

One Hour Prayer

When I was ordained in California, I received God's word, "Daughter, talk to people about my love. Tell people how much I love them. People come to me with their needs. If their needs are filled, they leave me. Tell people how much I miss them!" And silence followed in deep sadness. What God yearns and longs for is more than to provide what we need from God; companionship, friendship, and love from us, and ultimately union with us.

The word prayer has often been wrongly understood by making it into a way of getting what we want. But prayer is any interior journeys or practices that allow experiencing faith, hope, love and beauty within ourselves and in God. It is not a technique for getting things, a pious exercise that somehow makes God happy, or a requirement for entry into heaven. It is much more like owning God and practicing heaven here and now. God's love is wild. His love is pouring into our hearts. Love wants to be united. God wants to unite with us eternally. And love needs communication on both sides as any form of intimacy requires time spent in each other's presence, time simply to explore and enjoy the gift of companionship.

Today we will handle practicality of prayer that you can apply to your daily prayer life. With the title of One Hour, you might respond immediately, "One Hour Prayer? Five minutes is long enough for me!" Wait! You will find very soon how it is easy to pray for one hour. It is not a time that you talk to God. It is a process to enter the presence and enjoying God including talking to God and listening to God.

One hour is not a legalistic word. You can have a powerful 10 min devotion sometimes. When you pour all your heart, 5 min or one min could be enough sometimes. But in everyday lives, discipline is a very important rule of spiritual life. God ordained this life to human beings. To have a habit of spiritual practice saves the whole rest of the day. I want to say it brings you great peace, since all the heavy weight on your shoulder will be given to God by praising and being with God. It surely will be taken care of by the Lord. And you will receive the fresh word of God; bread of life.

So today, I want to share a concrete way how you should spend one hour with the Lord daily. If you start from tomorrow, you might not at all finish the portion of one hour at all. It is okay. What is important is that you continue every day. To form a habit, it takes 6 weeks. Holy Spirit will encourage you to do a little more on the next day. So far as you continue, you will see how your life is ordered into the cosmos in the middle of a chaotic world. The rest part of the day will be taken care of by the Lord, and also the busy schedule will be in right order.

The most important key of prayer is to FOCUS on God. The first thing that makes prayer difficult is a distraction. Have you ever experienced that when you start to pray, your mind is bombarded with cares and concerns about family and this world? Your responsibilities, your worries, your relationships? All of the sudden, you have a phone call and signals of text messages. And you want to

check them badly. It is hard to resist. So, let's prepare your internal and external environment to practice silence and focus. Jesus said, Matt 6:6, "But when you pray, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private."

Finding your private place and time is the first thing. Prepare a particular time zone and shut the prayer room door for your personal time with the Lord. Prepare the Bible and prayer journal in front of you. Find a place that is comfortable and quiet. Talk to your loved ones, "It is my prayer time." And you go into the closed space. It means that you enter the space without your cell phone. The cellphone is very attached to human life these days.

So this way, we handle the external environment. And if possible with candlelight as a sign of his presence or a beautiful flower pot, and a cup of coffee or tea. I always do with a cup of coffee in the morning.

For internal Environment, how do you start? **Take a deep breath repeatedly. Quiet your mind and heart.** There are always many worries and thoughts that constantly speak to you. It is very natural. You don't need to feel guilty. You cannot start the prayer immediately. You might need time to sit as Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit!" When we sit and we center ourselves, we might be able to call Jesus' name silently. "Jesus..." Start with simple songs of praise and song of thanksgiving, hymnals you like. A soft Christian instrumental meditative music is helpful to me. You can find the Christian meditative music in the You Tube; or other spiritual music such as Taize songs. In the beauty of spirit-filled music, your heart will be calmed. You will hear a soft gentle prayer word coming from your mouth.

Psalmist tells us that we can enter the inner temple of God with praise and gratitude! (Ps 100) It is the way. You will naturally worship God. "Jesus, I thank you, I praise you!" "Father, I love you", "I love this place of meeting." "Holy Spirit, I thank you so much!" "God, you are big, you are great, you are beautiful, you are holy! You are amazing. You are joy of my heart!" And Let God cleanse all the past mistakes.

SIT and BE with the Lord. Let God's beautiful and gentle presence minister to you. Everything exposed to the light itself becomes light (Ephesians 5:13). So let your being and life be exposed to the light. Enjoy the presence through the Sunshine, the sweet quietness, the fragrance of the coffee, feeling the touch of the Lord in your heart, the unshakable loving gaze upon you. Listening to the music, singing songs you love, enjoying the presence, the first 10 to 15 minutes will pass very speedily. All the worries, duties, and thoughts that catch you give them to God one and after until your heart is entirely at Peace. Tell God all that we do need. Also, we thank God for what God has done last day that God touched you especially.

And **read the scripture with an open heart like a child.** You request the Father to give the food for the day. **Read with expectation that God will reveal it to you for the day. God will let a certain passage or a word enter into your heart in a special way.** When you have it, then you stay there and linger around the word so that the scripture may open and reveal the meaning. Read repeatedly and ask God what it means. The Bible is living word in God's heart, wait until the word opens. We feel like we know all the words of the Bible. Actually, we do not know it at all. Repeat the word, read the word repeatedly, hold the word, stay with the word, and request God to open the locked treasure. Hebrew

word of meditation meant “repeat the Word”. The word of God is unfathomable. It is moments like a baby in a mother's bosom that are comforting and nourishing. It is beautiful. You don't want to come out of that. This Bible reading and meditating time will take 15-20 min. You can do speedy reading of a book or several chapters or meditative reading of a verse or a paragraph. I do both.

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Lastly, write down what God talks to you through the scripture, what it talks about you, what it talks about God, what you should do to live the word, and also your prayer request in your

prayer note. Prayers for yourself, the family, the task of the day, the people you will meet, and for the community and the world. Use only one side leaving lots of space. And pray. While lifetime passes, the prayers will be answered one and after. Then write down how the prayer was answered. It will be filled one and after. The prayer journal will be a precious record of your faith resume, the answered prayers you cannot deny at all through the rest of your life. This part also takes 15-20 min.

How do you think about this way? The order or place could vary, but those elements should incorporate. One of my former congregations practiced and found that this way was very practical and doable. You will be surprised that you can stay with God for more than one hour. It is the basic prayer format that we can start. Once the living God touches you, you wait for this time. I heard from many former congregation that they really heard the voice of God, or met God in a way that they were able to notice. God created our hearts, surely God can let our hearts know God's guidance and presence.

In the morning you have two choices; turn on the TV and fill your heart with all the misery of the world. Or enter the presence, fill your heart with all the blessings, and power of the day. I never give up this precious time with God. I keep this prayer time whatever it takes. God prepares every day new and fresh grace so that we may be created anew every day. So that we may live as a fresh person without the accumulated burdens of life, worries, tensions, and pains. All negativity was already handled on the cross. All the anxiety, fear, and other kind of negativity belongs to Jesus. They are his. God challenges us to be like God. This is what it means to walk with Jesus through prayer. When you give the first part of your life, or best part of your life, the continuous prayer follows the rest of the days.

We are much beloved child of God. We are not a poor beggar at all. In this process, there is a piece that the Enemy plays with you. It is guilt for mistakes, neglected duties before God, etc. Do not be caught by that. With sincere confession, you are free from that charge because Jesus paid the cost. Instead, imagine the parable of the prodigal son. When the Son returns, the Father runs to him and enthusiastically embraces him. God is exactly like that when you come from failures and mistakes.

Our lives will be elevated up into the supernatural power of God. Mature Christians are powerful and mighty people. You are created to be mighty, claim your identity and own it. You decide and arrange your entire life around that prayer life. Guard your prayer life. Do not let anybody touch it at all. You will see your life is completely transformed. When Your prayer life is established, you can go deeper places than you can imagine and can come closer to the presence filled with brilliance and beauty. Are you excited to practice this?