

# **Bible Reading & Prayer**

## **A Seaside Church Resource**

The most basic thing we can say about Bible reading and Prayer is that God speaks to us through His word, and we speak to God through prayer. You cannot know God apart from regular reading of His word, and you cannot walk with God apart from regular communication with Him through Prayer.

### **Bible Reading- Here are some verses on Scripture itself.**

#### **Deuteronomy 6.4-9**

*"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. [ESV]*

#### **Psalm 1.1-2**

*Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. [ESV]*

#### **Psalm 119.9-11**

*How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word. With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments! I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you. [ESV]*

#### **Psalm 119.105**

*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. [ESV]*

#### **Psalm 119.130**

*The unfolding of your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple. [ESV]*

#### **Psalm 119.147**

*I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in your words. [ESV]*

#### **2 Timothy 3.16-17**

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work. [ESV]*

#### **Bible Reading Plan**

One of the best ways to read the Bible is to read with a plan. This will keep you reading through all of the scriptures and not just keep you stuck in one spot. Use the Bible reading plan in the back of your ESV Bible or use the one given out with this document.

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### Prayer

Once Jesus' disciples asked him how they should pray. He told them to "pray then like this." Jesus didn't just teach them a prayer to be memorized, but rather a way to pray or an order to praying. We see this in Matthew 6.9-13.

*Pray then like this:*

*"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*

*Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. [ESV]*

### **As a way to pray or a model to pray you can use the Lord's prayer.**

1. *Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name*
  - Begin your prayers by focusing on God. You've spent most of your time more than likely thinking about yourself. So think on God.
  - Think on his Holiness, there is no one like Him. Think on the fact that He is now your father in heaven because of Jesus.
2. *Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*
  - Pray for God's will to be done in your life, in your home, city, and world.
  - Before asking God for stuff you want, pray that His will would be done, not yours.
3. *Give us this day our daily bread*
  - After focusing on God alone and His will now you can present to him your needs.
  - Don't be afraid to ask God for both big and small things. He wants us as His children to ask of him.
  - What do you need God to do? Ask Him!
4. *and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors*
  - This is very important. So important Jesus actually mentions it twice in the prayer, once in Matthew 6.12 and again in 6.14-15.
  - This is where you confess and repent of your sin to the Lord.
  - Also, as you have received forgiveness from God you can now forgive others their sins against you because you have sinned infinitely more times against God than what anyone has sinned against you. If He has forgiven you then you must forgive others!
5. *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*
  - A final request is to ask God for protection from temptation. This comes from within. It is our own desires that we battle. Being tempted isn't a sin however temptation will lead to sin if not dealt with.
  - We also ask God to deliver us from evil. The devil is looking to destroy followers of Jesus and here we ask God to protect us from evil.
  - I usually spend the rest of my prayer time praying for other people and other issues going on in the city and world after going through this prayer order.

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### **George Mueller's thoughts on devotional time with the Lord.**

The first thing to be concerned about was not how much I might serve the Lord, how I might glorify the Lord; but how I might get my soul into a happy state, and how my inner man might be nourished. For I might seek to set the truth before the unconverted, I might seek to benefit believers, I might seek to relieve the distressed, I might in other ways seek to behave myself as it becomes a child of God in this world; and yet, not being happy in the Lord, and not being nourished and strengthened in my inner man day by day, all this might not be attended to in a right spirit.

Before this time my practice had been, at least for ten years previously, as an habitual thing to give myself to prayer, after having dressed myself in the morning. Now, I saw that the most important thing I had to do was to give myself to the reading of the word of God, and to meditation on it, that thus my heart might be comforted, encouraged, warned, reprov'd, instructed; and that thus, by means of the word of God, whilst meditating on it, my heart might be brought into experimental communion with the Lord. I began therefore to meditate on the New Testament from the beginning, early in the morning.

The first thing I did, after having asked in a few words the Lord blessing upon his precious word, was, to begin to meditate on the word of God, searching as it were into every verse, to get blessing out of it; not for the sake of the public ministry of the word, not for the sake of preaching on what I had meditated upon, but for the sake of obtaining food for my own soul.

The result I have found to be almost invariably this, that after a very few minutes my soul has been led to confession, or to thanksgiving, or to intercession, or to supplication; so that, though I did not, as it were, give myself to prayer, but to meditation it turned almost immediately more or less into prayer. When thus I have been for a while making confession, or intercession, or supplication, or have given thanks, I go on to the next words or verse, turning all, as I go on, into prayer for myself or others, as the word may lead to it, but still continually keeping before me that food for my own soul is the object of my meditation.

The result of this is, that there is always a good deal of confession, thanksgiving, supplication, or intercession mingled with my meditation, and that my inner man almost invariably is even sensibly nourished and strengthened, and that by breakfast time, with rare exceptions, I am in a peaceful if not happy state of heart. Thus also the Lord is pleased to communicate unto me that which, either very soon after or at a later time, I have found to become food for other believers, though it was not for the sake of the public ministry of the word that I gave myself to meditation, but for the profit of my own inner man.