

The peace of God . . . will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Phil. 4:7) Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 15:13) Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way. (2 Thes. 3:16)

Prayer

Father, strengthen my heart with supernatural peace in areas where I feel rejection, fear, and anxiety; strengthen my mind that I may overcome all turmoil, confusion, and indecision.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Fellowship with the Holy Spirit

Mike Bickle continues *with yet another powerful acronym. He says:*

We are called to walk in fellowship, or communion, with the Holy Spirit by intentionally developing our friendship with Him (2 Cor. 13:14). One way we can do this is by speaking to Him as the God who dwells inside of us. The indwelling Holy Spirit flows like a river in our heart (Jn. 7:38).

We will walk in the Spirit far more effectively if we regularly talk to the Spirit. Many believers do not talk to the Holy Spirit; thus, they neglect a most precious relationship. He longs for us to talk with Him, but He will not force conversation or friendship on those who are not interested.

When we talk to Him, He will talk back to us. Often when He "talks," He does not use words but He gives us impressions or He sensitizes our emotions so we can feel His nearness. God leads us by the still, small voice in our inner man (1 Kgs. 19:11–13). As we engage in a two-way dialogue with the Spirit, it is essential that we quiet our soul (Ps. 131:2). Our soul is by nature active and turbulent, so it takes effort to quiet ourselves.

I linger in the Spirit's presence with my attention turned inward to Him. I speak short, simple phrases to Him, slowly and softly. It is important to wait with a listening heart. Sometimes I will gently sigh in my spirit as I pray with subtle "groanings" that cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8:26). This happens naturally. Sometimes I am totally silent.

I often use five phrases when talking to or fellowshipping with the Holy Spirit. I thank the Holy Spirit for His presence in me and then ask for revelation, and for Him to use, strengthen, and teach me. I do this by using a five letter acronym:

T-R-U-S-T.

T: THANK YOU

The first thing we do is to turn our attention inward to recognize the Holy Spirit's presence simply by thanking Him for His indwelling presence. I say, *"Thank You, Holy Spirit, for Your indwelling presence in my inner man."* Take a few minutes to do this and add a few affectionate phrases like "I love You, Holy Spirit."

Scripture

He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. (Jn. 15:5) The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Cor. 13:14)

Prayer

Thank you, Holy Spirit, for Your bright presence in me. I love Your presence. Apart from You, I can do nothing. 23

R: RELEASE REVELATION

I ask the Holy Spirit to release revelation of God in me; in other words, to give me understanding of God's heart and Word. By asking for revelation, we prepare our spirits to receive truth from the Lord.

Scripture

That . . . the Father of glory may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened. (Eph. 1:17-18)

Prayer

Holy Spirit, I ask You to release revelation of God's heart and Word to me. I ask that You open my eyes as I read Your Word.

U: USE ME

Paul exhorted us to diligently seek to be used in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will use us more when we simply take time to ask Him to use us.

Scripture

The manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all. (1 Cor. 12:7) But earnestly desire the best gifts. (1 Cor. 12:31) Desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. (1 Cor. 14:1)

Prayer

Holy Spirit, I ask You to release the manifestation of Your gifts and power through me to help others. I desire to be a vessel of Your presence to bless others. 25

S: STRENGTHEN ME

The Spirit will strengthen our inner man by touching our mind, emotions, and speech with the might of His presence. We can draw on the strength of the Spirit as a river of life in us by asking Him to strengthen us. In addition to this, because the Holy Spirit lives in us, His love, peace, patience, and self-control are already in us. Thus, we can experience more of the power of His love, peace, patience, and self-control by thanking the Holy Spirit that these fruits are already in us by virtue of Him living in us.

Scripture

That He would grant you to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man. (Eph. 3:16) The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. (Gal. 5:22–23)

Prayer

Holy Spirit, release divine might to strengthen my mind and emotions. Thank You for the presence of Your love, peace, patience, and self-control in me.

T: TEACH ME

The Holy Spirit is the great teacher who is committed to lead us into God’s will and ways. He will give us wisdom on how to live in every area of life, including how to steward our money, manage our schedule, prosper in our relationships, function in ministry, and walk in purity and health in our physical body. When we ask the Spirit to lead us in these spheres of life, He will show us how to walk in godliness and wisdom.

Scripture

The Holy Spirit . . . will teach you all things. (Jn. 14:26) The Spirit of truth . . . will guide you into all truth. (Jn. 16:13)

Prayer

Holy Spirit, I ask You to lead me in every area of my life. Give me new ideas, order my steps, and open doors for new relationships and new business and ministry opportunities. Teach me how to live in a manner that is pleasing to You, and show me how to best walk in Your will, blessing, and prosperity for my life.

How You Can Encounter the Majesty of Jesus

Mike Bickle concludes:

Revelation chapters 1–3 contain thirty different descriptions of Jesus. There is no place in Scripture where Jesus is revealed with more depth and diversity than in these three chapters. Here, Jesus reveals Himself in the way that He appeared and in the names that He used. By meditating on these thirty descriptions, we can grow in intimacy with Jesus.

It is not enough to study them—we must talk to Jesus as we read them. Bible study is most effective when it creates a dialogue between us and the Holy Spirit. In this way, the Spirit will reveal more to us about Jesus. Journaling helps us capture the truths the Spirit gives us, so it is best to write our thoughts down during the dialogue.

I use the 3 letter acronym **A-R-K** to pray through these thirty descriptions.

The ark was the place where the presence of the Lord dwelt in the Old Testament. It also speaks of a place of safety—Noah's ark was kept safe during the flood. By encountering Jesus in these thirty descriptions, we can experience the ark of His presence as well as the ark of His safety. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe" (Prov. 18:10). How do we find safety in His name? One practical way is that when our spirit becomes strong, we stay calm in the storm. This allows us to make good decisions in times of pressure instead of making poor decisions driven by fear, panic, and confusion.

A: AGREEMENT

First, we agree with what the description says about Jesus. For example, when reading that Jesus is the faithful witness, we express our agreement by simply declaring to Jesus—with affection and gratitude—that He is the faithful witness. As we do this, our heart becomes more receptive to the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead. (Rev. 1:5)

Simply agreeing with each specific aspect of Jesus' personhood has a dynamic impact on our heart. The angels around God's throne declare who Jesus is night and day by saying, "You are worthy, You are holy." They speak of who God is with affection and thanksgiving. Like the angels, we can agree with the beauty and splendor of Christ. [29]

R: REVELATION

Next, we ask for revelation of Jesus according to each description. For example, we ask the Holy Spirit to reveal Jesus to us as the faithful witness.

K: KEEP THE PROPHECY

Finally, we must respond in practical ways as we ask for the Spirit's help to keep the prophecy.

Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book. (Rev. 22:7)

To keep the prophecy refers to acting on Jesus' commands and plans that are in the book of Revelation itself. We are to apply them to our life by responding in faith and obedience to the specific truths about His name in our actions and attitudes and by asking for the Spirit's help to be faithful. We are to respond to the prophecy in three ways.

1) By obeying the commands of Jesus as we persevere in walking in love and holiness. This involves responding in faith and obedience to the thirty truths about Jesus as seen in Revelation chapters 1–3.

2) By saying the message of Jesus as we proclaim the main truths set forth in "the prophecy."

3) By praying for the power of Jesus to release revival among the saints.

We make simple declarations of our resolve to obey the implications of these thirty truths. Then we ask the Holy Spirit to empower us to follow through, praying, for example, "I commit to be a faithful witness to the truth regardless of what it costs me. Holy Spirit, help me to do this."

EXAMPLES OF A-R-K

Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead…. (Rev. 1:5)

Jesus as the faithful witness

1. **Agreement:** “Jesus, You are the faithful witness to the truth. You are the truth. I thank You that You always tell the truth. I trust what You say because You are reliable. You took a stand that cost Your reputation and life. Thank You for being faithful until the end.”

2. **Revelation:** “Reveal Yourself to me as the faithful witness.”

3. **Keep the prophecy:** “I commit to speak the truth regardless of what it costs me. Holy Spirit, help me to speak up for the truths that are not popular.”

Jesus as the firstborn from the dead

1. Agreement: “Jesus, You are the firstborn from the dead. I rejoice in Your preeminence over all.”

2. Revelation: “Reveal Yourself to me as God’s firstborn. Teach me more about Your supremacy over all things.”

3. Keep the prophecy: “I will serve You as the One who is preeminent, by obeying you and drawing others to You instead of me. Holy Spirit, help me to walk this out.”

Chapter Ten

How Brother Lawrence Walked in God's Presence

Congratulations! You have arrived to the final chapter of this book.

To close, I have a special guest: *Brother Lawrence*, a five hundred year old monk that experienced the presence of God on daily basis.

What follows is a letter on how he found the habitual sense of God's Presence:

"Since you desire so earnestly that I should communicate to you the method by which I arrived at that habitual sense of GOD's Presence, which our LORD, of His mercy, has been pleased to grant to me; I must tell you, that it is with great difficulty that I agree to do this; and I do it only upon these terms, *that you show my letter to nobody.*

The account I can give you is:

Having found in many books different methods of going to GOD, and divers practices of the spiritual life, I thought this would serve rather to puzzle me, than facilitate what I sought after, which was nothing but how to become wholly GOD's.

This made me resolve to give the all for the All: so after having given myself wholly to GOD, to make all the satisfaction I could for my sins, I renounced, for the love of Him, everything that was not He; and I began to live as if there was none but He and I in the world.

Sometimes I considered myself before Him as a poor criminal at the feet of his judge; at other times I beheld Him in my heart as my FATHER, as my GOD: I worshipped Him the oftenest that I could, keeping my mind in His holy Presence, and recalling it as often as I found it wandered from Him.

I found no small pain in this exercise, and yet I continued it, notwithstanding

all the difficulties that occurred, without troubling or disquieting myself when my mind had wandered involuntarily.

I made this my business, as much all the day long as at the appointed times of prayer; for at all times, every hour, every minute, even in the height of my business, *I drove away from my mind everything that was capable of interrupting my thought of GOD.*

Such has been my common practice ever since I entered into religion; and though I have done it very imperfectly, yet I have found great advantages by it.

These, I well know, are to be imputed to the mere mercy and goodness of GOD, because we can do nothing without Him; and I still less than any. But *when we are faithful to keep ourselves in His holy Presence, and set Him always before us*, this not only hinders our offending Him, and doing anything that may displease Him, at least willfully, but it also begets in us a holy freedom, and if I may so speak, a familiarity with GOD, wherewith we ask, and that successfully, the graces we stand in need of.

In fine, by often repeating these acts, they become habitual, and the presence of GOD is rendered as it was natural to us.

Give Him thanks, if you please, with me, for His great goodness towards me, which I can never sufficiently admire, for the many favors He has done to so miserable a sinner as I am. May all things praise Him.”

THE END

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Publisher Notes

R.A. Torrey contribution taken from his book *"How to Pray"*

Jeanne Guyon contribution taken from his original work *"A Method of Prayer"*

Brother Lawrence contribution taken from the classic *"Practicing the Presence of God"*

Mike Bickle contribution taken from his booklet *"Prayers to Strengthen the Inner Man"*

Recommended Resources

Pablo's Coaching Program

If you enjoyed this book, you will love **Ablaze for Jesus**, my inner-life-coaching program for people like you. Featuring video discipleship episodes every 15 days and one FREE worship album every month. Discover **Ablaze for Jesus** at:

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More Revealing Books

Discover other revealing books I have written and keep growing in the Knowledge of God at:

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