

Chapter 8

Alone Time with God

Having A Relationship with God

"Avail yourself of the greatest privilege this side of heaven. Jesus Christ died to make this communion and communication with the Father possible."

Billy Graham

"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you..." James 4:8

Dependency on Him

We have been created to know God; to have a relationship with Him.

These Scriptures speak of relationship: *Ps. 40:5; Jeremiah 29:11; Ps. 139:17-18; 143:8*

Psalms 34:8, "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good."

What is happening with kids today? Are they experiencing a personal relationship with the Lord? What is happening with us? Are we experiencing a personal relationship with the Lord?

Are we teaching children a "religion" or a "personal relationship" with God?

Christianity is first and foremost a personal relationship with God. We have been called into fellowship with God Himself. (*1 Cor. 1:9*)

The purpose of prayer is intimacy with God. Intimacy with God will always be found in a fresh, living relationship with the Father. *That relationship necessitates that we have a time and a place to regularly and consistently meet with Him.*

Jesus is the way into communion with the Father. Jesus said to him, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."* (*John 14:6*)

Prayer is the heart of man in communion with the heart of the Father. But there is no instant fellowship with God.

Waiting upon God recognizes two important truths from Scripture: the helplessness of man and the sufficiency of Christ.

As we wait upon God, we understand Jesus' words, *"Apart from Me you can do nothing."* (*John 15:5*)
Do we understand this Scripture and do we believe it?

God is able to do far beyond anything that we can imagine. As much as we may love friends and family members, God loves them more. As much as we desire to help them, God can help them more. He can bring circumstances into their lives that will lead them to the cross. For the sake of our friends and family we must pray.

Ephesians 3:20-21, "Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

Prayer is loyalty to God. Our dependency should be on God. What or who are you depending on?

Prayer intensifies our fellowship with God. It is in that fellowship that the believer experiences the depth and height of the love of God.

Prayer is not a time in which we come to receive something from God. Prayer is an encounter with a holy God. It is coming into His presence – entering into fellowship and a relationship with Him. It is a means by which we get to know Him.

The purpose of "Alone Time" is not for how it benefits me. Ultimately, it's for my allegiance, my loyalty, my surrender, my submission to God, and for His glory.

My God, the One who created everything in the world, wants to meet with me. He wants to hear my concerns, my dreams, and my fears. He will give me words to encourage people, warnings to curb my wayward actions, and wisdom for daily life.

John 16:27, "For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God."

We will begin to experience *personal victory* as we enter into the private chambers of prayer. We must enter regularly and consistently. We must long for fellowship with Him. To do otherwise is rebellion. In essence it is saying, "I don't need You, Father. I can live today without Your strength and power."

We were created to know and love God. Without daily communion with Him it is impossible to serve Him effectively. Many Christians believe that they can work *for God* without having been *with God*. To live without waiting on the Lord is to *embrace humanism* and wrap it in *Christian trappings*. The philosophy of *humanism begins with man, continues with man, and concludes with man*. But Christianity begins with God. God reaches down to man, and man finds his only hope in Him. Man does not find purpose, power, and direction for his life in himself; he finds everything that he needs in God through Jesus Christ. Man must learn to live in absolute dependence upon God.

We shouldn't think of this time with the Lord as devotions, but having a relationship with Him. How about devotedness?" *Are we devoted to God?*

The disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray. (*Luke 11:1*)

Think about that; the disciples saw Jesus heal the sick, bring people back from death to life, feed thousands with little, miracle after miracle, and yet they wanted to be taught to pray. Amazing!

As we *pray* and *read God's word*, we enter into fellowship with God. This is how we hear God's voice.

How do I talk with God? I just talk to Him about all the things that I am facing, all the things that are on my heart, all the things that are going on in my life.

How much time should be given to "Alone Time" with the Lord?

How long should it be? The question is how close do you want to be with the Lord of the heavens?

God saved us supremely for a personal relationship with Him.

This is about private prayer. In praying, the principal object to be sought is to be alone with God. Find a place where you can pour out your heart with the feeling that no one is looking at you but God.

The following verses are few in number and are soon read, but they are of immense importance.

No part of Scripture is so simple, yet so full, as those in *Matthew 6*.

Let's look at...

Matthew 6:5 "And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward."

Now, prayer is an assumed activity in Jesus' mind, related to a Christian's life. In verses 5, 6, and 7 Jesus repeats the same phrase "*When you pray*". Jesus assumes every single person who calls themselves a Christian has a prayer life, that they are engaging in prayer, and communicating with God on a regular basis. He doesn't say "if you pray", but He says "*When you pray*."

Hypocrites are basically those who play a role on the stage, who act, to be seen by an audience. They love to be seen praying and therefore speak to be heard by men and not by God.

The warning is certainly clear enough; *do not pray for human recognition*, or practice your prayers, or pray to impress others.

Do I pray to be seen by people or to be heard by God?

Matthew 6:6 "But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly."

'Your room' ... 'shut your door.' Find as private of a place as you can.

- A place where you can shut the world out.
- A place where there is no temptation to be distracted from God.
- A place where you can easily give your full attention to Him.
- A place that will minimize distractions.
- A private place.

One of the reasons for a private place is that prayer is not a monologue, just me talking to God. It is a dialogue, whereas God is also speaking to me.

Prayer is a form of worship. It demonstrates dependence upon God and acknowledges His preeminence above all other authorities, circumstances, and relationships.

Private prayer allows us to bare our souls and to be completely honest and open with God, without fear of what others might think.

Pray to be heard by God, *not man*. God is omnipresent.

Both Jesus and His disciples prayed publicly, but their *public prayers were an expression of their private devotion to God*.

The "key" to getting up early in the morning is simple; go to bed early at night.

And what is early?

Early in the morning is *getting up before you have to*, so that you can spend time with God before the day starts.

Some people say that they are more alert at the end of the day than at the beginning. It's been said, "*Why tune up the fiddle when the concert is finished.*"

A good question to ask is "Why does God want to spend time with us?" The answer because He loves us. He wants to meet with us more than we want to meet with him.

Our God, the One who created everything in the world, wants to meet with us. He wants to hear our concerns, our dreams, and our fears.

John 16:27, "For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God."

We are not to consider our time alone with the Lord to be "devotions", but that we have a relationship with each other.

John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Jeremiah 31:3, "The Lord has appeared of old to me, saying: yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you."

Psalms 139:17-18, "How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand."

Psalm 40:5, "Many, O Lord my God, are Your wonderful works which You have done; and Your thoughts toward us cannot be recounted to You in order; if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered."

WE are to seek the Lord with faith and diligence, waiting on Him, being in the word, and inquiring of Him in prayer, that we might know Him and His will.

Thus says the Lord: *"Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, nor let the rich man glory in his riches; But let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth, for in these I delight, says the Lord."* (Jeremiah 9:24)

As you spend time with the Lord, it can be good to journal what He says to you.

Matthew 6:7 "And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words."

"...do not use vain repetitions..." In church *Matthew 6:9-13* is often recited without meaning, just vain repetition. Some think that longer prayers are better, or that many words are needed in order to get through to God. Some believe that prayer is a way to get God's attention, but that is not so.

What is important is that our prayers are sincere.

As long as we are sincere in our prayers and we ask, then God is pleased with our prayers.

Jesus intends that our minds and hearts be involved in what we are praying.

Prayer is not a way to manipulate God. Some people think that longer prayers are better than shorter prayers. The key is sincerity.

Peter is a great example; "Save me Lord" was a three-word prayer.

Sometimes it's going to be one or the other. Remember how Jesus prayed all night in the garden of Gethsemane before He went to the cross. There's nothing wrong with long prayers, but they shouldn't be long out of *vain repetition*, trying to earn something from God or to be seen by men.

It's not the length of the prayer that matters, it's the sincerity of our heart.

What is meant by sincerity of heart? It means to be heartfelt, wholehearted, genuine, and earnest.
[Synonyms – frank, candid, honest, open]

Repetition is not a problem if you mean it. Jesus prayed three times, Paul prayed three times and meant it every time he said it.

Matthew 6:8 "Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him."

There are many reasons I should pray; to acknowledge my needs and my dependence upon Him. I also pray because Jesus told me to pray.

No relationship is stronger than its communication. What is true in a human relationship is also true in our relationship with God.

This is what we have been called to as Christians; a relationship with God Himself. Prayer is simply talking to God and is the basis of our communication with God.

God is attentive to the needs of His children far more than human fathers are attentive to their children's needs.

Matthew 7:11, "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!"

Matthew 6:9 "In this manner, therefore, pray..." "Manner" means 'pray like this then.'

"Therefore, be praying in this manner."

We open the door of prayer with praise and thanksgiving.

Psalm 100:4, "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name."

Psalm 103:2, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits."

The word "bless" is a stronger word than "praise." It is praising with adoration and thanksgiving from a heart of deep love.

- Thanksgiving is a response to the goodness of God and acknowledges the deeds of God.
- Praise is a response to the greatness of God and acknowledges the attributes of God.

Why should we pray in this manner? Because, Jesus told us to! How wonderful it is that Jesus tells us how we should pray.

Matthew 6:9 "...Our Father..."

"In You, Lord, I put my trust..." Psalm 71:1; 118:8

The One who cares "...casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you." (1 Peter 5:7)

It is always wise, before we pray, to spend time deliberately recalling who God is.

According to Jesus, my prayers should be addressed to the Father, in care of Jesus. "Whatever you ask the Father in My name..." So, I pray to the Father in Jesus' name.

Jesus refers to God as "our Father," which emphasizes the personal relationship God desires to have with me, His child.

We pray to the Father, in Jesus' name.

The idea behind the word "Father" is one who protects and provides.

The word for 'Father' is 'Abba', meaning 'papa'. Keep in mind that in the Old Testament, God was addressed as: Elohim-the Strong One, El Shaddai - the Mighty One, Yahweh - the unspeakable word, which means, 'I Am that I Am'.

How important, as I pray, to realize whom I am addressing; considering the greatness of God, the power of God, and the fact that He is Abba Father. All prayer begins with the recognition that God is a loving Father.

Psalm 95:6-7 - "Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our maker. For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand."

Psalm 8:1 - "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth, who have set Your glory above the heavens!"

It may be a problem for some people to realize that God is a loving Father because their earthly father may not have been very loving.

This poses a problem for many people. The term "Father" may have a negative connotation.

But, Jesus teaches that the nature of our Father is goodness. He said, *"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him."* (Matthew 7:11)

Everything about the Father is good. It is in His nature to do good to His children.

It's important, as we pray, to focus on the goodness of God.

Psalm 34:8, "Oh taste and see that the Lord is good."

Psalm 107:1, "Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good."

The enemy of our soul lies to us about who God is.

Jesus taught that there is a loving Father (our Father) who is eagerly waiting to meet with us.

Notice that Jesus does not teach us to pray to Mary, or to the saints, or to angels.

I have a heavenly Father and He is the one I'm going to talk things through with.

How can I say, 'our Father?' *John 1:12* states, *"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."*

I've been adopted into His family. He is now my Abba Father.

"In Him we live and move and have our being...we are His offspring" (Acts 17:28). "And by Him we cry, 'Abba, Father'. "For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.'" (Romans 8:15)

These are great Scriptures to pray:

Pray: *Psalm 5:1-3* – *"Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my meditation. Give heed to the voice of my cry, my king and my God, for to you I will pray. My voice You shall hear in the morning, O Lord; In the morning I will direct it to You. And I will look up."* (rise above circumstances)

Psalm 63:1-8 – *"O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; my soul thirsts for You; my flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water."*

Matthew 6:9 "...in heaven..." – Focuses on how far above man God dwells. It takes the focus off of my problems, and puts my focus on He who is able.

Also, it focuses my attention on some of God's attributes.

Prayer moves us from the earthly to the heavenly.

Praise is a response to the greatness of God and acknowledges the attributes of God.

"What comes to our mind when we think about God is the most important thing about us." (A.W.Tozer)

- **OMNIPRESENCE** – God is everywhere. There is no place in the universe where God does not dwell. Prayer access to God is any place and for any person.

Jeremiah 23:23-24 – “Am I a God near at hand, says the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can anyone hide himself in secret places, so I shall not see him? Says the Lord; do I not fill heaven and earth? Says the Lord.” Proverbs 15:3 – “The eyes of the Lord are in every place...”

- **HE IS ETERNAL IN NATURE.** Not only is God everywhere, but He is there all of the time. He is eternal. We are everlasting, but God is eternal. God had no beginning, we did. He has no beginning and no end. He has always been.

“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.” Says the Lord, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.” (Rev.1:8)

Psalm 90:1-2 – “Lord You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.”

Too often we only pray with a view of here and now. When we pray, we need to realize we are entering into the realm of the eternal.

- **GOD IS OMNISCIENT.** He knows everything. Because God is everywhere, all the time, it is then possible to understand that He knows everything. This attribute of God makes prayer a wonderful blessing. He not only knows every detail of our lives, but He knows the deep hurts and needs that we have. (*Psalm 139:1-18*)

- **GOD IS OMNIPOTENT** – all powerful. The God who is able. *“God has spoken once, twice I have heard this: That power belongs to God.” (Psalm 62:11)*

God not only knows everything all the time, and is in every place all the time, but He also is all-powerful. He is the Lord strong and mighty. (*Psalm 24:8*)

Power and authority belong to God! There is nothing too difficult for God. This should remind us that He can do whatever He sees fit to do. He is able.

Jeremiah 32:17 – “Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?”

- **IMMUTABILITY** – God is unchanging. That is His nature. He is unchangeably holy and righteous and just. God Himself declared, *“For I, the Lord, do not change.” (Malachi 3:6)*

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yes and forever. (*Hebrews 13:8*)

Therefore the Word of God is unchanging. *“Forever O Lord, Thy Word is settled in heaven.” (Psalm 119:89)*

Since God is immutable we can always count on Him. *“Your greatness is unsearchable.” (Psalm 145:3)*

There’s no higher, there’s no greater, there’s no stronger than our Lord.

Pray: “You are the all-knowing, ever present, full of power, eternal God!”

Matthew 6:9 "...Hallowed be Your name."

The name of the Lord is holy, because He is holy.

Thanksgiving is a response to the goodness of God and acknowledges the deeds of God.

By the "name" of God is meant all those attributes through which He is revealed to us – His power, goodness, wisdom, holiness, justice, mercy, and truth. By asking that His name may be "hallowed," we mean that may it be made known and glorified.

So, when we say to God, "Hallowed be Thy name," we are saying "We praise you for Your nature."

Pray: "We thank You that You are sinless.
We thank You that You are pure.
We thank You that You are holy.
We thank You for who and what You are! Lord, we thank You that You are nothing like this fallen world.
We thank You that You are so willing to meet with us whenever we are willing.
We thank You that You are as gracious as You are.
We thank You that You are as good as You are.
We thank You that You are as patient, longsuffering, and slow to anger as You are.
We thank You that You are as merciful as You are and as full of compassion.
We thank You for Your faithfulness. Everything You promise will come to pass.
We thank You that You are as forgiving as You are."

When we pray, we need to focus on God. We should acknowledge His goodness, His greatness, and His purity, with praise and thanksgiving.

Again, Jesus teaches that the nature of the Father is goodness. He is a good Father, perfect in His goodness. He said, *"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him."* (Matthew 7:11)

To hallow something is to recognize it as holy or to set it apart to be exalted as being worthy of absolute devotion. To hallow the name of God is to regard Him with complete devotion and loving admiration. To be devoted is to be set apart or dedicated to; to be consecrated to. Pray: "You, O God, are worthy of absolute devotion."

Nehemiah 9:5-6 – "Stand up and bless the Lord your God, forever and ever! Blessed be Your glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise! You alone are the Lord; You made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and everything on it, the seas and all that is in them, and You preserve them all. The host of heaven worships You. You are the Lord God." Read: Psalm 145 – "I will extol You, my God..." also read Psalm 103:8.

Therefore, we ought to give God's name a position of grave significance in our minds and hearts. We should never take His name lightly (Lev. 22:32), but always rejoice in it and think deeply upon its true meaning.

The name of God is holy because He is holy.

Names had a special meaning to the ancient Hebrew people. The name of a person many times represented the character of that person.

So, we open the doors of prayer with praise and thanksgiving.

Isaiah 57:15 – "For thus says the High and lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place..."

Isaiah 6:3 – "And one cried to another and said: Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!"

Don't move on until the place that God occupies in my life is acknowledged and settled on. I need to have the right focus.

Matthew 6:10 "Your kingdom come..."

What does it mean for God's kingdom to come?

Pray: "Lord, let me seek no other kingdom but Yours.
May Your kingdom be the only one that I seek."

1 Chronicles 29:11 "Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as head over all."

I should pray for the advancement of God's cause, putting His interests first. I'm agreeing with Jesus, that God's kingdom would be established in the hearts of men and women, boys and girls, throughout the world.

This is intercessory prayer. This is where we pray for those who are not ruled by God. This is a good opportunity to pray for our city, state, nation, community, schools, church, missionaries, etc.

God loves the world, and desires that the world through Jesus would be saved.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." (John 3:16-17)

God want to establish His rule in the hearts of people.

When I pray for His kingdom to come, I am essentially praying for two things:

One: I am praying for the rule of God in the hearts of men and women, boys and girls; that they would come to know the rule of Jesus in their lives.

Two: I am praying for the return of Christ. *"Watch and pray." (Luke 21:36)*

Matthew 6:10 "...Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

What did Jesus mean when He said, "Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven"?

He is praying for Jesus to rule in the hearts of men and women, boys and girls.

We find two kinds of people:

- Those who are in harmony with God's purposes saying, 'Your will be done.'
- Those who are living for themselves saying, 'My will be done.'

2 Corinthians 5:15 - "and He (Jesus) died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again."

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven." (Matthew 7:21)

"And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever." (1 John 2:17)

1 Corinthians 15:31 - states Paul's comment that "I die daily".

This is a choice we all make every day, to live for Jesus or to live for self.

Pray: "Today again, I surrender my life to You. I ask that You would rule over my life."

"You've given me life, You've given me eternal life, how could I not but give You my life."

This reminds me that this world is not my home, but I can think that it is, and then start to worry about all kinds of things.

This reminds us that this is not the end for us. It reminds me of the fact that whatever is going on in my life or in the world, this world is marching towards its God-appointed end.

Everything is under control, God is moving as He desires.

I need to be reminded of this every day. He could come back today.

I acknowledge that... Pray: "God, You know what is best and I surrender my will to Yours. I ask that Your will would be done in and through my life."

I John 5:14-15 - "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him."

I conclude by offering to Him my heart, and surrendering this day to Him, and giving Him all honor and praise, and rejoicing that He is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

Matthew 6:11 "Give us this day our daily bread."

"Give us this day..." not this month, not this year.

Why does the Lord want us to pray day-by-day? Because prayer, in and of itself, is our greatest need, and expresses ultimate dependence upon God.

Jesus wants His followers to be conscious of a day-to-day dependence. The Lord wants you and me to come to Him every day, because we have need of Him.

This portion of Scripture concerns my own daily needs, both spiritually and physically. I am taught here to acknowledge my entire dependence on God for the supply of my daily necessities.

I recognize that it all comes from God. It all comes from my "Abba Father."

He said, "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him." (Matt 7:11)

Ask God every single day to provide for your family, your daily needs of food, clothing, and shelter.

Pray: "I trust You for my daily bread and in every other area of need; I honor You in this way. I recognize that it all comes from You."

Jesus said, "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you." (Matthew 6:33)

Jesus had just said, "Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on."

If we pray "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done", then as we seek the kingdom of God He promises "these things" shall be added.

Personal petitions – there is absolutely nothing wrong with bringing our own personal needs to the Lord in prayer.

1 Peter 5:7, "...casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you."

Matthew 6:12 "And forgive us our debts..." (sins)

This part of the prayer condemns all self-righteousness and self-justifying. Pray: "Lord, please keep me from being self-deceived." I am instructed to keep up a continual habit of confession at the throne of grace, and a continual habit of seeking mercy and remission.

This is a daily prayer, where on a daily basis, I am confessing my sin to God and asking for His forgiveness. I confess and repent and then I talk it through with Him.

1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Do I understand what happens when I sin? Sin separates me from fellowship with my Father. Do I understand the cost of sin?

THIS FORGIVENESS COMES BY WAY OF THE CROSS.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." (Psalm 139:23-24)

Pray: "Cause me today, to keep a short account with You, God. Cause me not to grieve Your Holy Spirit. Cause me to be sensitive to Your Holy Spirit."

"Lord, cause me to:

be filled afresh with Your Spirit, and to
sow to Your Spirit, to reap of Your Spirit and to
walk in Your Spirit, to be led by Your Spirit and to
live in Your Spirit, to be controlled by Your Spirit and to
have the fruit of Your Spirit come from my life (Agape).

I present my body as a temple that Your Holy Spirit might indwell me.

In Jesus' name"

It is good to understand that there are 2 kinds of guilt:
There is false guilt and true guilt.

Often people will struggle with false guilt as they try to pray.

False guilt: general in nature and has Satan as its source. Satan, the accuser of the brethren, accuses us in general terms.

He whispers in our ears, "You are no good. How can you pray? You are not worthy." The one who listens to such accusations will always struggle in prayer.

Only Jesus is worthy.

Our access to God is never based on the worthiness of man. Our access is based on the blood of Jesus. It is only by grace that we can approach God.

True guilt: many feel guilty when they pray because they are guilty. The difference between an accusation of Satan and conviction from the Holy Spirit is that Satan's accusation is general and repentance is impossible, but the Holy Spirit's conviction is specific and leads to repentance. Confession of sin is the result of the light of God shining in our hearts.

When there is sincere confession and true repentance, there will be a release of the rivers of grace upon the soul.

These are great Scriptures to pray:

Psalms 66:18-19, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear. But certainly God has heard me; He has attended to the voice of my prayer."

Isaiah 59:1-2, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear."

Psalms 86:5, "For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You."

Lamentations 3:22-23, "Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness."

Isaiah 43:25, I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My sake; and I will not remember your sins."

Matthew 6:12 "...as we forgive our debtors." (those who have sinned against us)

This is to remind me that I must not expect my prayers for forgiveness to be heard if I pray with malice and spite in my heart toward others.

On a daily basis forgive people of the sin that they have committed against us in the previous 24 hours, so that we don't have this stuff attached to us for a week or months or years. Becoming bitter, or angry, and wanting revenge, begins to take a toll on us spiritually.

We read in *Matthew 18:21*, then Peter came to Jesus and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times? The answer was 70 times 7. (The parable of the wicked servant)

People will fall short, as we fall short, and we need to forgive them every day.

We need God's forgiveness on a daily basis. We need to forgive on a daily basis.

(keep me from) (and) (me)
Matthew 6:13 "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one..."

"For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust." Psalms 103:14

Pray: "Lord, You know that I am weak."

Jesus is teaching us to acknowledge our weakness.

"Then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation..." 2 Peter 2:9

"...He is able to aid those who are tempted." Hebrews 2:14-18

It is important to understand what we read in the book of James.

James 1:13, "Let no one say when he is tempted, I am tempted by God; for God cannot be tempted by evil; nor does He Himself tempt anyone."

Pray: "Do not allow me to be so led into temptation that it overwhelms me, but rescue me from the evil one."

This Scripture seems to be saying that it is the devil who is in view, who tempts God's people to sin and from whom we need to be rescued.

Verse 13 teaches me to ask God to deliver me from the evil that is in the world, the evil that is within my heart, and from the evil one, the devil.

Pray: "I entreat You, Lord, Who alone can preserve me, to continually deliver me from the power of evil."

"I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one."
(John 17:15)

Each morning, as we pray, we need to realize that we are heading out into a world not under God's submission.

We know that there is a god of this world who is called the devil and there will be all kinds of issues around us.

Verse 13 is a request concerning my weakness. It teaches me that I am liable at anytime to be led astray or to fall.

Everyone has weaknesses and struggles in their lives. Each one of us has greater temptations in certain areas, and we need to talk those things over with the Lord. It's a reminder to us.

Verse 13 instructs me to confess my weakness and beseech God to hold me up, not allowing me to run into sin. Pray: "God, keep me from any 'new' sins."

Before I leave my home and head out into the world, and before temptation comes into my life, I acknowledge the possibility of it happening. So that, when it comes, it doesn't surprise me. This is so vital in regards to a victorious Christian life.

If we don't realize the battle is coming our way, an enemy can catch us by surprise very easily.

"But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one."
2 Thess. 3:3

Temptation usually follows this pattern:
It begins in our minds-

1. There is a simple thought of evil (initially we may not recognize it as an evil thought)
2. There is a dwelling on the thought.
3. There is a delighting in the thought, thinking of ways it might be fulfilled
4. Then the decision is made to fulfill the desire of that thought (now the temptation has culminated in actually sinning).

Pray: "Keep me from dwelling on these thoughts. Don't let me be drawn into the temptations that are all around. Please stay close to me and cause me to sense Your presence."

Psalms 141:3-4, "Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth (ears, eyes); keep watch over the door of my lips. Do not incline my heart to any evil thing."

Psalms 19:14, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer."

"I now acknowledge my complete dependence on You, Lord, to protect me, to watch over me and to keep me, to lead me, to guide me today."

I ask the Lord to never let me be tempted beyond what I can bear.

"No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." (1 Corinthians 10:13)

We settle the issue, before the temptation comes, that we will obey what God's Word says.

Joseph in the Old Testament determined that he would obey God. He did not try to figure out what he should do when the temptation came. He ran.

How many people in the body of Christ, whose life is not characterized by victory, keep falling for the same temptations and the same sin; yet they do not have a devotional life with the Lord?

This is why we are told to watch and pray. *Mark 14:38, "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

Daily we need to talk those temptations over with the Lord, before the day begins. Ask for His strength before the temptation happens.

This is so important, because when we pray about these areas in our lives, He will answer our prayers.

He's going to help us in that area of our life and we need Him to help us every single day.

What we are doing whenever we pray this prayer, is to express our dependence upon God in every area of our human life.

Matthew 6:13 "...For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."

"Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to God our Savior, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, both now and forever. Amen. (Jude 24, 25)

"For thine is the kingdom..." These words set forth God's universal right and authority over all things, by which He disposes of them according to His pleasure.

The words ***"and the power"*** allude to God's infinite sufficiency to execute His sovereign right and to perform His will in heaven and earth. Because He is the Almighty, He has the ability to do whatsoever He pleases.

The phrase ***"and the glory"*** sets forth His ineffable excellency

I conclude by offering to Him my heart, and surrendering this day to Him, giving him all honor and praise, and rejoicing that He is King of kings and Lord of lords.

Closing my "Alone Time" with God this way reminds me that He has the authority and the power to answer my prayers. He is the Almighty God. He's the Creator of the heavens and the earth. He's the Creator of everything that is created.

Important:

He closes in verse 14 and 15 with a warning on the subject of forgiveness.

If you forgive men their trespasses, then Your heavenly Father will forgive you. If you don't forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

This is not a part of the prayer. Jesus is warning us because He knows our tendency not to forgive others. He wants us to know that if this is the case, then He will not forgive us, causing our fellowship with Him to be affected. We are still saved, but our communion is damaged.

To carry unforgiveness for someone is like ingesting poison and waiting for the other person to die.

We prepare our hearts to seek the Lord through prayer, meditation and commitment.

Now, my heart is prepared to receive God's word.

Psalm 119:18, "Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law.

Ezra 7:10, "For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel."

For more information about meeting/responding to the Lord through His Word, go to:

www.CalvaryCurriculum.com

You can find more teaching on this subject in the **Audio: Training & Teaching** section.