

Developing a Devotional Lifestyle

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The Intimacy of Prayer

Read Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; Luke 6:12; Luke 9:28-29

These four verses capture a dominant characteristic of the lifestyle of Jesus. Anyone who spent any time at all with Jesus saw something unique in his daily lifestyle. Jesus *prayed*. Not the perfunctory prayers of the Pharisees but the passionate prayer of someone who knew God on intimate terms. It was no wonder that the disciples approached him one time and asked him to teach them to pray (see **Luke 11:1**). They had observed Jesus' lifestyle of prayer for many months and had begun to realize the priority of prayer.

Read Matthew 10:24-25

In Luke 6:40, Jesus said: "...everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher." The Holy Spirit's work is to do exactly this – to train us to be like Christ (see **Romans 8:29**) – and that includes his lifestyle of prayer.

Our aim is not simply to get you to "pray" or "read the Bible" each day. We are seeking to help you develop a culture of intimacy with God.

- **There is an intimacy to be found in prayer.** When we pray, we are not simply mouthing words to God. We are *meeting with God* in prayer.
- **There is an intimacy to be found in God's Word.** When we read the Bible, we are not simply reading ink on paper. We are *meeting with God* in the pages of his Word.

This subtle difference between dry role-playing and the intimacy of a Christ-like lifestyle of prayer is the foundation upon which a vibrant prayer life is built. But be warned! Discovering the excitement of prayer can be addictive!

Putting it into Practice

In your devotions this morning, read **Psalm 1**. As you read, talk to the Lord about the content of this psalm. Let God's Word shape your conversation with him. Now read the psalm again, allowing the Lord to speak to your heart. Remember: your goal is *intimacy*, not information.

MEMORY VERSE

Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light for my path.

Psalm 119:105

Here are a few suggestions that may help you to memorize your memory verses:

- ➡ Ask the Lord to help you remember his Word (see [John 14:26](#)).
- ➡ Use the version of the Bible you are most familiar with. What you normally read in your Bible is what you need to be memorizing.
- ➡ Don't just memorize the contents of the verse; memorize its "address" (the verse reference) as well. You can do this by following this pattern: Step 1: **reference**; Step 2: **verse content**; Step 3: **reference**. Then repeat steps 1-3. Note that you are quoting the reference twice as many times as you quote the actual verse content. This gives the verse a clear "reference tag."
- ➡ After you have read your memory verse out aloud several times, try going through your memory verse *without* reading your computer screen.
- ➡ Look up your memory verse in your Bible. Look at its immediate context and read the verses that come before and after your memory verse.
- ➡ Print out your memory verse or jot it down on a piece of paper. Take this paper with you when you go to work or do other daily activities. Meditate on the meaning of the verse throughout the day.
- ➡ During your noon appointment with the Lord, take out your memory verse and go over it again. Talk to the Lord about what this verse means to you personally.
- ➡ In the evening (at either your evening study or your evening devotions), see if you can quote your memory verse from memory. Then, without looking at the memory verse itself, see if you can find it in your Bible.
- ➡ The next day, before you begin committing a new verse to memory, rehearse your previous day's memory verse and see if you can remember it (without cheating!).
- ➡ Finally, at the end of the week (possibly on the Sunday), collect all your week's memory verses, rehearse them and see if you can recall them without reading them. Spend a little extra time on any verses you have difficulty recalling.
- ➡ Remember: Don't just memorize a verse. Put it into practice ([James 1:22](#)). It is not being able to quote a verse from memory that counts. It is His Word *abiding* in your heart that counts ([John 15:7](#)). When you actually apply a verse consistently to your daily life, that is when you *truly* know that verse!