

The 21-Day EXPERIMENT IN PRAYER

In prayer as in life, it really helps to begin with the end in mind. What is your goal? What do you hope will happen in your own life and the lives around you as you embark on this adventure in prayer? My goal in prayer is simply this: I want to learn to hear God and become familiar with His voice. Why? So that I can pray the prayers He wants to pray through me. If I am hearing His voice, I know I will be praying His will. Remember the second part of our Lord's prayer, "Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as in heaven." It should stun us into faithfulness to realize that our prayers are part of the way God gets His work done here on earth.

But we must give God time to speak to us. A few minutes each day to read and think about His promises in the Bible is like nourishment to our soul and also sharpens our "inner hearing" of God's voice. In John 10:27 ^{NIV}, Jesus says, "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me."

I periodically use a simple spiritual exercise to revive my faith. Each time I perform this 21-day experiment, God speaks to me in a tangible way. His voice occurs more often as a whisper than a shout, but it is always personal, just for me. I have incorporated a simple prayer pattern for people "on the go" to coordinate with a daily reading of the 21 chapters in the **Gospel of John**.

Ground Rules:

1. Set aside **15 minutes each day** to prayerfully read one chapter of **John's Gospel**.
2. Pray for the Holy Spirit to impress **one verse** from your reading upon your mind for that day. Write that "**watch word**" on a 3x5 card in your Chubby Book.
3. List **prayer needs** on the adjacent card. Think of the people and places God has put on your heart. Pray that verse for each of those needs. Find other times in your day to pray beyond just your morning quiet time. Waiting for an appointment, stuck in traffic, folding clothes, waiting in line, working out, going for a walk?
4. You might want to have a friend to do this with you. The accountability is good. Plus, you can phone or text with your **PODs** for each other (prayer on demand).

What you'll need:

- Bible
- Fine point Sharpie
- 3x5 cards (*I like the wire bound version at Harris Teeter, which I call a "Chubby Book."*)

Make a decision to stick with this experiment. Do not evaluate whether any changes occur until the **END** of the 21 days. You can even say to yourself, "Well, nothing seems to be happening today, but I will postpone judging its impact until after 21 days." **I pray for God to help you notice subtle answers.** Psalm 5:3 ^{NASB} says "In the morning, O Lord, You will hear my voice; In the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch."

