

Committed to Christ: Essential Practices of a Disciple

A Life Lived in Prayer

The first practice of a passionate follower of Jesus Christ is a life lived in prayer. A praying disciple recognizes that prayer engages the transforming power of God. A praying disciple prays in the confidence of God's promises—those fulfilled and those yet to come understanding prayer is a powerful force. And lastly, for a praying disciple, prayer is not reserved for a particular time or place but is a way of life. Following are seven ways for a disciple to grow deeper in their prayer life (1).

1) **Keep a daily appointment with God.**

Have a special notebook and pen handy and find a quiet place and time reserved for prayer. Turn off any noise makers—T.V., phone (cell or other), radio, etc.). Read a few verses of Scripture and then pray.

2) **Thank God for three specific blessings in your life.**

Don't just say, "For all your blessings, I am grateful." Name them. Thank God for the child who hugged your neck when you came home from work. Be specific and pray thanking God.

3) **Confess one specific failing or sin.**

If a failing, ask God to change you to be the person he intended you to be. If a sin, ask God to forgive you with a truly repentant heart. We have the assurance of God's word that if we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (I John 1:9) Remember God's Sanctifying Grace. The only sin God cannot forgive is the one which is not confessed.

4) **Pray for at least three other persons.**

Each week we pass out with Sunday morning worship bulletins a prayer list of those sharing the joys of their lives as well as those in need of prayer as they face the inevitable storms of life that come our way. You can use that as a starting point but don't stop there. Pray for teachers, police, firemen, volunteers, missionaries.... Well, you get the point. Pray for at least three people each day.

5) **Share with God one of your own personal needs and write it down.**

6) **Ask God to fully release the power of the Holy Spirit in you for the next twenty-four hours.**

This tip for powerful prayer is your seeking God's wisdom and power to be an effective disciple. The moment you professed Jesus as your Lord and Savior, the Holy Spirit took up residence in your heart and mind. However, if you are not intentional about seeking his power and wisdom, he will not force those precious gifts upon you. Remember the Lord's promise, "If you then, though you are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him." (Luke 11:13)

7) **Pray for Christ Holy Church and the United Methodist Church.**

We are neither smart enough nor righteous enough to guide the church. But, the Lord will if we ask.

1) Bouknight, William R. "Practical Tips for Powerful Prayer," www.sermons.com, 2015