

Patterns for Daily Prayer ~ November 6, 2016
A Starter Plan for Daily Prayer (15 minutes)*

- 1) **Approaching** - Bring God to mind
 - Think of the privilege of prayer. Realize God is present. Ask him to help you pray. Think over who you will be addressing.
 - Think about what He has done to make this encounter possible.
 - Think of how you stand related to Him.

- 2) **Meditating** - Read and Meditate on a portion of Scripture
 - Read a Scripture passage. Discern one or two truths you learn there. Choose the one that most impresses you and write it in a sentence.
 - Now ask:
 - How does this truth help me praise God?
 - How does it show me a sin to confess?
 - How does it show me something to ask God for?

- 3) **Word Prayer**
 - Turn the answers to these questions into a prayer –
 - Discover something in the text as a basis for praising, repenting and aspiring, then the prayer itself can be immediately turned into a prayer.
 - OR Take the Lord's Prayer and paraphrase each phrase or adapt it to your daily situation.

- 4) **Free Prayer**
 - Pray about whatever needs are on your heart. Also spend time thanking God for the ways you see him working your life and caring for you.
 - Pour out your heart to God in prayer.
 - Adoration, Thanksgiving, Confession, Repentance, Petition, Intercession.

- 5) **Reflection**
 - Take a moment to thank and admire God for what he has showed you today. End with a note of praise.

A Pattern for Morning and Evening Prayer

Morning Prayer (25 minutes)

- Approaching God
 - Ask him for his presence and help as you read and pray. Choose from one of these scriptural invocations: (An invocation is a call for God to be present and our desire to meet with Him). Psalm 16:8; 27:4, 9-10; 40:16-29; 63:1-3; 84:5-7; 103:1-2; 139:7-10; Isaiah 57:15; Matthew 11:28-30; John 4:23; Ephesians 1:17-19; 3:16-20.

- Bible Reading and Meditation

* Adapted from Tim Keller, *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*, New York, NY, 2014, 254.

- *(Keep in mind that no one can do all of the following in any one session of prayer).*
 - To study the passage, read it three or four times.
 - Then make a list of everything it says about God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit).
 - List anything it tells you about yourself.
 - List any:
 - Examples to be followed
 - Commands to be obeyed (or things that need to be avoided).
 - Promises to claim.
 - When all this is done – choose the verse or truth that is most striking and helpful to you. Paraphrase the thought or verse in your own words.
- To meditate on the passage: Write down answers to the following questions (or one of these questions the Lord directs you to):
 - What does the text show me about God for which I should praise and thank him?
 - What does the text show me about my sin that I should confess and repent of?
 - What false attitudes, behavior, emotions or idols come alive in me whenever I forget this truth?
 - What does the text show me about a need that I have? What do I need to do or become in light of this? How shall I petition God for it?
 - How is Jesus Christ or the grace that I have in him crucial to helping me overcome the sin I have confessed or to answering the need I have?
 - Finally: How would this change my life if I took it seriously - If this truth were fully alive and effective in my inward being?
 - Why might God be showing this to me now?
 - What is going on in my life that he would be bringing this to my attention today?
 - Prayer
 - Pray in response to what God has revealed through your meditation.
 - Pray for your pressing needs and pressing concerns.
 - Take a final moment to enjoy him and his presence.



Evening Prayer (15 minutes)

- Approaching God
 - Ask him for his presence and helps as you read and pray.
- Bible Reading and Meditation
 - Read a Psalm, eventually working through all 150 Psalms twice a year.
- Prayer
 - Turn the Psalm into a prayer and pray it back to God.
 - Think over your day and confess where you sinned and failed to respond as you should have
 - Think over your day and pray for people you met or heard about who have needs or are in difficulty.
 - Pray for some of the more urgent and important needs on your heart.
 - Entrust them to God for the night.

4 Prayers for throughout the day[†]

Prayer upon rising from sleep

- My God, Father and Savior, thank you for giving me the grace to come through the night into a new day. Now grant me strength that I may employ it entirely in your service, so that all my works may glorify your name and encourage those around me.
- As you have been pleased to make your sun shine upon the earth to give us bodily light, grant the light of your Spirit to illumine my understanding and my heart. Amen.

Prayer upon Beginning One's Work or Study

- My good God, Father and Savior, grant me aid by the Holy Spirit to now work fruitfully in my work/study which is from you, all in order to love you and the people around me rather than for my own gain and glory.
- Give me wisdom, judgment and carefulness. Bring me under the rule of true humility. Let me accept with patience whatever amount of fruitfulness or difficulty in my work that you give me this day. And in all I do, help me to rest always in my Lord Jesus Christ and in his grace alone for my salvation and life. Amen.

Prayer after the Midday Meal

- O Lord God, Thank you for all the benefits and gifts you constantly shower on me. Thank you for sustaining my physical life through food and shelter; for giving me new life through the gospel; and for the certainty of the best life which is yet to come. I ask that you would not allow my affections to be tangled in desires for this world. Let me always set my heart on things above, where Christ is seated at your right hand. Please hear me, merciful Father, by our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

Prayer before Sleep

O Lord God, now grant me grace now to rest my body but to also have my spiritual rest in soul and conscience, that I may let go of all earthly cares so I might be comforted and eased in all ways. And because no day passes that I do not sin please bury all my offenses in your mercy. Forgive me for Christ's sake. Thank you for your grace. Amen

[†] Adapted from John Calvin's Daily Prayers, Keller, 264-265