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Spiritual Disciplines: Prayer

Praying Through Scripture

Sometimes we are stuck and simply do not know what to pray for. A great solution is to pray through a passage in the Bible. Also, praying through the truths of the Bible help us to know that we are praying the mind of God. As we pray through scripture, God has the opportunity to shape our thoughts to match His thoughts.

The Psalms are a very rich source of scripture for use in prayer. Any significant passage that contains a prayer is also a good source for praying scripture. Occasionally, praying through a doctrinal passage in the New Testament letters can be helpful to internalize truth to your life.

Praying through scripture can take two simple forms:

1. *Directly praying the words of the Bible.*

This option simply takes the words in the Bible passage and slowly read and meditate on them as you pray them to God.

2. *Using the words of the Bible as a catalyst to expand and shape your prayers.*

In this option, you read a phrase, verse or short passage, meditate on it, and pray the thought back to God in your own words. Often, God may bring a thought to mind that applies the particular truth to your current circumstances, which allows you then to pray for that circumstance.

An example of the second form, from *Psalm 25:1-3* (ESV):

This is only a sample. I do not suggest praying through only a few verses. Often, if we limit ourselves to a few verses, we will miss a truth that God has for us in response to our situation. When we pray through a larger passage, we may begin with a prayer from our perspective of our circumstances, but God may shift our view to where He wants us to be.

“To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.”

Lord, God, I take this moment to step back from my life and focus on you. I worship you in this moment. I honor you because you are my salvation and the keeper of my soul. I lay myself before you, for you are my God.

“O my God, in you I trust; let me not be put to shame; let not my enemies exult over me.”

God, I can't make it on my own. I trust in you. Anything that happens to me reflects on you. I believe that you have promised to take care of me. If you do not, it is your name on the line. I pray that you would protect me from those that want to harm me. God, do not give them an opportunity to laugh at me on your account.

“Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame; they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.”

There is your promise, God. You will protect me. Protect me in this time of distress. Please give me the strength to wait for you. If I wait for you, you will not allow my enemies to laugh at me. Keep me from getting ahead of you in this situation. Do not allow me to be careless about my faith. Do not allow me to move forward without carefully considering your heart. I know you will protect me when I am doing your will in your time. Please keep me on the right path and at the right time, so that you can demonstrate your care and concern for me without me being ashamed.

And so on . . .