

## HOW TO PRAY THROUGHOUT YOUR DAY

### 40 Days of Prayer

*Pastor Warren's sermon transcript*

#### Week 4

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This weekend, we are in part five of 40 Days of Prayer. I want us to look at how you pray throughout your day. When you look at Paul, it's really obvious that Paul prayed all the time. In every book, he starts with a prayer as he writes most of the New Testament, and he says, "I'm always praying. I'm continually praying. I'm constantly praying. I'm praying without ceasing. I never stop praying for you." He's always, always praying.

How do you do that? How do you pray without ceasing? How do you continually pray without stopping? In Ephesians, there at the top of your outline, Ephesians 6:18, it says this,

*"Pray in the Spirit at all times with all kinds of prayers, asking for everything you need. To do this, you must always be ready and never give up. And always pray for all of God's people."*

Now, in that one verse, he gives us seven instructions. Let me just point them out real quick. First, he says, "I want you to pray in the Spirit." He starts by saying, "Pray in the Spirit." What does that mean? It just means let God lead you. Listen to impressions. If all the sudden somebody... the image of them is put in your mind, pray for them. You get an idea, pray about it. You think about something, pray about it.

When the Holy Spirit puts an idea in your mind, stop and pray about it. Don't say, "I'll pray about it later." Do it right then. Follow the Spirit's leading. It's always good to listen to what God is saying to you. He says, "Pray in the Spirit," and then he says, "at all times." There is no bad time to pray. There's never an inappropriate time to pray. Every time, anywhere, you can pray all the time.

Then he says, because it's always a good idea to pray, and he says, "Pray with all kinds of prayer." Did you know that there are different kinds of prayer? There are many, many different kinds of praying. There's not just one right way to pray. There are lots of kinds of prayers depending on your emotion and depending on the circumstance. If you want a good example of it, look at the book of Psalms.

In the book of Psalms, there is a prayer for every emotion known to man. There are complaining prayers. There are crying-out prayers. There are comforting prayers. There are clarifying prayers. There are courageous prayers. There are confessing prayers. There are celebrating prayers when you're happy. The book of Psalms, 150 chapters, it's right in the middle of your Bible. If you open it put up in the middle, there is where it is. It's the book of prayers and songs.

There is a prayer for every emotion known to man. For thousands of years, people have prayed the Psalms. If you want to learn how to pray, just read the Psalms. Say, "Lord, make this my prayer," and let it be your prayer, but there is a prayer for all times, and there are prayers for all emotions, and there are prayers for all kinds of situations.

He says, "Pray in the Spirit. Pray at all times. Pray all kinds of prayers asking for everything you need." What does that mean? There are no subjects off limit. There is nothing that you cannot pray about. If you're interested in it, God's interested in it. If you worry about it, pray about it. If you prayed as much as you worried, you'd have a lot less to worry about.

Worry never changes anything, but prayer can change things. When you start to worry, just stop and say, "Well, if I'm worrying about it, I might as well pray about it." He says, "You can pray about everything. Nothing is off limits." You can pray about physical issues, mental issues. You can pray about financial issues, sexual issues. You can pray about relational issues, career issues, political issues. There is nothing off limits. He says, "Pray all the time. Pray in all the different ways. Pray wherever you are. Pray whatever you're interested in. Pray about everything."

Then he says, number five, he says, "Always be ready." He says, "If you're going to pray all the time, to do this, you have to always be ready." What does ready mean? It means you've got to have a plan. That's what we're going to talk about today. How do you plan your prayers?

Spontaneous prayers are great. Spontaneous prayers are good. Spontaneous prayers are what you need to do in the moment, but the Bible says, "You also need to plan your prayers. You need to think them out. You need to be strategic. You need to prepare. You need to think through when you want to pray, where you want to pray." You've got to have a plan. You have to be prepared if you're going to be ready. Then he says, "To do this, you must always be ready and never give up," which means you never stop praying.

Finally, he says, "And always pray for all of God's people," which means we're supposed to pray for everybody. I can't do that if I only pray two minutes a day. I've got to pray throughout the day. How do I do this? That's what I want us to look at this weekend. How do I pray throughout my day?

Well, there's two different ways. I want you to write this down, two different ways that you can pray throughout your day. The first is just to

### **1. Keep a running conversation with God.**

You just talk to God like I'm talking to you, like you talk to anybody else. You just keep a running conversation with God. You don't end the prayer. You don't say, "In Jesus' name, amen." You just talk. If something comes up, you talk to God about it. Then maybe a minute or two goes by, and then you talk about something else. It's like breathing. You don't think about breathing. You just do it. If you did not breathe, you'd die. Prayer is spiritual breathing. Prayer is to your soul what breathing is to your body, and it needs to become as natural so that you don't even think about it.

Right now, you probably have to think to pray, but you can actually develop a habit like I have done and many, many people have done, where I don't even think about what I'm praying. I just instead of talking to myself, I talk to God all the time. Now, you talk to yourself all the time. You

know that. You are your biggest fan. No matter what happens to you, and you feel it, taste it, touch it, smell it, sense it, you talk to yourself about everything you experience in life. Well, it's not that hard to just make a switch, where instead of talking to yourself all the time, you talk to God all the time. That's the kind of conversation you just ... You're driving the car. You go into the carwash. You walk into the grocery store. You pick up some trash. You deliver some mail, or whatever you do, you can just talk to God all the time. It's a conversational praying.

Now, to pray conversationally, what do you do? You just talk to God about whatever you're interested in at that particular moment. It's not formal. It's just like I'm watching TV. I talk to God about what I'm watching. Do you think that was funny, God? I didn't. You can just ... You're watching some western. You go, "Man, that's a beautiful place. God, that was really cool. You made that Monument Valley out there in Arizona."

The Bible says in Ephesians 6:18, "*Pray on every occasion as the Spirit leads.*" On every occasion means as I said, you can talk to God anywhere, anytime, about anything, all the time, as the Spirit leads. When you get an impression, you pray about it.

Now, here is what I've noticed. I just wrote this down this week. I don't think I had ever thought about it. If I don't feel like praying, it means I'm not praying what I feel. Let me say that again. If I don't feel like praying, I'm not praying what I feel.

If the only time you pray is when you pray stuff you think God wants to hear, well, that's boring. If you pray about what you're feeling right now, nervousness or anxiety, or your stomach's upset, or you're frustrated, or you're tired, and you just talk to God about it, when you talk to God about what you feel, then you're going to feel like praying. When you don't feel like praying, it means you're praying about the wrong thing. God isn't interested in what you're not interested in. God already knows everything in your life. He just wants you to talk just like a father or a mother longs to have their children talk to them. You long for your children to grow up to that day that they can talk to you, and have an intelligent conversation, and frankly, it doesn't matter what they talk about. You just like having their attention and listening to them.

You keep a running conversation with God. If you don't feel like praying, it means you're not praying what you feel. 1 Thessalonians 5:17 says, "*Never stop praying!*" In other words, "*Pray all the time!*"

One of the ways that people run in conversation, the other way, write this down, is to

## **2. Schedule prayer times throughout my day.**

I'm going to teach you a very, very simple way to do this this weekend. Schedule prayer times throughout my day.

This is not some new idea. From the beginning of time, people have scheduled their prayer times. The Jews in the Old Testament scheduled their prayer times. They set times. There were

fixed hours. The Bible tells us in Daniel, remember when we studied that great character, it said, "He kneeled in prayer three times a day, morning, noon and night." He kneeled three times a day. But what really happened was something that happened during the Roman empire. When the Romans took over the known world at that time, one of the things they did is they would build a forum in every major city. In that forum, they would put up a bell tower. The Roman's bell tower would ring about six or seven times a day. It would ring first at about 6:30 in the morning. That was called prime or the first hour. It meant everybody get to work. It was the alarm clock that says, "Work has now started in this city" at about 6:00, 6:30 a.m.

At about 9:00 a.m., the bell would ring again. That was about three hours later, so it was called the third hour. When you read the Bible, it talks about when Jesus hang on the cross from the sixth hour. It talks about the ninth hour and the third hour. You find it all through the Bible, but they're using Roman legion terms. Prime was about 6:00. Nine o'clock was the third hour. Twelve o'clock noon was the sixth hour of the day. That was a lunch break. Here is the cool thing. In the Roman empire, the lunch break lasted until 3:00 p.m. It was a three-hour lunch break. Now, that's the good news. The other point was you didn't get to go home until about 6:30. At noon, the bell would ring again. Then it would ring again at 3:00 in the afternoon, and then it would ring again at about 6:00 p.m. in the evening, which meant work is over. Go home.

Everybody could hear these bells, and the Romans had these going for hundreds of years, so you know what happened? The Jews and the Christians started using the Roman bells for the times of prayer. They developed a habit of praying every time those bells rang, and that's called the Liturgy of the Hours. Even today, Catholic church has the liturgy of the hours, and they still use the Roman terms that the Romans gave, the third hour, and the sixth hour, and the ninth hour, and vespers, and prime, and the different kinds of words that are used for the prayers throughout the day.

Now, what's interesting is over time, the monks who were in monasteries started putting their own bells in the monasteries. That's why they had bell towers. They would ring the bells, because then it meant it's time to pray again, another three hours, another three hours, another three. Time to pray again. In fact, in the 1400s, the monks started thinking, "You know what, this is a bad deal, where we always have to have one guy right there ready to ring the bell," so they started creating mechanical instruments that would ring the bells on schedule. The Latin word for bell is cloc. Have you ever heard of that?

You didn't know this. Clocks were invented to make time for prayer. It's the whole reason we have clocks. The clock was not invented to make life speedier, to make life rush. Everybody has secularized. We now have watches and all kinds of time pieces, but the clock was invented for worship so that everybody would know it's time to pray. It's time to pray. It's time to pray. The word clock as I said is the Latin word cloc! Cloc is the word for bell.

Now, in Psalm 119:164, there in your outline, David says, "*Seven times a day, I praise you!*" Over the centuries, these daily times of prayer throughout the day began to be known as I said the Liturgy of the Hours or Divine Office. It got very, very complicated. I would not recommend... In fact, I have the volumes that are literally thousands of pages for the Liturgy of the Hours. It's about that thick. It's four volumes, about that tall, and it's very, very complicated. I

want to teach you something far simpler, far, far simpler that you could memorize, and you can use. It's something I created based on the seven phrases of the Lord's Prayer.

The Lord's Prayer is not simply a prayer to be prayed. It is a model for life. In fact, when Jesus gave the Lord's Prayer, He said, "You should pray like this." Notice, He didn't say, "You should pray this." He said, "You should pray like this." Nowhere in the Bible are you commanded to recite the Lord's Prayer. In fact, God says multiple times in the Scripture, don't say something over and over and over that becomes a vain repetition. You don't even think about it. But we typically take a model and make it a recipe. God in the Bible never says the Lord's Prayer is something you should pray over and over and over. He never says it. He says, this is a model. This is a pattern. This is how you should pray, not what you should pray.

I want us to take a typical day in your life. I want to show you how starting in the morning when you get up, and then breakfast, and then midday, and then at noon, and then in the afternoon, and then in the evening, and before you go to bed, you could use the seven phrases of the Lord's Prayer to just remember, "Oh, I should talk to God right now," whether it's 30 seconds or a minute or five minutes, or however much time you put into it. It's a simple pattern that you can use. All right, let's get right into it.

Number one, we're going to start your day with the first phrase of the Lord's Prayer, and the first thing you do when you wake up, here is what you do. Write it down. The first thing when you wake up, get up with gratitude.

### **1. Get up with gratitude.**

When you get out of bed in the morning, before your breakfast or anything else, you should get up starting to be grateful to God, and telling God all the things you're grateful for.

Now, you've got a choice on what attitude you're going to have when you get up. Like I said, you wake up grumpy in the morning. You said, "No, I usually let her sleep." You can get up with grumbling. You can get up with griping. You can get up with groaning. You can get up with grouching. You can get up with grumbling. You can get up with growling. You can get up with grunting, or you can get up with gratitude. It's your choice. Did you know that doctors have discovered that the single healthiest emotion known to man is gratitude, that the attitude of gratitude actually makes you healthier mentally, emotionally, physically. It's actually good for your health. Why not start every morning with gratitude to God, and you thank God for all the things that he has done for you?

What I would recommend you to do is that you keep a gratitude list by your bedside. I've put one ...I gave it to you months ago. We've put another one in your program. You could take it home with you. You finish filling this out, stuff you're grateful for, and put it by your nightstand. You don't have anything memorized. I've got mine memorized A to Z, and stuff I'm grateful for. But you could get up in the morning, and before you get out of bed, you stop and say, "Let me just be grateful to God for some things," and you can even read some stuff off: D, you designed my life for your great plan and purpose. Thanks God. E, you empower me with your Spirit. F, you forgive me, and you forget my sins. You free me from shame, and you fill my life with meaning. Boom. You could just read through this list. It will change your attitude.

Doctors and actually psychologists have proven that the attitude that you have for the day is set in the first eight minutes. Do you want to grumble, grouse, groan, grunt, or do you want to be grateful? You start your day with gratitude to God for the goodness of God. One of the ways is just to use this little tool to make a list of stuff you're grateful for. Another way is just to make a playlist of songs of gratitude, thank you songs to God. You can go on Spotify or iTunes, or something, and make a list of songs that say thank you to God, and you can play those. You get up with gratitude, and you wake up with worship. That would set your attitude for the whole day, very, very simple. You start with that.

Now, why do we do this? Lookup here on the screen. The Bible says this, *"What do you have that God didn't give you? Everything [you have] is a gift from God! And if it was given to you, how can you brag about it?"* (1 Corinthians 4:7)

Really, what gratitude does is it gets me to focus on the loving Father that we talked about last week, the Abba, the Daddy, the Papa who gives me all that I need, who meets all my needs. You start your day focusing on the goodness of God, and that's the first phrase of the Lord's Prayer.

Look at this, Matthew 6:8-9. Jesus said, *"Your Father knows what you need before you ask him."* You know that. When you pray, *"Your Father knows what you need before you ask him. So then, this is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven.'"*

Start with thinking about God and his goodness. He's a good, good Father. Yes, you are. Yes, you are. He's a good, good Father. He's caring. He's close. He's consistent. He's competent. God, you're a good, good Father. Let me give you a list of the ways that you're good to me. You start your day not with confession, not with your request. You start it with gratitude. God, you're a good, good Father. Let me just tell you all the things I'm grateful for. You know what, I'm grateful for running water. I'm grateful for indoor plumbing. I'm grateful for ice. I'm grateful for bed and sheets and a blanket. I'm grateful for shoes to put on. I'm grateful for a warm house when it's cold, and a cold house when it's hot outside. You just tell God all the stuff you're grateful for, and you take for granted. He says, *"You start with Our Father..."*

James 1:17, *"Every good gift and every perfect present comes from your Father of light in heaven..."*

So, the first thing out of bed, here is what you do. Fill this in.

- I thank my Father in heaven for his consistent love and I recall all of the ways that he's good to me.

I thank my Father in heaven for his consistent love, and I recall all of the ways that he's good to me. That's how you start your day. We're going to have seven little snippets through the day. The very first thing you do, you get up. You get up with gratitude.

You get out of bed. You get dressed. You shower or whatever you do. Now, you're getting ready to eat. First, I get up with gratitude. The second thing I do is

## 2. Bless God's name at breakfast.

I bless God's name at breakfast. Now, I've gone from getting up to going to breakfast. I can pray at breakfast. It doesn't have to be a long prayer, but what I do is I pray the second phrase of the Lord's Prayer and I bless God's name at breakfast.

What does it mean to bless? It means to honor. It means to give respect. It gives to praise, the word, the theological word is adoration. We adore God. We bless Him. We praise Him. That's the second phrase of the Lord's Prayer. "*Our Father in heaven...*" you're a good God. Thank, you for all you've done. You're a good Father.

He says, number two, "*Hallowed be your name*" (Matthew 6:9). That means holy. I'm going to respect your name. I'm going to honor your name. I'm going to praise your name. I'm going to adore your name. That's the second thing you do, and you do it at breakfast. I bless God's name at breakfast. Psalm 145:2, "Every day, I will bless your name." Circle the every day part. Not just every Sunday, not every weekend. Every day, I will bless your name, and praise it forever and ever.

Now, what is the big deal about God's name? If you read through the book of Psalms, it's mentioned about 80 times. Bless the name of the Lord. Praise the name of the Lord. Give thanks to the name of the Lord. Exalt the name of the Lord. What's the big deal about God's name? Well, your name really is your character. Your name is really who you are. If you go and you make get a loan, it's based on your good name. If you have a bad name, nobody is going to loan you any money. If you have bad credit, you've got a bad name. You have a bad reputation. What God says is ... When I make a promise to you, and there are over 7,000 of them in the Bible, it's based on my name. I'm consistent. I can be depended on. I have integrity.

In Psalms, God's name is praised over and over and over, because your name is your character. Now, one of the things that happened in the Bible is that your name was more than just something cute that sounded nice. Today, we pick names because we like the way they sound. Maybe all the kids have the same letter or something like that. But in the Bible, the name was given because they thought, that's what your character is. It could be good or bad. For instance, Jacob means swindler. Jabez means painful. Evidently, his mom bore him in a lot of pain. She had a difficult labor. Your name often got attached to you, and then you start living up to your name. Well, we hallow God's name.

In the Bible, did you know that God has about 100 names in Hebrew and Greek? Why did anybody need 100 names? Because each name, it's actually like a title, represents a character quality of God.

I've put a couple of them there on your outline just to show you. For instance, God says, "I am Abba." We talked about that last week. It means, "I'm your loving Father." I'm your Daddy. I'm your Papa. God says, "My name is Abba. You can call me Abba." That's not a Swedish rock group. God also says, "I am El Deah," which means, "I'm the God who knows you, and I know everything." That's a good thing. God, I don't have to know everything if you know everything,

and you know me, and you know what's best for me. "I'm El Deah. I'm the God who knows you and knows everything." The Bible says, God says, "My name is Jehovah Rapha," which means I'm the God who heals you. That's a good one because we all need healing, mental, emotional, spiritual, financial, physical. I'm the God who heals you.

El Shaddai means, "I'm the Almighty God," which means, "I've got all the power you need. You don't have to have all the power, because I do. And I'm helping you. I'm supporting you." All through the Scripture, there's, "Jehovah Jireh," which says, "I am your provider." There's "Jehovah Shalom," "I am your peace." There's "Jehovah Tsidkenu," "I am your righteousness." You don't have to earn your way to heaven. I'll be your righteousness." The Bible says that you are to bless and honor the names of God.

Now, here is the point. Listen real closely. All prayer is based on how much you know God. The more you know God, the less you're going to worry. The more you know God, the more you're going to relax. The more you know God, the more confident you're going to be. The more you know God, the more you're going to know you. People who have a problem with their identity, "I don't know I am. I don't know what I'm supposed to do. I don't know what I'm supposed to be," don't know God as well as God wants them to know him. The better you get to know your Creator, the better you're going to get to know yourself.

When we talk about knowing the names of God, it just means, do you know what God is really like? Do you know what he means when he says, "I am this, and I am that, and I'm the alpha and omega?" What in the world does that mean to your life?

Look at this verse, Psalm 9:10, *"Those who know your name trust in you, for you, Lord, have never abandoned those who truly seek you."*

I review the names of God, and then I think about the promises they imply. If God says, "I'm Jehovah Jireh, I'm your provider," it means, "Do I have to worry about where the next meal is coming from if he is my provider? Do I have to worry about where the forgiveness is coming from if he says, 'I am your forgiver'?" The more you know the names of God, the more you're going to know what God is like, the more you're going to relax. So, this is just a good time. When you get up, you get up with gratitude, and when you go to breakfast, you bless God's name at breakfast, and you just remind yourself who God is. This is called thanksgiving and praise. That's how you start your day.

Now, you're going to go to work, *"Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done."* That's the third phrase in the Lord's Prayer. That's what you're going to do when you get to work about midmorning. Now, you got up with gratitude, and you went to breakfast blessing God's name. This isn't long. You're just thinking about God. Now, then you get to work. About midmorning, you can take a brief prayer break. Nobody is going to ring a bell at 9:00 or 10:00, but you could still take a little prayer break. Why do you want to do that? Let me ask you a question. Do you ever find it easy to get distracted from your real work? Yes? Do you ever feel like, "I'm not getting done what I need to get done?" Yes. Did you ever feel like you're wasting your time? Sometimes. Did you ever feel like your priorities just got shot out from underneath your feet?



Yes. Do you ever feel like, "Okay, it's halfway through the day or halfway through the morning, and I've lost my focus, I've lost the big perspective?" That's when you need to pray. It doesn't have to be long. You just sit down at your desk. Go out to your truck, or go in a restroom, or go sit in your car. Take a minute. Take five minutes. Then at midmorning, write this down, remember what matters most.

### **3. At midmorning remember what matters most.**

If you will do this every day, if you'll begin a habit of sometime in the middle of the morning, you just pause, take a deep breath. It doesn't take a long time. Just say, "Okay, let me stop right here. What matters most? Let me get the big picture, because I have gotten down in the weeds, and I've lost my direction, and I need to pause and pray."

That's when we come to the third phrase, which is this, Matthew 6:10, "*May your kingdom come, and may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*"

Now friends, that's called a redundant statement, because when Jesus says, "Let your kingdom come, let your will be done," it's saying the same thing. Where God's kingdom comes, God's will is done. Where God's will is done, God's kingdom has come. He's just saying, "God, we want your agenda, not our own."

Is America on the wrong agenda right now? Do we need God's agenda? Yes. In our lives? Yes. In our families? Yes. In our economy? Yes. In our business? Yes. In every area, let your kingdom come. Let your will be done. Why? Because it's always going to be the right thing. We're going to mess it up.

So, at mid-morning, I remember what matters most. This is the principle of dedication. Write this down.

- I align myself with God's purpose and plans for my life.

I align myself with God's purpose and plans for my life. What does that mean? It means I just pause, maybe I walk behind the door in my office. I don't even close the door, and I just go, "God, I want to remind myself, there's something a whole lot bigger than just what I've got on my table to take care of today." Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done. God, you got a big plan. You got a plan for the world, but you also have a plan for me.

God has a universal purpose for the whole world. History is moving toward a climax. History is his story. We're not a circular, this is not the circle of life like *Lion King* says. Life is not circular. It is linear. There was a beginning, and there is going to be an ending, and that Jesus Christ is going to come back one day. God has a plan for the whole world, but more important than that, he's got a plan and a purpose for your individual life too.

At midmorning, you just pause and go, let me just take a deep breath here, and go, "Okay, I know I got a lot of stuff to do, but really, what I want more than anything else, God, I want your plan in my life. I want your purpose for me, and I'm praying for your will to be done in the world

and in our nation. I'm praying for your kingdom to come, and your will to be done." I align myself. I recommit myself to God's purpose in my life.

Now why would you do that? Well, one of the reasons, listen, is that God promises when you do that, he'll help you get your work done. God says, "If you line up with my plan and purpose, I will help you get your work done."

One of the great promises in the Bible, the next verse, Matthew 6:33, *"If you seek first God's kingdom and his righteousness, [that's his plan, his purpose, his agenda, you seek God's kingdom and his agenda,] all the other things will be given to you as well."*

I don't have enough time? Put God's agenda first. I don't have enough money? Put God's agenda first. I don't have enough energy? Put God's agenda first. I don't know which way to turn at work? I've got a major decision to make? Put God's agenda first. I don't know how I'm going to finish this assignment at school? Put God's agenda first.

So, if in the midday, that sixth hour, say the 9:00 or 10:00 you just go, "I just want to remind myself God. I'm more interested in what you want me to do than I am, what I want to do." When you do that, it's going to open up all kinds of power. He says, "I will make everything else take care of yourself if you put me first." How do you do that? How do you put God first? Well, how about every day, in the midday, in the morning, just go, "God, I just want to remind myself, I want your plan and your purpose. Your will be done in my life." All right?

Now, about this time a little bit later, you're starting to get hungry. We're coming up on lunch time, and we're coming up on that noon hour. There's no bell going to ring unless you're in grade school. Nothing takes so long as the last two minutes of class. Remember those clocks that would tick backward before they went forward, tick, tick, tick, tick. When that goes back it goes tick, and everybody jumps up before it ticks there because they know what's going to happen next.

Now, we come to lunch. What do I do at lunch? Number four,

#### **4. List my needs at lunch.**

I list my needs at lunch. At lunch time is a good time for you to talk to God about all the things you need. You started the day with gratitude, and then you blessed his name at breakfast. Now, you've committed yourself again to his plan and purpose for your life. Now, you come to lunch. God said, "What do you need?" Seek first the kingdom of God. Now, everything else is to be given to you. What do you need?

Now, it's lunch time, so you may be eating a sandwich. That can remind you of the fourth phrase. *"Give us this day our daily bread."* And that's the fourth phrase of the Lord's Prayer. You can pray it at noon. Give us this day our daily bread. Now, what is bread? Bread represents everything you need. It represents money. In fact, people often call money bread. You got any bread on you? It could represent money. It could represent resources. It could represent contacts. It could represent a contract. It can represent a husband or a girlfriend or a wife. It can represent

anything you want or need. It's the stuff that fulfills you. It's the stuff that sustains you. Bread is not just talking about bread. It's talking about anything you need in your life.

The Bible says that God says to you, I want you to pray this every day. Give us this day our monthly bread? No. Our weekly bread? No. *"Give us this day our daily bread."* "God, give me what I need for today." God isn't really interested in giving you what you need next year, because you wouldn't have to trust him. You wouldn't have to have any faith. You wouldn't have to depend on him. When God fed the children of Israel as they're coming out of Egypt, and they're going to the Promised Land, he gave them manna. It only lasted a day. It would rot. They couldn't store it up. It literally was daily bread, and so they had to depend on God.

"God, you gave me enough strength for yesterday, but I'm going to need strength today. And tomorrow, I'm going to come back, and I'm going to say, I need strength. This afternoon, I got a major contract. I got a major project. I've got a conflict I've got a deal with. I've got a meeting that I have to be at that's not going to be very fun. I have to do some bills. I have to organize some papers. God, I've got stuff coming up in my life. Give me this day my daily bread. I need more intelligence. This afternoon, I'm going to ask you to help me to have that." So, it represents everything you need to live.

What do I do when I list my needs at lunch? Well, you can make a list. You can make a prayer list, or while you're eating your sandwich, or your In N Out, or whatever you're eating, just go, "God, here's some stuff I really needed help with." Lunch time is a good time to do that. That's the fourth part of praying throughout the day.

What do I do? To things, write these down.

- I ask for anything I need.

You don't to be embarrassed. God, I need a new car. I want to suggest that before you go buy something, you ask God to give it to you first. Just give him a chance. He may not, but you may miss a blessing. The Bible says, "You have not because you ask not." One day you're going to get to heaven, and there are going to be warehouses up there filled with all kind of stuff, and you're going to walk into those warehouses. There'll be a tag on every item, all this cool stuff. On the tag, every tag will say the same thing: never asked for. You need a surfboard? You're a surfer? You can ask God. Is there anything that's ... No. If you're interested in it, you can ask for it. My job is to just ask. God's job is to figure out. Yes, that's a good thing. No, that's not a good thing.

I ask for anything I need. John 14:13, Jesus said, *"You can ask for anything in my name."* Circle that word anything. You have not, because you ask not. But at lunch time, I don't only list all my needs. The next thing is

- I ask for what other people need to.

Have you got a friend who needs something? You got a family member who needs something? Why don't you ask for it at lunch tomorrow? When you pray for somebody else, when you ask

on somebody else's behalf, that's called intercession. That's the technical term for it. When you pray for yourself, it's called petition. When you pray for somebody else, it's called intercession. You're interceding on their behalf. At lunch time, that's a good time to do both.

The Bible says in 1 Samuel 12:23, *"I'd be sinning against the Lord if I failed to pray for you."* Do you ever sin? Yes. Sometimes, you sin because you don't pray for people you love, and you should be. Samuel said, *"God forbid that I should stand against that by failing to pray for you."*

If I as your pastor didn't pray for you, I would be sinning. That's why I pray for you. I love you, but I also don't want to sin, because I don't just ask for me. I ask for we. I ask for us. In fact, it doesn't say, Give me my daily bread. It says give what? Us. It means you're in a family, so when you're asking God, don't just ask for yourself. Ask for other people. Give us, not just give me. It's *"Give us our daily bread."*

Look at this verse, 2 Peter 1:3. *"Jesus has the power of God, by which he gives us [notice this,] everything we need to live, and to serve God. We have these things because we know him."*

Sometimes, when you're at work, by noon, you're already stressed out because the day has not gone the way you want it to. Your boss brought in an extra load of stuff, or something didn't come in the mail or nothing is working out the right way, or the copy machine is on the fritz, or it could be anything. People are out sick, and you've got to double up. Sometimes by noon time, you're pretty stressed out.

Look at this verse on the screen. This is a good verse, you know this verse, Philippians 4:6-7, *"Do not get anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition..."* See that petition? That's what we're talking about in this one here. Petition is I'm asking God. I'm making my list. *"Don't get anxious about anything, but instead in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

If you'll do this fourth kind of praying at lunch time, your afternoon is going to go a whole lot better, and you'll have the peace that passes understanding, because you stopped for just a minute in the middle of the day, and you prayed. It doesn't have to be long, but you just stop for a minute and you pray. If you list all your needs at lunch, you're going to go back to work after lunch just a little bit more peaceful. You need to not just feed your body at lunch time. You need to feed your soul.

Now you come, you go back to work. Midafternoon, that's when you want to take a nap. You're starting to get a sluggish there. You're not real bright, but by midafternoon, I don't know about you. I'm in the people business, and so I'm dealing with people all the time. I don't know if you've noticed this, some of them are kind of goofy, some of them are frustrating. Don't look at them. Some people are disappointing. Some people hurt you intentionally and some unintentionally.

I don't know about you, but by the time I get to midafternoon, I've got a stack of bad attitudes, because of the people that I've had to listen to or deal with. And so, in the afternoon, I've got

some attitudes and some actions, and I've got some sins that have piled up by midafternoon. The fifth thing I do, write this down,

### **5. I ask for forgiveness in the afternoon.**

I ask for forgiveness in the afternoon. When I take a little prayer break in the afternoon, and I don't even tell people that I'm doing this. Sometimes, I just get up from a meeting to go to the bathroom and while I'm in the bathroom, I talk to God. In the afternoon, I just say, "Lord, is there anything in my life I need to clean out? Is there any sin?"

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

God, is there something here that I need to just admit to you? I need to confess. I don't want to carry the garbage into the rest of the day. Now, it doesn't take a long time. It's just like taking out the garbage. Taking out the garbage doesn't take a long time, but it keeps your house from stinking. If you don't take out the garbage in your soul every day, your soul starts stinking. Don't let sin stockpile in your life. In the first place, you start carrying around guilt, and that's dumb.

Now we come to the fifth statement in the Lord's Prayer, Matthew 6:12, *"Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us."*

This is the kind of prayer... remember I told you the different kinds of prayer. We've had thanksgiving or adoration, and we've had petition. We've had dedication. Now, we've got confession.

In confession, what do I do? I just own up to my own wrong reactions. I admit my sins. While I'm at it, I forgive everybody else who's sinned against me, because I certainly don't want to hold on to grudges. They hurt you more than they hurt anybody else. You don't want to be carried around by resentment.

Now, listen, read your pastor's lips right now. There is never any reason for you to walk around feeling guilty if you know the Lord. Some people actually think they're more spiritual by feeling guilty. I remember one time years ago this lady who she'd come to Saddleback, and after every service, I'd be out on the patio, and she said, "You know Pastor Rick, today, God just spoke to me." And it was always something bad. You're doing this wrong. You're doing that wrong. You're doing this wrong. You're doing that wrong.

She did this for months. Finally, one day, I said, "Ma'am, does God ever say anything nice to you?" Because my God isn't always causing me to be focused on that stuff. He knows I'm going to see it, but if you do this on a regular basis, in the afternoon, you just take out the garbage. That's *"forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us."*

Doctors say most people could leave the hospital today, except for guilt and resentment – guilt over things I have done to hurt others, resentment over what other people have done to hurt me. As a result, we regret the past, and we worry about the future, and we waste today. We crucify

ourselves on the cross of guilt and resentment. That's dumb. You're not more spiritual feeling guilty. Jesus died on the cross, so you don't have to carry guilt.

Every day, you need to take out the garbage. It might be a good idea to do it in the afternoon. *"Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us."* Here is what I do. Write this down.

- I admit my sins, and I forgive others who've frustrated me.

There is no rational reason for carrying around guilt. Just confess it. Should I ever feel guilty? Yea, for about three seconds. That's about how long it takes to admit it, and ask forgiveness. Then it's cleaned up.

Psalm 32:5, a great, great verse, *"I confessed my sins to you and didn't try to hide them... Then you forgave me, and now, all my guilt is gone!"*

I remember driving down the street one day, and I saw a sign in a service station, gas station. It was talking about a certain kind of oil. It said, "A clean engine has more power." That's true of people too. When you let sin stockpile in your life, and you have stuff that you haven't confessed to God, it just clogs up the system. You're not running on all your cylinders. A clean engine has more power. A clean soul has more resilience, and you need resilience in today's world.

In the afternoon time, that break where it's 3:00 or whatever it is in the afternoon, you just take a little time and say, "Let's do some house cleaning." God, is there any sin, any attitude, any action I just need to admit? I'll admit it to you.

Now, you're closing up your work, and you're heading home. You get in your car, and you start to head home. By the way, did you know studies have shown this – ninety percent of all arguments in the world happen one hour before dinner. Three words: low blood sugar. Cranky, cranky, cranky, and you're tired. You're hungry, and you've got low blood sugar.

You come home, and everybody takes it out on each other. The husband yells at the wife, and the wife yells at the kids, and the kid kicks the dog. The dog chases the cat. The cat bites the head off the Barbie doll. And there's a chain reaction going on. And you need to just be aware that at the end of the day when you go home, that's a prime time for you to get in argument. Knowing it, it's wise to ask for help.

So now, we come to the sixth prayer time. That's when you get home, and you just take a minute. I'll tell you what I used to do. When my kids are growing up, you know, I listened to people's problems all day. I talk to people, and I carry them. When I come home, I would pause at the door to our house. I was going to go, "I'm not taking these problems in the house, and dumping them on my wife and kids. I'm just not going to do it."

What I did is I found an old milk can at some antique store. I painted it blue, and I stuck it out there in front of the front door, and I called it my worry and problem can. Every day when I'd come home, I'd walk up, and I'd go, "Lord, you know all those problems. Half of them aren't solved yet, but I'm not taking them inside. I'm going to dump them in this can right here, and

tomorrow morning when I walk out, they'll still be there, but I'm not going to load them on my wife, and I'm not going to load them on my kids because I don't want to do that."

The sixth thing you pray in this time of day, in the late afternoon, is you

## **6. Ask God to help me make wise decisions.**

Whether you've got kids at home or not anymore, or you're living with some friends, you need to ask God to help you make wise decisions, and by the way, to protect you from making dumb decisions too. This is the sixth phrase of the Lord's Prayer. It goes like this. *"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."*

Now, I don't know about you. You're probably different. I don't know about you. My worst temptations actually come in the evening. They come from two very demonic sources, the television and the refrigerator. They're of the devil. I can stay on a diet until at least 6:00 p.m., but between 6:00 p.m. and midnight, oh brother. When you're tired, your resources are low. You're going to get in arguments. You're going to say things. You're going to hurt people unintentionally. It's a good thing to pray before you go walk back in the home, *"Lord, lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil."*

Some of you, the television is a big temptation. I'm talking about you're watching stuff you shouldn't be watching. Maybe it's your computer, and you're watching some stuff on the computer you shouldn't be watching. Before you get home, *"Lord, lead me not into temptation."*

God has given us a great promise. Look up here on the screen, 1 Corinthians 10:13, *"Remember that the temptations that come into your life are no different from what other people experience."* Now, this is a good thing. It says we all go through the same common temptations. You think you're special? You're not when it comes to temptation. You have the exact same temptations everybody else does. You have the same temptation they've had for thousands of years. Jesus had them in the same way, the same root temptation. Now, the good news is if they're common temptations, it means there are common solutions.

It says this, *"Remember that the temptations that come into your life, they're no different from what others experience."* We're all in the same boat, so don't act so high and mighty and holy, holy. We all have the same temptations. *"And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it. When you are tempted, [this is a great promise. You might memorize this.] When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you will not give into it."*

Anybody who says, "I can't help myself," was lying because God's promised, "I'll always make a way out, but you got to choose it. You've got to choose it." Say, "It was overpowering. I couldn't help myself." Yes, you could. God says, "I always make a way out for you." Now, you need to understand two very important things about temptation. It's not a sin to be tempted. Jesus was tempted. It's a sin to give into temptation.

In fact, a lot of people, when they get tempted, they go, "Oh, I shouldn't even be tempted." Where did that thought come from? I'll tell you where it came from. It came from the evil one. It came from the devil. Martin Luther said, "You can't keep the birds from flying over your head, but you can keep them from building a nest in your hair."

You can't control every idea that's put into your mind. Some comes from stuff you saw at a movie theater 20 years ago, and Satan pulls it back out. That's why you want to watch what you put in your mind. Everybody is worried about air pollution and water pollution. Are you worried about mind pollution? Some people are so open-minded their brains fall out. They just allow anything, a tractor pull through their brain with all kinds of garbage. You should worry about mind pollution more than you worry about water pollution, because your brain affects your character.

I'm saying, God says, "I'll give you a way out." By the way, if you're watching stuff that's no good for you on the internet, you might want to memorize this verse, up here on the screen, Psalm 101:3, "*I will refuse to look at anything vile and vulgar.*" Nowadays, that might mean the news. You have to worry about that. So I ask God to help me make wise decisions.

Finally, we come to the end of the day. Now, you're getting ready for beddy-bye. You're putting on your PJs, and here is the last thing you pray. You prayed when you get up. Now for the last phrase in the Lord's Prayer.

### **7. I end my day with an encouraging truth.**

Write that down. I end my day ... this is called the benediction, a good word. You end your day with a good word. It's good to read the Scripture promises. Read some promises from God. I end my day with an encouraging truth. And the Lord's Prayer ends with one of the most encouraging truths around, and it goes like this,

Matthew 6:13, "*For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever! Amen!*"

Now, let me tell you what that means. If you'll think of that verse, and you'll remember what it means, you're going to sleep a whole lot better, because what that verse says is three incredibly encouraging truths.

Number one, God is in control.

#### **1. God is in control.**

The politicians aren't. Other nations aren't. Your boss isn't. God is ultimately in control. The Bible says, "*The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord, ... and he can turn it whithersoever he wishes*" (Proverbs 21:1). If just enough people pray. That's why the world changes when God's people pray. He's waiting on us.

Sometimes we say, "God, we're waiting on you to do something." God is saying, "I'm waiting on you to pray." This is a partnership. But when I pray, "*Yours is the kingdom, and the power and*



*the glory forever! Amen!* Good night, Lord, " I'm saying, "God, number one you're in control. Second,

2. This is not the end of the story.

And third,

3. God and his family win in the end."

I've read the last chapter of the Book. God wins. God wins. So, if you go to bed, and the last thing you watch is either news or late-night TV talking about the news, you're going to go to bed depressed.

Corrie Ten Boom said it, "If you look at the world you'll be distressed, if you look within, you'll be depressed, if you look at Christ, you'll be at rest." It all depends on who you're looking at.

*"Yours is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever!"*

"God, you're in control. This is not the end of the story, and we win in the end. Good night, Lord. I'll see you in the morning." And when I wake up, it's going to be get up with gratitude, and then bless your name at breakfast. So I'm ending positive, and I'm going to start positive. You'll sleep a whole lot better.

Now, I want to encourage you to not just listen to this, but to actually try this format of using the Lord's Prayer to mark out six, seven times during the day. I'm not talking about 20 minutes a day. I'm just talking about a minute here, a minute here, five minutes here, whatever, what you've got time for. God just wants to ... He just wants to hear from you.

Now I know what you're thinking. "Rick, you don't know how busy I am." You're busier than me? I would love to compare schedules. You're busier than me? Martin Luther once said, "I have so much to do today. I must pray three hours, because I can't get it all done if I don't go pray." When you pray, God helps you. *"Seek first the kingdom of God, and all these other things will be added unto you."* God can do more in a few minutes less if you use some of that in prayer.

If you say with your excuse, "I don't have the time to pause and pray," then you're too busy. You can explain that to God when you get to heaven one day, why you were too busy to talk to him. Let me give you a promise. You need to write this down, Proverbs 10:27 on the screen. I love it in the Living Bible.

The Living Bible says, *"Reverence for God adds hours to each day."*

Hello, do you need more time? Reverence for God adds hours to each day. It's like tithing. God can make 90 percent of my money go further than 100 percent. God can make my time go further when I give part of it to him in prayer. *"Reverence for God adds hours to each day"* (Proverbs 10:27, Living Bible).

The Lord's Prayer is not just a ritual that people pray. It is a pattern for living. It is a model for how to manage your day. If you do this, you'll have more energy. You'll have more peace. You'll be closer to God. You'll have more power in your life. You'll have more confidence. If you'll do it, Jesus says, "This is the way you ought to pray. Pray throughout your day."

A hundred fifty years ago, a young Boston woman married a printer. They got married and had three kids. But Civil War ended their happiness, because Mary's husband got conscripted in the Civil War, in the Northern Army, and he died in the Battle of Antietam. Then after her husband died, her 12-year-old son drowned. Then her only daughter died. It was one calamity after another.

her grief, Mary Ann Kidder began to turn to writing hymns. If you've been in a traditional church, you've sung Mary Ann Kidder hymns, because she wrote hundreds and hundreds of them, that it would be very well known, helped millions of people. In fact, she wrote, I think, 181 hymns.

There's one that she wrote that I remember as a little kid hearing my parents singing that's called *Did You Think to Pray?* And we'll end with this.

"When you left your room this morning, did you think to pray? In the name of Christ our Savior, did you ask for loving favor as a shield today? When you met with great temptation, did you think to pray? By his dying love and merit, did you claim the Holy Spirit as your guide and stay? When your heart was filled with anger, did you think to pray? Did you plead for grace my brother that you might forgive another who had crossed your way? When strong trials came upon you, did you think to pray? As your heart was filled with sorrow, did the love of Christ you borrow at the gates today?" The refrain goes like this, "Oh, how praying rests the weary. Prayer will change your night to day, so when life seems dark and dreary, don't forget to pray."

Let's bow our heads.

What I've just taught you will change your life if you actually practice it. You'll grow closer to Christ. You'll have more energy. You'll make better decisions. You'll have less stress. You'll get better ideas at work. You'll be more productive. You'll be healthier. I could go on and on and on.

The Lord's Prayer covers every major need in your life. And if you'll use it as a model for daily schedule of checking in with God, "God, I'm checking in with you. It's mid-morning. God, I'm checking in with you. It's noon. God, I'm checking in with you. It's the afternoon."

Remember, I told you there are two ways to pray throughout your day. One is conversationally, where you just talk to him all the time. That's a good thing. But it's also a good thing to set aside specific times, and say, "These are going to be the times that I check in with you every day."

*"Our Father who art in heaven...* You're a good God and I'm going to be grateful for everything you've done. *Hallowed be your name.* Your name, Lord, tells me all the things you've promised to do in my life." Why don't you pray it right now? Say, *"Our Father in heaven,"* just say it in your mind. Say, "God, you're a good, good God. And I want to be grateful. I want to start each day with gratitude, the healthiest emotion. I don't want to start it with news. I don't want to start

it with bad news. I want to start it with the goodness of God." Then say, "Lord, I want to bless your name at breakfast. I want to learn these names of God so that I can know what you've promised to do in my life, that you're my healer. You're always present. You will give me power. You're my forgiver, all of the things that you've promised by your names. And I want to bless your name."

*"Your kingdom come, Lord. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.* I want to seek first your kingdom. God, I want your plans and purposes for the world and for my life to be number one. I don't want to be in cross purposes with you. I want to seek first your purpose, believing that everything else I need, you're going to take care of. Lord, every day, I want to say *give me this day our daily bread*, just enough to get me through today. Give me strength for today. Give me wisdom for today. Give me the finances I need for today. I want to make a list at lunch time as I eat my sandwich, that you would give me more than that, but inner food, soul food.

Lord, I want to ask you to *forgive me of all my sins as I forgive those who've sinned against me*. Remove guilt and shame, and resentment, and bitterness from my life. I can't waste energy on those energy drainers. Lord, there's some things in my life that you know I'm tempted by, and I'm not very good at handling on my own, and I'm asking you to *lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*.

I want to ask you to help me make wise decisions, and not impulsive ones, and not dumb decisions. *Deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever.* Lord, when I'm down, when I'm depressed, when I feel overwhelmed, when I feel discouraged, help me remember that you're in charge. You're in control. You're still on the throne, but this is not the end of the story. There is more to life than here and now, and that ultimately, we win.

When the world outside looks darker, and darker, and dimmer, and dimmer, help me to realize that you hold the keys to the future, and that because I'm on your side, and I'm in your family, ultimately, it will all work out. If you've never opened your life to Jesus Christ, say, "Jesus Christ, come into my life right now. Change me. Save me. I want to get to know you. And I humbly ask this, in your name, amen."