



SALEM ALLIANCE CHURCH

FREEDOM & PURPOSE

RESOURCE GUIDE



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HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

This guide is a compilation of spiritual practices and resources that are specifically curated to help you engage with the stage you find yourself in on the Discipleship Pathway.

For each spiritual practice, there is a brief explanation as well as opportunities to put it into practice. We encourage you to read through the Resource Guide and see if there are one or two things that you sense the Holy Spirit inviting you to engage with.

These practices and resources are not the end goal but a means of deepening connection and communion with God, who is the one that transforms us into people of Christ-like love.

ABOUT THIS STAGE

Freedom and Purpose is the next step after rediscovering God and surrendering to His healing love in our lives.

Now we surrender to God's will to fully direct our lives, but with our eyes wide open, aware but unafraid of the consequences. Once parts of the deep, excruciating inward journey have been experienced, the natural outcome is to venture outside of one's self-centeredness and back into the active world with a new sense of fulfillment. This is the outward journey, a venture outside our self-interests to others, based on the growth and peace of mind we have experienced from the inner journey.

This outward venture may or may not be different from our previous direction, but our focus is different. Our focus is outward, but from a new, grounded center of ourselves. Once again, we have been changed. We have experienced new wholeness. We are aware of our faults and have a fresh desire to be in God's will rather than our own. We know we are surrendering to a much wiser, more vital Spirit. We sense a looser grip on ourselves and a willingness to be conduits for God's work in our lives and others' lives. We endure suffering gracefully, because our confidence is in God.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE: APPRENTICING OTHERS

Matthew 28:18-20

Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

"Ultimately, Jesus calls his disciples to make disciples, who will make disciples. It is through this factor of multiplication that Christianity has grown and spread into every nation of the world." —**Dr. Craig Kraft**

"The church changes the world not by making converts but by making disciples."—**John Wesley**

"If the Church is not making disciples, then all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible, are a waste of time."—**C.S. Lewis**

Description

Making disciples is the God-given agenda for the church. That agenda is more than "saving souls." It involves helping people make the transformational journey into Christ-likeness.

A FEW WAYS TO ENGAGE

LEADERSHIP SQUARE

The Leadership Square is a helpful tool that guides you through the stages of disciple-making. This can provide a useful framework as you apprentice others.

1. I do, you watch.

The disciple is being led by the leader. The leader has to be very directive.

2. I do, you help.

The leader does the work but invites the disciple to help where they can. The leader has to be the visionary coach.

3. You do, I help.

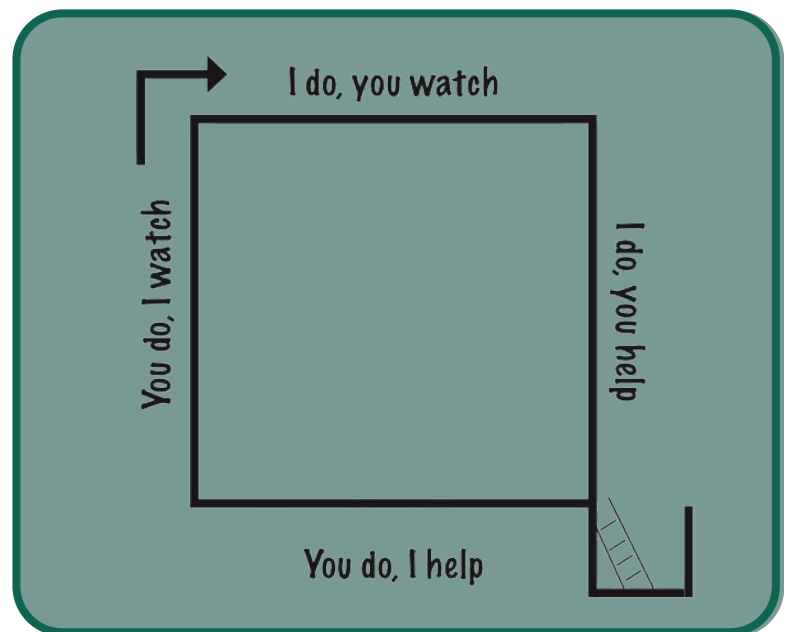
The disciple steps up and the leader hands off the leadership while still helping and protecting.

4. You do, I watch.

This is delegation. The disciple is doing it and the leader is watching them.

5. The disciple turns into a leader and begins to make their own disciples.

This is how the Kingdom grows.



Scan the QR code, or click [HERE](#) to watch an instructional video on the Leadership Square



TIME TO PRACTICE:

Fill out your own apprenticeship action plan below by detailing ways you plan to apprentice someone through the different stages of the Leadership Square. Be as specific as you can.

I do, you watch.

I do, you help.

You do, I help.

You do, I watch.

LEARNING CIRCLE

As we learn to notice and listen to God more in our lives, we can learn to recognize Kairos moments—moments when God is grabbing our attention in some way. These moments could be a life-altering event, or maybe an ah-hah moment or a simple worry. They could also be a word, phrase or theme that sticks out to you from Scripture reading. The Learning Circle is a tool that helps us notice the Kairos moments and encourages us to stop and listen for what God is doing and saying to us through them.

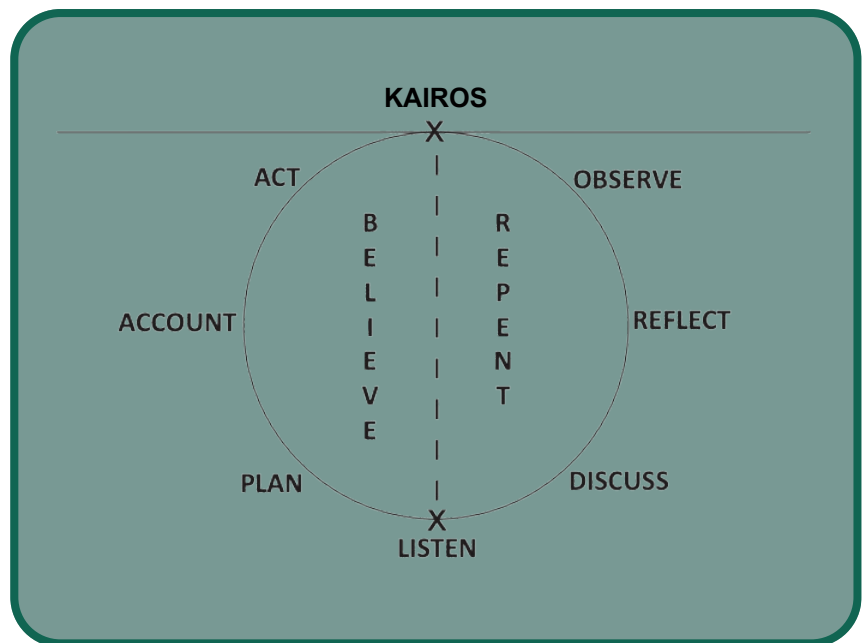
There are 7 parts of the Learning Circle:

1. Observing. This is the “what.” We are gathering facts about what we noticed.

2. Reflection. This is the “why.” Why did this grab my attention? This involves reflection on past experiences that contribute to your initial Kairos moment.

3. Discussion. Discussion is essential to the learning process as we engage in the journey together. It is important to discuss our Kairos moments with others as well as invite them to listen with us and for us.

4. Listen. Now we get to ask God the question: what are You saying to me? and listen for His response. More specifically, we are asking, “what do You want to say to me about Yourself or myself?” We frame it this way because we often jump to a state of doing rather than being. As we listen for His heart, we can summarize it into a short phrase like “Laura, you are safe” or “Laura, I love to take good care of you.”



Scan the QR code, or click [HERE](#) to watch an instructional video on the Learning Circle.



5. Plan. Once we have heard His response, we can now make a Plan. This plan is simply how I lean into what I've heard. How will I keep listening to what I have heard? The plan must be doable and measurable

6. Account. Account means that you are not in this alone, we do this together. Who is checking in on you with your plan to listen? If you are in a huddle, we know that huddle will check in with us next week for both accountability and encouragement.

7. Act. Act is how we respond in our daily life. We invite God to renew our minds with His truth as we engage with our plans and as we learn to believe what He is saying to us.

Mark 1:14-15

Later on, after John was arrested, Jesus went into Galilee, where he preached God's Good News. "The time promised by God has come at last!" he announced. "The Kingdom of God is near! Repent of your sins and believe the Good News!"

In the Mark passage, we hear Jesus say "repent and believe the Good News." The Learning Circle helps us to live in this way. To notice what God is doing, listen for His Good News, turn away from, or repent, from our old ways of thinking and believe what He is telling us. The first side of the circle is the repent side: to change our thinking and turn to God. The second side of the circle is the belief side: imbedding the truth into my daily life.

TIME TO PRACTICE:

1. Take yourself around the Learning Circle.

2. Take someone you are apprenticing around the Learning Circle. (Review the next page for helpful questions and prompts for when taking someone around the Learning Circle)

QUESTION PROMPTS FOR TAKING SOMEONE AROUND THE CIRCLE

First, help them synthesize the kairos moment into a word or a short phrase.

OBSERVE

- What stuck out to you? What grabbed your attention?
- Was it a word, a phrase, a feeling, a reaction...?
- What kind of physical reaction did you have to this kairos moment?

REFLECT

- Why do you think this grabbed your attention?
- What feelings rise to the surface when you think about it?
- Does this connect to an event or experience in the past?
- Have you noticed a pattern connected to this?
- How do you think your family of origin impacts this kairos?
- How does this connect to your sense of identity?
- How have you noticed the kairos affecting how you relate to God/others?

DISCUSS/LISTEN

- Ask God, either on your own, or invite the others in to listen with you - God, what are you saying to me about Yourself or myself?

PLAN

- What is something measurable and doable that you can do this week to lean into what you are hearing?

ACT

- Do the plan this week.

ACCOUNT

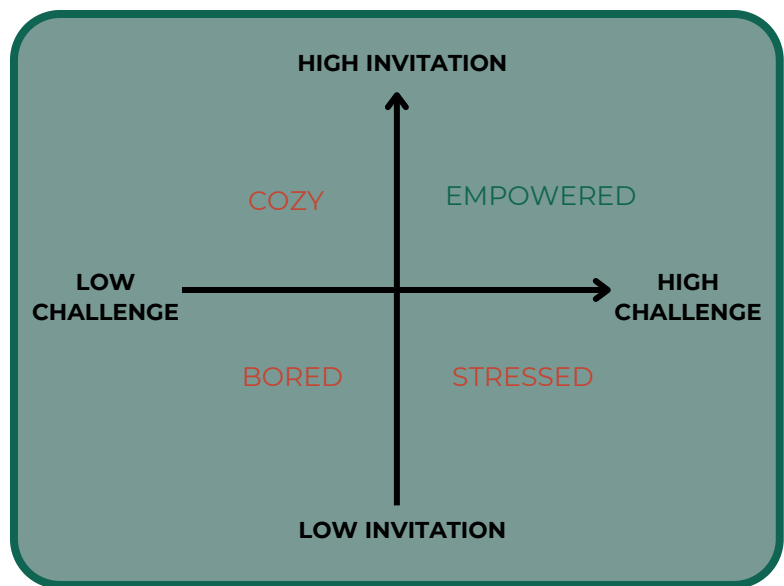
- Questions to ask next week:
 - How did your plan go?
 - Did it help you lean into what God was saying to you?
 - Did you hear or experience anything further about this kairos moment?

INVITATION-CHALLENGE MATRIX

Jesus created a highly inviting but highly challenging culture for his disciples to function and grow within. If we are to grow as disciples, and disciple others well, we too will have to learn the art of invitation and challenge.

This matrix can help us look at our own relationship with Jesus as He disciplines us. It can help us evaluate the relationships that we have with others as we disciple each other, as well as the culture that we are creating in our churches and Christian community as we follow Jesus together.

- **COZY: High Invitation/Low Challenge** When we seek to create a comfortable environment for growing in our relationship with God, and if we avoid calling each other to responsibility, action and growth, we become a cozy culture.
- **BORED: Low Invitation/Low Challenge.** When there is absence of both invitation and challenge, the result is a boring culture.
- **STRESSED: Low Invitation/High Challenge.** When we focus primarily on actions, behaviors, rules, and what needs to be done next, we end up fostering a stressful and legalistic culture.
- **EMPOWERED: High Invitation/High Challenge.** Jesus was able to create a discipling culture in which there was an appropriate mix of invitation and challenge. He asks us to do the same as we follow Him together.

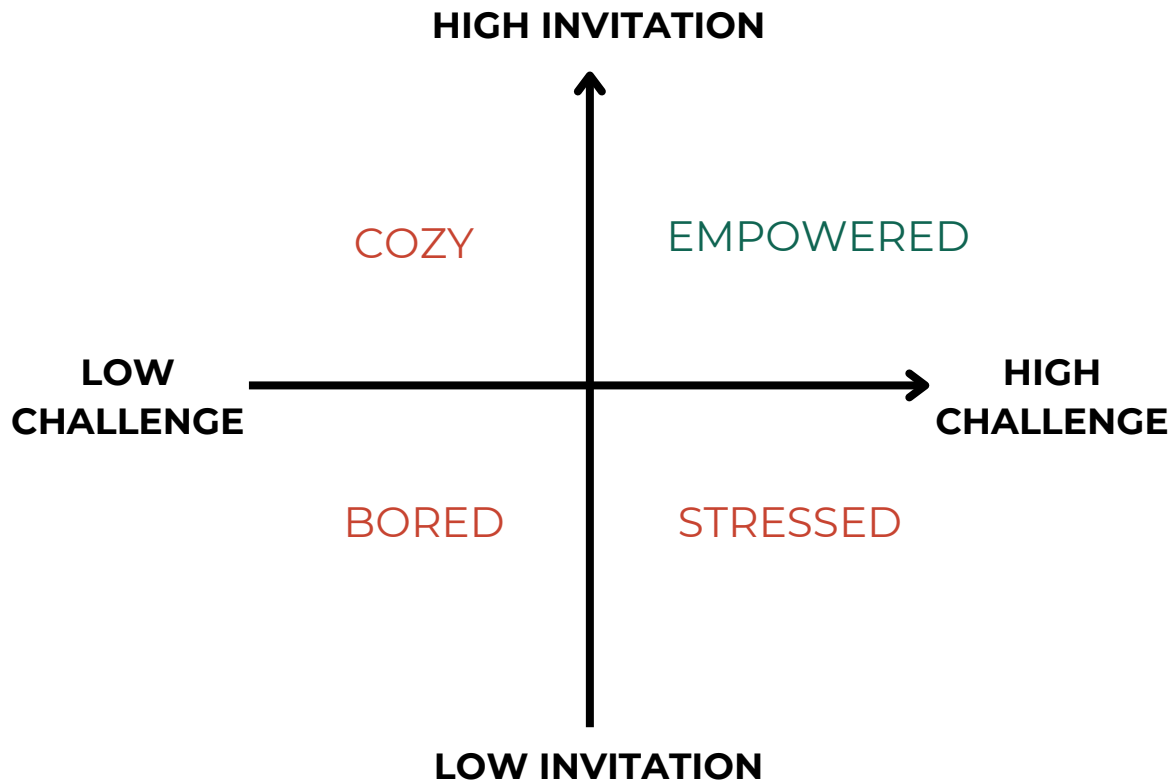


Scan the QR code, or click [HERE](#) to watch an instructional video on the Invitation-Challenge Matrix.



TIME TO PRACTICE:

1. Identify where you are on the Invitation-Challenge matrix. You may find it helpful to actually mark where you are on the matrix below.



2. Ask Jesus to show you where you are in need of invitation and/or challenging in your life.

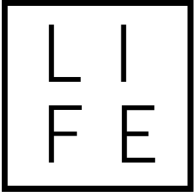
3. Share the Invitation-Challenge Matrix with someone you are apprenticing and walk them through it.

ENGAGING IN APPRENTICING OTHERS AT SAC



Be a part of Exploring Faith Ministries

Exploring Faith Ministries walks with people who want to know more about Jesus. If you would like be a part of this ministry, or for more info, contact Cary Wood at cwood@salemalliance.org.



GROUPS

Lead a Life Group

Leading a Life Group is a primary way to help others grow in their apprenticeship to Jesus at Salem Alliance Church. For more info, contact Sam Brown and Sarah Morrow at lifegroups@salemalliance.org.



Become a Discipleship Coach

Discipleship is the journey of following and becoming more like Jesus. If you would like to help coach someone along that journey, contact Cary Wood at cwood@salemalliance.org.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE: SERVING

Mark 10:45

For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

“Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the
world.”

—**Teresa of Avila**

“[God] does not burden us equally with all things, but considerately puts upon each of us just a few central tasks... For each of us these special undertakings are our share in the joyous burden of love” —**Thomas Kelly**

Description

God's trajectory is to bless the earth through His people. And to show them exactly what He had in mind, He came to earth as one who served (**Luke 22:27**). Jesus is God with us and He calls us to serve (**Matthew 22:37-39**). This is not religious rhetoric that we simply endorse as a good rule of thumb; the Christian discipline of service is the way the world discovers the love of God. We are the way God blesses the earth.

A FEW WAYS TO ENGAGE

GIFTS, PASSIONS, STORY (GPS) ASSESSMENT

As followers of Jesus, each of us has a unique and significant role to play in seeing God's Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. More specifically, we believe that here at Salem Alliance, each member of our church has a unique and significant role to play in seeing Salem become a city at peace with God.

The GPS assessment is an insightful tool designed to help you discover your unique Kingdom role. It's a free online assessment that explores your gifts, passions, and story and how they intersect to empower you to live on mission.

TIME TO PRACTICE:

1. Complete the GPS Assessment to discover the unique way God has created you.

Scan the QR code or visit <https://www.salemalliance.org/gifts-passions-story/gps-assessment/>



2. Meet with a GPS coach to further process your results.

Discussing your results with a GPS coach can bring greater awareness, and engagement, and help you better discern the ways that God has uniquely created you to serve.

3. Take your next step towards serving.

Based on your Gifts, Passions and Story, what next step is God inviting you to take?

On the next page, look at the list of opportunities SAC provides to engage with serving. What could that look like for you?

ENGAGING IN SERVING AT SAC



Furniture Bank

The Furniture Bank provides furniture to those in Salem who have received safe, permanent housing and need assistance transforming that place into a home. Scan the QR code for more info or email neighborhoods@salemalliance.org.



Feed Salem

Feed Salem is an equal opportunity food pantry where neighbors are welcomed and encouraged to choose the nourishment they need. Scan the QR code for more info or email neighborhoods@salemalliance.org.



RORS

The Royal Order of Red Suspenders delivers free, seasoned, and cut firewood to neighbors who need assistance heating their home. Scan the QR code for more info or email neighborhoods@salemalliance.org.



Bless Every School

Bless Every School comes alongside our local schools through supporting teachers, encouraging staff, and prayer. Scan the QR code for more info or email neighborhoods@salemalliance.org.



Love the City

Love the City is committed to equipping and empowering the people of Salem Alliance Church to bring the tangible peace, presence, and power of Jesus to our neighbors. Scan the QR code for more info or email neighborhoods@salemalliance.org.



Baraka

Baraka offers support and connection for refugees, immigrants, and asylum seekers. Scan the QR code for more info or email baraka@salemalliance.org.



OMNI

If you are looking for a place to serve, OMNI would love to have you! Join the preschool volunteer team as our youngest children experience church in a fun and engaging way, meet new friends, and get to know Jesus. Our ministry serves families with children ages 0-4 years old. Scan the QR code for more info or contact Shua Yang at syang@salemalliance.org



C1 & C2

C1 & C2, our grade school ministries, serves students in Kindergarten through 5th grade. Join our teams as we explore what God is up to and look for where He is on the move. Contact Kahri Mlinarcik (C1) at kmlinarcik@salemalliance.org or Angy Thomas (C2) at athomas@salemalliance.org.



Middle & High School

We believe ministry is a team sport and we cannot do what we do without our incredible team of volunteer leaders. Are you interested in making a difference? Reach out to Tanya Xiong (MS) at txiong@salemalliance.org or Brandon Miller (HS) at bmiller@salemalliance.org.



Young Adults

YA is a community for 18-30(ish) year olds who are single, dating, engaged, married, with kids, single parents, and everything in between. We want to do life with Jesus, life together, and life on mission. To serve with YA, contact Sean O'Connor at soconnor@salemalliance.org.



GLO (Special Needs)

We believe people of all abilities should have the opportunity to come to church and feel welcomed, accepted, and celebrated and become full participants and contributors in the body of Christ. Scan the QR code for more info, or contact Aimee McGrath at amcgrath@salemalliance.org.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE: BEING A WITNESS

Acts 1:8

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

"Witnessing is that deep-seated conviction that the greatest favor I can do for others is to introduce them to Jesus Christ."—**Paul Little**

"Evangelism is not a professional job for a few trained men, but is instead the unrelenting responsibility of every person who belongs to the company of Jesus."—**Elton Trueblood**

"We're witnesses, not salespeople. Our job is not to 'close the deal' with the right technique, but simply to bear witness to our life with Jesus."—**John Mark Comer**

Description

A witness is simply someone who tells what they saw, heard, or experienced—they tell the story of what happened to them. Anyone who follows Jesus has a story to tell, and no story is boring or uneventful. Every disciple has been set free, released, redeemed, forgiven, made new, and inhabited by the Holy Spirit. Our stories can help set others free. Testifying to the Good News requires no strategy or program, rather, it depends on responding to the Spirit's nudge to open your mouth and heart for the sake of others.

A FEW WAYS TO ENGAGE

B.L.E.S.S. OTHERS

The B.L.E.S.S. practices described below are a practical and accessible way for you to witness to others in the everyday moments of life.



B - Begin with prayer

In the places God has placed you, spend time praying for people by name. Ask God for opportunities to get to know people who don't know Jesus.



L - Listen

Instead of talking, focus on asking questions, listening well, and learning about others' stories.



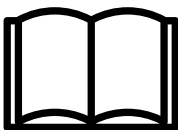
E - Eat

Invite those people you have been praying for and listening to, to share a meal or grab a coffee.



S - Serve

As you build relationships, pay attention to any practical needs that come up and offer to help.



S - Share your story

Look for opportunities to share what a difference Jesus has made in your life. Don't feel like you have to tell your life story all at once—think "bite-size" stories.

TIME TO PRACTICE:

B - Begin with Prayer

Write down the names of 2 people you are in relationship with who don't know Jesus and start praying for them:*

1. _____ 2. _____

L - Listen

With the people above in mind, write a couple of questions you could ask them to learn more about their story:

1. _____

2. _____

E - Eat

When in the next few days or weeks can you get something to eat or grab a coffee with one of these people?

S - Serve

As you think about their lives, where have they expressed they are in need? What is something that you could do to respond that need?

S - Share your story

If you get the opportunity to share part of your story, what would you want someone to know about the difference Jesus has made or is currently making in your life?

*If you struggle to think of anyone you know who isn't a follower of Jesus, pray for opportunities and ways to engage with those who don't know Jesus in the contexts God has placed you.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE: CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER

Romans 8:26-27

Meanwhile, the moment we get tired in the waiting, God's Spirit is right alongside helping us along. If we don't know how or what to pray, it doesn't matter. He does our praying in and for us, making prayer out of our wordless sighs, our aching groans. He knows us far better than we know ourselves, knows our pregnant condition, and keeps us present before God.

“Prayer is not primarily saying words or thinking thoughts. It is, rather, a stance. It's a way of living in the Presence.” —**Richard Rohr**

Description

We often associate prayer with the words we say. Contemplative prayer is a way of being with God that does not depend on giving the Holy One information about what we would like done in the world. Just as friends enjoy one another without conversing, contemplative prayer is a way of being with God without wordiness.

A FEW WAYS TO ENGAGE

BREATH PRAYER

Breath prayer is a way to use the simple act of breathing to commune and communicate with God. They are short, one-sentence prayers, rooted in Scripture that are aligned with our breath—the first half is prayed while inhaling, the second half is prayed while exhaling. They remind us that each breath we are given is God’s gift and that God’s Spirit is nearer to us than our own breath. These prayers can be easily repeated throughout our day as a way of meditating on God’s Word and reminding ourselves of His presence with us.

TIME TO PRACTICE:

Find one or two phrases you want to communicate to God; as you breathe in, say one; as you breathe out, say another. Focus on the words you are praying and offer them sincerely to God. Try one of these below or come up with one on your own.

Lord, help me be still, and know You are God.

God, I need You.

Lord, give me wisdom (or strength or patience).

God, I know You are good; please carry me.

WELCOMING PRAYER

Welcoming prayer invites God into the ordinary events and relationships of life with all their busyness, triggers, muscle tension and heartache. It is an opportunity to welcome the emotions and experiences of our day and to do so with the Holy Spirit.

As we engage in welcoming prayer we are invited by God to detach from the need to be secure, liked, and in control, and attach to the presence of Jesus instead.

There are three steps to Welcoming Prayer.

1. Notice the emotion or state of being in your body. Feel and sink into what you are experiencing at this moment. What does this sensation feel like? Is it moving around? Are you tensing parts of your body or breathing differently than usual? Is it a familiar sensation? Try to be fully present to this sensation rather than pushing it away. You don't need to analyze, explain, or even name the sensation, just notice it.

2. Welcome whatever you are experiencing. Accept that your feelings are there and that you can just be the way you are without trying to change. "Welcome" what you are experiencing this moment in your body as an opportunity to invite communion with the Holy Spirit.

3. Let go by saying "I let go of my desire for security, affection, and control, and I embrace this moment as it is."

TIME TO PRACTICE:

1. Notice, welcome and let go. This week make a point to notice when you are triggered by a person or event. Take a moment or longer to engage with the 3 steps of Welcoming Prayer.

2. Do a body scan. Our body often manifests what is bubbling under the surface of our mind. When your heart races, your jaw clenches, your shoulders get tight or you can hardly breathe, it's your body trying to alert you to something about your experience! If we pay attention, our body will let us know how tense, tired, angry, impatient, unsafe or nervous we are. Do a body scan from your toes to the top of your head. Feel any tension, tightness, ache or pain? As you name that place say, "Welcome, Jesus, welcome," and let the tightness go. Breathe deeply. Release.

3. Scan through your day. Anticipate the events and what will be good or hard. Welcome Jesus into these events before you enter your day and in the midst of the day.

CENTERING PRAYER

Centering prayer provides a way to center one's life in God's presence. It does not focus on talking to God about all our needs, projects, ideas, programs, plans and agendas. Instead we sit in the presence of God and give him our undivided love and attention.

Generally, the only words that are spoken in centering prayer are the prayer words that continually bring our drifting attention back to God. The prayer word is a simple word like Jesus, love, peace, Father, or a phrase from Scripture that encapsulates the intent of the heart to be with God. With this word we linger with God and open ourselves to his presence.

TIME TO PRACTICE:

- 1. Set aside** a minimum of fifteen minutes. Set a timer if that helps you to be less concerned about when to stop.
- 2. Settle into a comfortable position.** Intentionally place yourself in the presence of God, in the center of his love.
- 3. Choose a simple word,** phrase or verse from Scripture that expresses your desire for God (e.g., love, peace, grace, Jesus, great Shepherd). Let this word guard your attention.
- 4. Take time to become quiet.** It is not unusual for the first minutes to be filled with many noisy thoughts. Don't worry about them or pay attention to them. Let them go. Gently return your attention to the center of God's presence and love by repeating your word. When your thoughts wander let them drop to the bottom of your mind. Gently return to the presence of Christ through repeating your word. Let the word draw your attention back to Jesus. Be with Jesus. Listen. Be still.
- 5. Return to your word throughout the day** and remind the Lord of your love for him.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

If you hope to get the most out of these spiritual practices, reflection is a helpful tool.

After engaging with one of these practices for a while, take five to ten minutes to journal your answers to the following three questions.

“We don’t change from our experience, we change when we reflect on our experience.” —Trevor Hudson

WHERE DID I NOTICE RESISTANCE AS I ENGAGED IN THIS PRACTICE?

WHERE DID I FEEL DELIGHT?

HOW WOULD I DESCRIBE THE CONNECTION AND COMMUNION WITH GOD I EXPERIENCED THROUGH THIS PRACTICE?

WHERE DO I SEE EVIDENCE OF MYSELF BECOMING A PERSON OF CHRIST-LIKE LOVE THROUGH THIS PRACTICE?

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

BOOKS

- ***Organic Outreach*** by Kevin Harney
- ***B.L.E.S.S.: 5 Everyday Ways to Love your Neighbor and Change the World*** by Dave and Jon Ferguson
- ***The Art of Neighboring*** by Pathak & Runyon
- ***Find Your Place: Locating your Calling through your Gifts, Passions, and Story*** by Rob Wegner and Brian Phipps
- ***Practicing the Way: Be with Jesus, Become like Him, Do as He Did*** by John Mark Comer
- ***Opening to God*** by David Benner
- ***Prayer: Find the Hearts True Home*** by Richard Foster

VIDEOS

- **Huddle Shapes** <https://www.salemalliance.org/upper-room/huddle-resources/>
- **The Alpha Course** <https://alphausa.org/try/>
- **Practicing the Way course** (practictheway.org/course)

PODCASTS

- **Neighborhoods sermon** by Ash Dalen
(<https://www.salemalliance.org/messages/neighborhoods/?action=listen>)
- **Restoring the Soul podcast - Welcoming Prayer**
- <https://open.spotify.com/episode/6jVEkvhFjD211WrVSsQTOx?si=2dmsRt-gTgaXUXj5Hpg9tg>

YOU'RE INVITED TO JOURNEY WITH US AS WE PURSUE LIFE WITH JESUS, TOGETHER AND ON MISSION.

JESUS

- Baptism Class
- Exploring Faith Ministries
- Healing & Prayer Ministries

TOGETHER

- Weekend Services
- Partner Class
- Life Groups
- Age & Stage of Life Ministries

ON MISSION

- In Church
- In the Neighborhoods
- In the Nations
- Baraka (Refugee Ministries)



Find out more

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