

*Discovering
Spiritual
Maturity*

C.L.A.S.S. 201

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WELCOME TO DISCOVERING SPIRITUAL MATURITY

We're glad you signed up! This class is the second of RHBC's three basic classes.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS CLASS:

"... that you may **become mature** Christians and may fulfill God's will for you."
Col. 4:12b (Ph)

"We are not meant to remain as children ... but to grow up in every way into Christ..." Eph. 4:14-15
(Ph)

THE FOCUS OF THIS CLASS:

We will focus on the **Four Basic Habits** every Christian needs to develop in order to grow to spiritual maturity. This class will ...

- Equip you with the **skills** you need to begin these habits
- Explain the **tools** you need to continue these habits.

WHAT IS "SPIRITUAL MATURITY"?

"...In the unity of common faith, and knowledge of the Son of God, we arrive at real maturity - the measure of development which is meant by 'the fullness of Christ.'" Eph 4:13(Ph)

Spiritual Maturity is BEING LIKE CHRIST

"For from the very beginning God decided that those who came to him ... **should become like his Son...**"
Rom.8:29(LB)

FACTS ABOUT SPIRITUAL MATURITY

1. IT'S NOT AUTOMATIC

"You have been Christians for a long time now, and you ought to be teaching others, but instead ... you need someone to teach you ... When a person is still living on milk, it shows he isn't very far along in the Christian life ... He's still a baby Christian!" Heb. 5:12-13 (LB)

2. IT IS A PROCESS

"**Learn to be mature.**" Prov. 8:5 (GN)

"**Continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our savior Jesus Christ.**" 2 Peter 3:18 (GN)

3. IT TAKES DISCIPLINE

*"Take **the time and the trouble** to keep yourself spiritually fit." 1Tim. 4:7b (Ph)*

*"**Discipline** yourself for the purpose of godliness."(NASB)*

UNDERSTANDING DISCIPLESHIP

1. Mature believers are called ___ **DISCIPLES** _____
2. I cannot be a disciple without being ___ **DISCIPLINES** _____
3. The more disciplined I become ___ **THE MORE GOD CAN USE ME** _____
4. The mark of a disciple is ___ **CROSS BEARING** _____

(Jesus) *"Anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple." Luke 14:27*

5. How often am I to do this? ___ **DAILY** _____

(Jesus) *"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross **daily**, and follow me."*
Luke 9:23

6. What is involved in "cross bearing"?

___ **WHATEVER IT TAKES** ___ to give Christ first place in my life!

FOUR HABITS OF A DISCIPLE

HOW CAN I BECOME A DISCIPLE? Develop ___ **DISCIPLINE HABITS** _____

*"... You have **put off the old self** with its **HABITS**, and have put on the new self... which God is continually renewing in his own image, to bring you to a full knowledge of himself." Col. 3:9-10*

1. TIME WITH GOD'S WORD

*"If you **continue in my Word**, then you are my disciples indeed. And you will know the truth and the truth will set you free."* John 8:31-32

2. PRAYER

*"If you remain in me, and my words remain in you, then you will **ask for anything you wish**, and you shall have it ... in this way you become my disciples."* John 15:7-8 (GN)

3. FELLOWSHIP

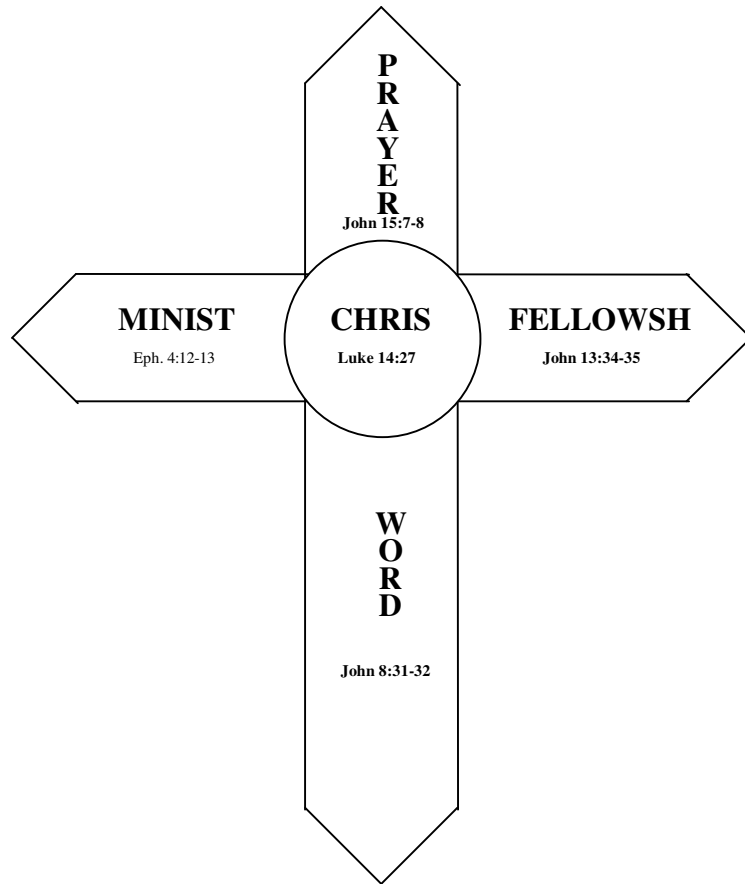
*"Love each other just as much as I love you. Your **strong love for each other** will prove to the world that you are my disciples."*

John 13:34-35 (LB)

4. **MINISTRY**

“...to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up... and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the stature of Christ.”

Ephesians 4:12-13



DEFINITIONS OF "HABIT": (Webster's II Dictionary)

"A continual, often unconscious inclination to do a certain activity, acquired through frequent repetition."

"An established disposition of the character."

"Sow a thought, reap an act.

Sow an act, reap a habit.

Sow a habit, reap a character.

Sow a character, reap a destiny."

"A customary practice"

THE GOAL OF THIS CLASS

That I will __COMMIT_____ to the habits necessary for spiritual maturity.

"In the past you voluntarily gave your bodies to the service of vice and ... the purposes of evil. So now give yourselves to the service of righteousness - for the purpose of becoming truly good."

Rom.6:19 (Ph)

HOW TO GET A “GRASP” ON YOUR BIBLE

"The whole Bible was given to us by inspiration from God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives; it straightens us out and helps us do what is right. It is God's way of making us well prepared at every point, fully equipped to do good to everyone."

2 Tim 3:16-17 (LB)

SIX WAYS TO GET A “GRASP” ON YOUR BIBLE

The Hand Illustration

On this page trace an outline of your own hand!

I. HOW TO HEAR GOD'S WORD

*"Faith comes from **hearing** the Word of God."* Rom. 10:17

Ways to Hear God's Word

- The Bible on tape
- Church services & studies
- Sermon tapes
- Radio/TV teachers

PROBLEM: We forget 95 % of what we hear after 72 hours.

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR HEARING

1. Be ready and eager to hear God.

(Jesus) *"He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"* Luke 8:8

"How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" Psalm 119:103

2. Deal with attitudes that prevent hearing God (Luke 8:4-15)

"Consider carefully how you listen ..." Luke 8:18

- **A Closed Mind:** Is fear, pride or bitterness preventing me from hearing God?
- **A Superficial Mind:** Am I really serious about wanting to hear God speak?
- **A Preoccupied Mind:** Am I too busy and concerned with other things to concentrate on what God has to say?

3. Confess any sin in your life.

*"... **Get rid of** all moral filth and humbly accept the Word..."*
James 1:21

4. Take notes on what you hear.

*"We must pay more **careful attention** to what we've heard, so that we do not drift away!"* Heb. 2:1

Keep a Spiritual Notebook

5. Act on what you hear!

"Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says!" James 1:22

"Whoever ... does not simply listen and then forget, but puts it into practice - that person will be blessed in what he does."

James 1:25 (GN)

II. HOW TO READ GOD'S WORD

"Happy is the one who reads this book ... and obeys what is written in it!" Rev. 1:3 (GN)

How often should I read God's Word? DAILY

"(The Scriptures) shall be his constant companion. He must read from it everyday of his life so that he will learn to respect the Lord his God by obeying all of his commands." Deut. 17:19 (LB)

SUGGESTIONS

Read it systematically.

Bible without notes.

Read it in different translations.

For reading: Good News, Living Bible, Phillips

Read it aloud quietly to yourself.

Underline or color code key verses.

Choose a reading plan and stick with it.

If I read approximately 15 minutes a day, I can read through the Bible once a year.

**A BIBLE READING PLAN
THROUGH THE NEW TESTAMENT IN 30 DAYS**

1. Matthew 1-9
2. Matthew 10-15
3. Matthew 16-22
4. Matthew 23-28
5. Mark 1-8
6. Mark 9-16
7. Luke 1-6
8. Luke 7-11
9. Luke 12-18
10. Luke 19-24
11. John 1-7
12. John 8-13
13. John 14-22
14. Acts 1-7
15. Acts 8-14
16. Acts 15-21
17. Acts 22-28
18. Romans 1-8
19. Romans 9-16
20. 1 Corinthians 1-9
21. 1 Corinthians 10-16
22. 2 Corinthians 1-13
23. Galatians - Ephesians
24. Philippians - 2 Thessalonians
25. 1 Timothy - Philemon
26. Hebrews
27. James - 2 Peter
28. 1 John - 3 John
29. Revelation 1-11
30. Revelation 12-22

III. HOW TO STUDY GOD'S WORD

"... they accepted the message eagerly and **studied the Scriptures** everyday ..." Acts 17:11 (Ph)

"Be a good workman ... **Know what His Word** says and means." 2 Tim. 2:15

The difference between reading and studying the Bible is that you _____TAKE NOTES_____ when you study.

The secret of effective Bible study is knowing how to _____ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS_____.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES FOR BIBLE STUDY

"Dynamic Bible Study Methods" By Rick Warren (Victor Books)

12 different methods are explained in simple step-by step instructions. (Tapes are also available)

Study Bibles:

- The Best Personal Study Bible:
"The Life Application Bible" (Tyndale)
- The Best Topical Study Bible:
"Thompson Chain Reference Bible - NIV (Kirkbride)
- The Best Background Study Bible:
"The NIV Study Bible" (Zondervan)
- The Best Doctrine Study Bible:
"The Disciples Study Bible" (Holman)

Bible Handbooks:

- **"Richard's Complete Handbook" (Word)**
- **"Haley's Bible Handbook" (Zondervan)**
- **"Eerdman's Bible Handbook" (Eerdmans)**

Other Important Study Tools:

**As many different translations as you can afford
(These can be purchased in parallel editions)**

A complete concordance to match your translation

A Bible on computer program such a "WordSearch" or "PCBible"

- "The New Bible Dictionary" (Eerdmans)
- "The Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible" (Baker)
- "The New Bible Commentary" (Eerdmans)
- "The Moody Atlas of Bible Lands" (Moody)

IV. HOW TO MEMORIZE GOD'S WORD

"Guard my words as your most precious possession. Write them down, and also keep them deep within your heart." Pr. 7:2-3 (LB)

BENEFITS OF MEMORIZING SCRIPTURE

1. It helps me resist temptation.

"I have hidden your Word in my heart that I might not sin against you." Ps. 119:11

2. It helps me make wise decisions.

"Your Word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path. Ps. 119:105

3. It strengthens me when I'm under stress.

"... Your promises to me are my hope. They give me strength in all my troubles; how they refresh and revive me!" Ps. 119:49 (LB)

4. It comforts me when I'm sad.

"Your words are what sustain me ... They bring joy to my sorrowing heart and delight me." Jer. 15:16 (LB)

5. It helps me witness to unbelievers.

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." 1 Peter 3:15

WHEN TO MEMORIZE A VERSE

- During your Quiet Time
- While Exercising
- While waiting (spare moments)
- At bedtime (Ps 63:6)

HOW TO MEMORIZE A VERSE

1. Pick a verse that speaks to you.
2. Say the reference **before and after** the verse.
3. Read the verse aloud many times. Record it!
4. Break the verse into natural phrases.
5. Emphasize key words when quoting the verse.
6. Write down the verse and erase a word one at a time.
7. Write out the verse on a flash card.
8. Carry some cards with you at all times for review.
9. Display your verses in prominent places.
10. Always memorize the verse word perfect.
11. Put the verse to music. Write a song!
12. Get a partner so you can check each other.

Suggested beginning rate: 2 new verses a week.

THREE KEYS TO MEMORIZING: ___REVIEW_____,
___REVIEW_____, ___REVIEW_____.

We remember what is _____IMPORTANT TO US_____.

“Your teachings are worth more to me than thousands of pieces of gold and silver.” Psa 119:72 (NCV)

SCRIPTURE MEMORY COURSE

The following verses suggest a "balance" in Scripture Memory. The verses selected are key verses in understanding the foundations of the Christian Life and Christian Growth. Do not feel tied-down to this suggested list. This is only a tool to lead you in an understanding of the importance of memorizing "key" verses.

Live the New Life:

Christ the Center	II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 2:20
Obedience to Christ	Rom. 12:1; John 14:21
The Word	II Tim. 3:16; Josh. 1:8
Prayer	John 15:7; Phil. 4:6-7
Fellowship	Matt. 18:20; Heb. 10:24
Witnessing	Matt. 4:19; Rom. 1:16

Proclaim Christ:

All Have Sinned	Rom. 3:23; Isa. 53:6
Sin's Penalty	Rom. 6:23; Heb. 9:27
Christ Paid the Penalty	Rom. 5:8; I Peter 3:18
Salvation Not by Works	Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5
Must Receive Christ	John 1:12; Rev. 3:20
Assurance of Salvation	I John 5:13; John 5:24

Rely on God's Resources:

His Spirit	I Cor. 3:16; I Cor. 2:12
His Strength	Isa. 41:10; Phil. 4:13
His Faithfulness	Lam. 3:22; Num. 23:19
His Peace	Isa. 26:3; I Peter 5:7
His Provision	Rom. 8:32; Phil 4:19
His Help in Temptation	Heb. 2:18; Ps. 119:9, 11

Be Christ's Disciple:

Put Christ First	Matt. 6:33; Luke 9:23
Separate from the World	I Jn. 2:15-16; Rom. 12:2
Be Steadfast	I Cor. 15:58; Heb. 12:3
Serve Others	Mark 10:45; II Cor. 4:5
Give Generously	Prv. 3:9-10; II Cor. 9:6-7
Develop World Vision	Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:19-20

Grow in Christ likeness:

Love	John 13:34-35; I Jn. 3:18
Humility	Phil. 2:3-4; I Peter 5:5-6
Purity	Eph. 5:3; I Peter 2:11
Honesty	Lev. 19:11; Acts 24:16
Faith	Heb. 11:6; Rom. 4:20-21
Good Works	Gal. 6:9-10; Matt. 5:16

V. HOW TO MEDITATE ON GOD'S WORD

*"(Those) who are always **meditating** on His Laws ... are like trees along a river bank bearing fruit ... they never wither and whatever they do prospers."*

Ps. 1:2-3 (LB)

Meditation is ____FOCUSED THINKING____ about a Bible verse in order to discover how I can apply its truth to my own life.

WHY MEDITATE ON SCRIPTURE?

1. It is the key to becoming like Christ.

"... *Your life is shaped by your thoughts.*" Pr. 4:23 (GN)

"... *Be transformed by the **renewing** of your mind.*" Rom. 12:2

"As we ... **contemplate** the Lord's glory, we are being transformed into His likeness ..." 1 Cor. 3:18

2. It is the key to answered prayer.

"If you live your life in Me, and my words live in your hearts, **you can ask for whatever you like, and it will come true for you.**" John 15:7 (Ph)

3. It is the key to successful living.

"... *Meditate on (the Word) day and night, so you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.*" Joshua 1:8

SIX WAYS TO MEDITATE ON A VERSE

1. **Picture it!** Visualize the scene in your mind.
2. **Pronounce it!** Say the verse aloud, each time emphasizing a different word.
3. **Paraphrase it!** Rewrite the verse in your own words.
4. **Personalize it!** Replace the pronouns or people in the verse with your own name.
5. **Pray it!** Turn the verse into a prayer and say it back to God.
6. **Probe it!** Ask the following nine questions:

S.P.A.C.E.P.E.T.S. Questions

Is there any ...

SIN TO CONFESS?

PROMISE TO CLAIM?

ATTITUDE TO CHANGE?

COMMAND TO KEEP?

EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW?

PRAYER TO PRAY?

ERROR TO AVOID?

TRUTH TO BELIEVE?

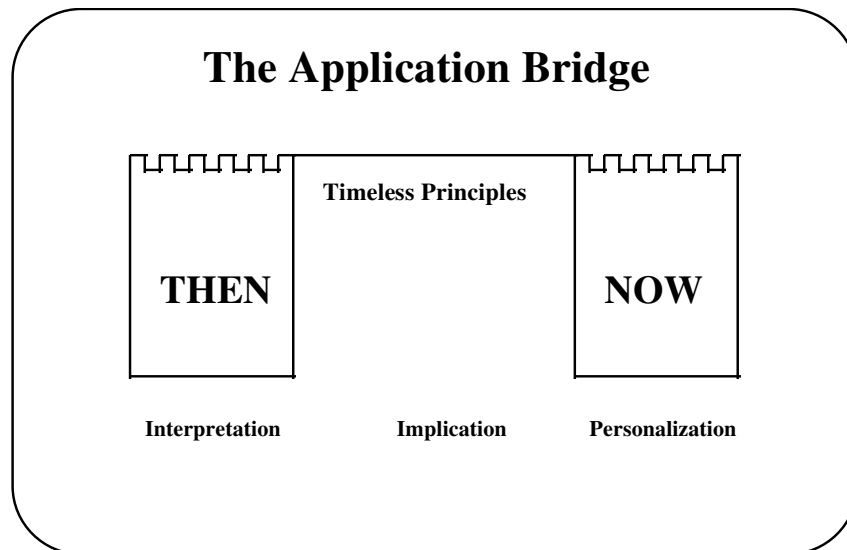
SOMETHING TO THANK GOD FOR?

VI. HOW TO APPLY GOD'S WORD

"Do not fool yourselves by just listening to the Word. Instead, put it into practice."
James 1:22

"... Whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven."
Matt. 5:19

HOW TO APPLY SCRIPTURE



1st ask: What did it mean to the original hearers?

2nd ask: What is the underlying timeless principle?

3rd ask: Where or how could I practice that principle?

Write out a sentence that describes a project or action you will take to apply the truth.

4 Marks of A Good Application Project

- 1. It's PERSONAL**
- 2. It's PRACTICAL**
- 3. It's POSSIBLE**
- 4. It's PROVABLE**

*"Now that you know these things - **do them!** That is the path of blessing!" John 13:17 (LB)*

THE HABIT OF A DAILY TIME WITH GOD

"The one who looks steadily at God's perfect law ... and makes that law his HABIT - not listening and then forgetting, but actively putting it into practice will be happy in all that he does."

James 1:25 (Ph)

HOW TO HAVE A QUIET TIME

DEFINITION: "A quiet time is a daily time I set aside to be alone with God to get to know Him through the Bible and prayer."

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF A DAILY QUIET TIME

Your time alone with God should be the top priority in your schedule for five reasons:

1. We were ___CREATED_____ to have fellowship with God.

"So God created man in his own image ..." Gen. 1:27, 2:7, 3:8

"Look! I've been standing at the door and constantly knocking. If anyone ... opens the door, I will come in and fellowship with him and he with me." Rev. 3:20 (LB)

2. Jesus ___DIED_____ to make a relationship to God possible.

"God ... has invited you into this wonderful friendship with his Son, Christ our Lord." 1 Cor. 1:9 (LB)

3. Personal time alone with God was Jesus' ___SOURCE OF STRENGTH___

Mark 1:35, Luke 22:39, Luke 5:16

*"Jesus **often** withdrew to lonely places and prayed."*

4. Every person who has been effective in ___SERVICE___ for God developed this habit.

Abraham, Moses, David, Daniel, Paul, etc.

5. You cannot be a ___HEALTHY_____ Christian without it!

"Man cannot live on bread alone but on every word that God speaks." Matt. 4:4 (GN)

"... I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." Job 23:12 (NAS)

"How can a young man cleanse his way? By keeping to your Word." Ps. 119:9 (Mof)

II. THE PURPOSE OF A DAILY QUIET TIME

1. TO GIVE ___DEVOTION_____ TO GOD.

"Give to the Lord the glory due to his name. Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness."
Ps. 29:2

*"(Hezekiah) was successful, because everything he did ... he did in **a spirit of complete devotion** to his God." 2 Ch. 31:21 (GN)*

God deserves our devotion! (Rev. 4:11)

God desires our devotion! (John 4:23)

2. TO GET ___DIRECTION_____ FROM GOD.

"Show me the path where I should go, O Lord; point out the right road for me to walk. Lead me ..." Ps. 25:4 (LB)

2 Things To Do In A Quiet Time

Consider your way: *"Ponder the path of your feet and let all your ways be established."* Pr. 4:26 (KJV)

"In all your ways acknowledge Him, and he will direct your paths." Pr. 3:6 (KJV)

Commit your day: *"Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him to help you do it and he will."*
Ps. 37:5 (LB)

3. TO GAIN ___DELIGHT_____ IN GOD.

"Delight yourself in the Lord; and he will give you the desires of your heart." Ps. 37:4 (KJV)

"... (God's) presence fills me with joy and brings me pleasure." Ps. 16:11 (GN)

FACT: The better I get to know Christ, the more ___I LOVE HIM_____.

*The objective of your Quiet Time is not to study **about** Christ, but to actually spend time with him!*

4. TO GROW _____MORE_____ LIKE GOD.

"Jesus has the power of God, by which he has given us everything we need to live and to serve God. We have these things because we know him.... With these gifts you can share in being like God" 2 Pet 1:4 (NCV)

*"When the council saw the boldness of Peter and John ... they were amazed and realized **what being with Jesus had done for them!**" Acts 4:13 (LB)*

HOW TO BEGIN A DAILY QUIET TIME

1. SELECT A SPECIFIC TIME.

The best time to have a quiet time is when I am AT MY BEST_____!

Reasons for considering a early morning quiet time:

1. **The example of Bible character.**
(Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Hannah, Job, Hezekiah, David, Daniel, Jesus.)
2. **It seems logical to begin the day with it.**
” The best time to tune your instrument is before you play the concert, not after!”
3. **It demonstrates that meeting with God is your first priority. You give him the first part of your day!**
4. **You are likely to be more rested, your mind is less cluttered, and it’s often the quietist time!**

Whatever time you set, BE CONSISTENT_____.

HOW LONG SHOULD A QUIET TIME BE:

3 Guidelines

Start with 15 minutes and let it grow.
Don't watch the clock!
Emphasize quality, not quantity!

2. CHOOSE A SPECIAL PLACE.

"Jesus left the city and went, as he usually did, to the Mount of Olives ... to pray." Luke 22:39
(GN)

The Important Factor:

*"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went to a **solitary place**, where he prayed."* Mark 1:35

3. GATHER THE RESOURCES YOU'LL NEED.

1. A Bible - with readable print.
2. A Notebook - to write down what the Lord speaks to you about, and to keep your prayer list.
3. A Songbook - if you want to sing.

4. BEGIN WITH THE RIGHT ATTITUDES

_____ **REVERENCE** _____

"Be still, and know that I am God." Ps. 46:10

_____ **EXPECTANCY** _____

"Open my eyes to see wonderful things in your Word." Ps. 119:18 (LB)

_____ **OBEDIENCE** _____

"The thing you should want most is God's kingdom and doing what God wants" Mat 6:33 (NCV)

5. FOLLOW A SIMPLE PLAN

"FIFTEEN MINUTES WITH GOD"

(A Plan To Get You Started)

1. _____ **RELAX** _____. (1 Minute)

Be still and quiet! Slow down! Prepare your heart. Take a few deep breaths and wait on God.

2. _____ **READ A VERSE** _____. (4 Minutes)

See the section on "How To Read God's Word".

Begin reading where you left off the day before. Read until you feel God has told you something. Then stop and think about it.

3. _____ **REFLECT ON THE VERSE** _____. (4 Minutes)

See the section on "How To Meditate on God's Word".

You may use the S.P.A.C.E.P.E.T.S. or any of the 6 methods of meditation. Think about what the passage means to your life. Write down your thoughts. Part of reflecting is *memorizing* verses that speak to you in a special way.

See the section on: "How To Memorize God's Word".

4. _____ **RECORD WHAT GOD DID** _____. (2 Minutes)

See the section on "How To Apply God's Word".

Write out a personal application statement that is practical, passable, and measurable.

"Thoughts disentangle themselves when they pass through the lips and the fingertips."

5. _____ **REQUEST** _____. (4 Minutes)

See the section on "The Habit of Prayer". Conclude our Quiet Time by talking to God about what He has shown you and making your requests from our prayer list.

III. HOW TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS WITH YOUR QUIET TIME

1. THE PROBLEM OF DISCIPLINE

Your first problem in establishing a quiet time will face you the moment you wake each morning: Am I going to get out of bed? (*"The Battle of the Blankets"*)

Suggestions

1. Go to bed _____ ON TIME _____.
2. Get up _____ IMMEDIATELY _____.
3. Be aware of quiet time ___ ROBBERS _____.
4. Fall asleep thinking __ SPIRITUAL THOUGHTS _____.

2. THE PROBLEM OF DISTRACTIONS

Satan will try to use anything to get your mind to wander during a quiet time.

Suggestions

- Get out of _____ BED _____.
- Get thoroughly _____ AWAKE _____.
- Read and pray _____ ALOUD _____.
- _____ WALK _____ during your prayer time.
- Keep a _____ JOURNAL _____.

3. THE PROBLEM OF DRYNESS

Sometimes you will feel like you're not getting anything out of your quiet time. (*"The Battle of the Blahs"*)

Never judge your quiet time by your _____ FEELINGS _____.

Possible Causes of Spiritual Dryness

1. Your physical condition.
2. Disobedience to God.
3. Rushing your quiet time.
4. Getting in a rut.
5. Not sharing insights with others.

THE HABIT OF PRAYER

Talking with God

"Base your happiness on your hope in Christ. When trials come, endure them patiently; steadfastly maintain THE HABIT OF PRAYER."

Rom. 12:12 (Ph)

HOW TO REVITALIZE YOUR PRAYER LIFE

I. APPROACH PRAYER WITH THE RIGHT ATTITUDE.

(Matthew 6:5-8)

•BE REAL

"When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men." (vs. 5)

Don't try to IMPRESS GOD

Don't try to IMPRESS OTHERS

•BE RELAXED

"But when you pray go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." (vs. 6)

•BE REVEALING

"Don't recite the same prayer over and over as the heathen do, who think prayers are answered only be repeating them again and again. Remember, you Father knows exactly what you need before you ask Him! (vs. 7-8 LB)

II. USE THE MODEL JESUS GAVE US

Matt. 6:9-15 "This, then, is **HOW** you should pray ..."

THE SIX PARTS OF PRAYER

1. PRAISE: I BEGIN BY EXPRESSING LOVE TO GOD

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name .."

TWO KINDS OF PRAISE:

- "ADORATION" - Praising God for *who he is*.
- "THANKSGIVING" - Praising God for *what he has done*.

"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise. Be **thankful** unto him, and **ble**ss his name." Ps. 100:4

HOW TO PRAISE GOD:

1st: As you read your Bible, make a list of God's character qualities that you discover and then review them when you pray. (See *Prayer Guide 1*)

Examples:

God is patient	Num. 14:18
God is merciful	Num. 14:18
God is forgiving	Num. 14:18
God knows everything	1 Sam. 2:2
God is loving	1 John 4:8

**KEY: ___GOD'S CHARACTER___ is the basis for our boldness in making requests in prayer.
God answers the prayers that acknowledge who he is!**

2nd: Remind yourself and affirm the promises God has made that are contained in the meaning of his names. (See *Prayer Guide 2*)

3rd: Make a list of all that you are thankful for and review them when you pray. (See *Prayer Guide 3*)

2. PURPOSE: I COMMIT MYSELF ___ TO DOING GOD'S WILL_____

"Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven ..."

Pray for God's will to be done ... in my family ... my church ... my ministry ... my job ... my future ... my city ... the nation ... the world.

"Offer yourself as a living sacrifice to God, dedicated to his Service and pleasing to him. This is the true worship that you should offer." Rom. 12:2 (GN)

3. PROVISION: I ASK GOD TO _____ PROVIDE MY DAILY NEEDS _____

*"Give us today our **daily** bread ..."*

What needs can I pray about? ___ALL OF THEM!_____

*"God will supply **all** your needs from his riches in glory because of what Christ Jesus has done for us."* Phil. 4:19 (LB)

"Since God did not spare even his own Son for us but gave him up for us, won't he also surely give us everything else?" Rom. 8:32

"You do not have ... because you don't ask God!" James 4:2

THE KEY: ___BE SPECIFIC_____

Write down your requests, with a promise you are claiming from the Bible, and expect an answer!
(See *Prayer Guide 4*)

"Don't worry about anything, but in everything, by pray and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." Phil. 4:6

4. PARDON: I ASK GOD TO FORGIVE MY SINS

"Forgive us our debts ..."

4 Steps to Forgiveness

1. Ask the Holy Spirit REVEAL every sin

"Examine me, O God, and know my mind; test me, and discover my thoughts. Find out if there is any evil in me".
Ps. 139:23-24

2. Confess each sin SPECIFICALLY.

"You will never succeed in life if you try to hide your sins. Confess them and give them up; then God will show mercy to you." Prov. 28:13 (GN)

3. Make RESTITUTION to others when necessary.

"When you remember your brother has something against you ... go at once to make peace with him, then come back and offer your gift to God. Matt. 5:23-24 (GN)

4. By Faith, ACCEPT God's Forgiveness.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins, and purify us from all unrighteousness."
1 John 1:9

5. PEOPLE: I PRAY FOR OTHER PEOPLE

"... as we have also forgive our debtors."

"Pray much for others; plead for God's mercy upon them; give thanks for all he is going to do for them."
1 Tim. 2:1 (LB)

If you want to know how to pray for others ...

Eph. 1:15-19, Col. 1:3-12, 1 Th. 1:2-3, 2 Th. 1:11-12

Make a prayer list of people you want to pray for. You might pray for different people on different days of the week. (See Prayer Guide #5)

6. PROTECTION: I ASK FOR SPIRITUAL PROTECTION

"And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one."
(vs. 13)

Believers face a spiritual battle everyday. Satan wants to defeat you through temptation and fear. By praying for protection, you will have the confidence to face every situation during the day.

"The Spirit who is in you is more powerful than the spirit who is in those who belong to the world."
1 John 4:4 (GN)

PRAYER GUIDE 1
CHARACTER TRAITS OF GOD

Faithful	II Cor. 1:20
Righteous	II Tim. 4:8
The Light	John 8:12

PRAYER GUIDE 2 THE NAMES OF GOD

Did you know that God has several names? They are all in the Bible and each name describes a facet of his character. You can take each of these 8 names and focus individually on what God is really like! Pray the names of God as affirmations of praise!

8 HEBREW NAMES OF GOD - DECLARE WHO GOD IS

Jehovah-Shammah- "God is Present with me" (Ezekial 48:35)
You are here! I am never alone!

Jehovah-Rohi- "God is my Shepherd" (Psalm 23:1)
You lead me and feed me and protect me!

Jehovah-Jireh- "God is my Provider" (Gen. 22:14)
You see what I need before I even ask!

Jehovah-Rophe- "God is my Healer" (Exodus 15:26)
You can heal my body, emotions, and relationships!

Jehovah-Tsidkenu- "God is my Righteousness" (Jer. 23:6)
You accept me and forgive me because of Jesus!

Jehovah-M'Kiddish- "God is my Sanctification" (Lev. 20:8)
You make me holy and like Jesus!

Jehovah-Shalom- "God is my Peace" (Judges 6:24)
You give me peace in spite of circumstances!

Jehovah-Nissi- "God is my Banner" (Exodus 17:15)
You are my victory in conflict and confrontation!

Think on the implications of these names and you'll have plenty to praise God for!

PRAYER GUIDE 4
MY PERSONAL REQUESTS

Date	Request	Promise	Date Answered
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PRAYER GUIDE 5
PEOPLE I'M PRAYING FOR

Family _____

Christian Friends _____

Friends I'd like to see become Christians _____

Spiritual Leaders _____

Government Leaders _____

Others _____

THE HABIT OF TITHING

Honoring God With My Giving

"On the first day of each week, set aside some of what you have earned and give it as an offering. The amount depends on how much the Lord has helped you earn."

1 Cor. 16:2 (LB)

HOW MY GIVING REVEALS MY SPIRITUAL MATURITY

"Just as you excel in everything else... in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness... see that you also excel in the grace of giving." 2 Cor. 8:7

WHY GOD WANTS ME TO GIVE

7 Benefits to My Life

1. GIVING MAKES ME _____ LIKE GOD _____

God so loved the world that He gave his only Son ..." John 3:16

2. GIVING DRAWS ME _____ CLOSER TO GOD _____

"Where your treasure is, there your heart is also." Matt.6:21

3. GIVING IS THE ANTIDOTE TO ___ MATERIALISM _____

"Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to be generous and willing to share. In this way they may take hold of the life that is truly Life!" 1Tim. 6:17-19

4. GIVING STRENGTHENS ___ MY FAITH _____

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. Honor the Lord by giving him the first part of your income, and he will fill your barns to overflowing." Prov.3:5,9

"Give and it will be given to you ... For with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you."
Luke 6:38

5. GIVING IS AN INVESTMENT _____ IN ETERNITY _____

"... Give happily to those in need, and always be ready to share whatever God has given you. By doing this, you will be storing up real treasure for yourselves in heaven - it is the only safe investment for eternity." 1 Tim 6:18-19 (LB)

6. GIVING BLESSES ME _____ IN RETURN _____

"A generous man himself will be blessed." Prov. 22:9

"A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed." Prov.11:25

"Good will come to him who is generous ..." Ps. 112:5

7. GIVING _____ MAKES ME HAPPY _____

(Jesus) *"There is more happiness in giving than in receiving."* Acts 20:35

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT TITHING

WHAT IS TITHING?

"Tithe" means "a _10TH_____part"

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A "TITHE" AND AN "OFFERING"?

- A "tithe" is giving FIRST 10TH of my income.
- An "offering" is anything I give IN ADDITION my tithe.

WHY SHOULD I TITHE? 8 REASONS FROM GOD'S WORD

1. Because God COMMANDS IT.

"A tenth of all you produce is the Lord's, and it is holy." Lev. 27:30

2. Because Jesus COMMENDED IT.

"Yes, you should tithe, and you shouldn't leave the more important things undone either." Matt. 23:23

3. Tithing demonstrates that God has 1ST IN MY LIFE.

"The purpose of tithing is to teach you to always put God in first place in your life." Deut. 14:23 (LB)

4. Tithing reminds me that EVERYTHING I HAVE was given to me by God!

"Always remember that it is the Lord your God who gives you the ability to produce wealth." Deut. 8:18

5. Tithing expresses my LOVE TO THE LORD.

"How can I repay the Lord for all his goodness to me?" Ps. 116:12

"Each of you should bring a gift in proportion to the way the Lord your God has blessed you." Deut. 16:17

6. God says that refusing to tithe is STEALING from Him!

"God says 'Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing me!' But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' God says 'In tithes and offerings ... Bring your **whole** tithe to My house.'" Mal. 3:8-10

7. Tithing gives God a chance to prove HE EXISTS and wants to bless you!

"Bring your whole tithe to My storehouse. **Test me in this**" says the Lord, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out **so much blessing** that you won't have room enough for it! I will prevent pests from devouring your crops and the vines in your fields will be protected from plagues." Mal. 3:10

8. Tithing proves that I LOVE GOD.

(Jesus) "If you really love me, do what I command." John 14:15

"... I want you to be leaders also in the spirit of cheerful giving ... This is one way to prove that your love is real, that it goes beyond mere words." 2 Cor. 8:7b - 8 (LB)

WHAT SHOULD I TITHE?

The 1ST part of what I earn, not the LEFTOVERS.

"Honor the Lord by giving him the **first part** of all your income." Prov. 3:9-10

WHERE SHOULD I GIVE MY TITHE?

WHERE I _____ WORSHIP _____

"Bring your *whole* tithe to My Storehouse (Temple) ..." Mal. 3:10

WHEN SHOULD I TITHE? _____ WEEKLY _____

"On the first day of every week, set aside some of what you have earned and give it as an offering. The amount depends on how much the Lord has helped you earn." 1 Cor. 16:2 (LB)

How To Remember

- Keep a Ledger Book - Acct. #1: My Tithe
- Use weekly envelopes
- Teach your children to tithe

GIVING WITH THE RIGHT ATTITUDES

•GIVE WILLINGLY _____.

"For if the willingness is there, your gift is acceptable according to what you have, not according to what you don't have." 2Cor.9:12

"Each one should give *what he has decided in his heart to give*, not reluctantly or under pressure ..." 1 Cor. 9:7a

•GIVE CHEERFULLY _____.

"... for God loves a cheerful giver!" 2 Cor. 9:7

•GIVE SACRIFICIALLY _____.

"They gave as much as they were able, and even *beyond their ability*. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service ..." 2 Cor. 8:3-4

•GIVE EXPECTANTLY _____.

"Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly; and whoever sows generously will reap generously." 2 Cor. 9:6

THE KEY TO GIVING

" ...THEY FIRST GAVE THEMSELVES TO THE LORD ... " 2 Cor. 8:5

A COMMITMENT PRAYER

"Father, I know you love me and want what's best for me. I recognize that all I have, or will ever have, comes from you. I am more interested in pleasing you than in having more possessions. I want you to have first place in my life and I am willing to begin tithing as you have commanded. Out of gratitude for all you've done for me, and in expectation that you will continue to provide for me, I commit myself to returning at least the first 10% of all I earn back to you. I want to begin investing for eternity. Help me to remain faithful to this commitment. In Jesus' name, Amen."

THE HABIT OF FELLOWSHIP

Participating in God's Family

"Let us not give up the habit of meeting together, as some are doing. Instead, let us encourage each other."

Heb. 10:25 (GN)

WHY IS FELLOWSHIP SO IMPORTANT?

1. I BELONG IN GOD'S FAMILY WITH OTHER BELIEVERS.

*"Let us do good to all people, especially to those who **belong to the family of believers.**" Gal. 6:10*

"The Christian who is not committed to a group of other believers for praying, sharing, and serving, so that he is known, as he knows others, is not an obedient Christian. He is not in the will of God. However vocal he may be in his theology, he is not obeying the Lord." Dr. Ray Ortland

*"You are a member of God's very own family ... and **you belong** in God's household with every other Christian." Eph. 2:19 (LB)*

*"So in Christ, we who are many form one body, and each member **belongs** to all the others!" Rom. 12:5*

2. I NEED ENCOURAGEMENT TO GROW SPIRITUALLY.

*"Let us think of one another and how we can encourage each other to love and do good deeds."
Heb. 10:24 (Ph)*

"Two are better off than one ... If one of them falls down, the other can help him up. But if someone is alone and falls, it's just too bad, because there is no one to help him ... Two men can resist an attack that would defeat one man alone. A rope made of three cords is hard to break." Eccl. 4:9-10,12 (GN)

3. I NEED ACCOUNTABILITY TO GROW SPIRITUALLY

"People learn from one another just as iron sharpens iron." Pr. 27:17 (GN)

*"Every day ... keep encouraging one another so that none of you is hardened by the glamour of sin."
Heb. 3:13 (JB)*

*"Brothers, if someone is trapped in some sin, you who are spiritual should **restore** him gently ... Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. Gal. 6:1-2*

4. CHRIST IS PRESENT WHEN WE FELLOWSHIP TOGETHER.

*"For wherever two or three have come together in my name, I am there, right among them!"
Matt 18:20 (GN)*

5. THERE IS POWER WHEN PEOPLE PRAY TOGETHER.

"Whenever two of you on earth agree about anything you pray for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven." Matt. 18:19 (GN)

6. FELLOWSHIP IS A WITNESS TO THE WORLD.

(Jesus) *"My prayer for all of them is that they will be of one heart and mind .. so the world will believe you sent me." John 17:21(LB)*

7. I AM OBLIGATED TO EVERY OTHER CHRISTIAN

"God has given you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other ..." 1 Peter 4:10 (LB)

There are different kinds of service to God ... together you form the body of Christ and each one of you is a necessary part of it." 1 Cor. 12:5, 27 (LB)

The "One Anothers" of Fellowship

(Partial List)

Serve one another	Gal. 5:13
Accept one another	Rom 15:7
Forgive one another	Col. 3:13
Greet one another	Rom. 16:16
Bear one another's burdens	Gal. 6:2
Be devoted to one another	Rom. 12:10
Honor one another	Rom. 12:10
Teach one another	Rom 15:14
Submit to one another	Eph. 5:21
Encourage one another	1 Thess. 5:11

HOW CAN A LARGE CHURCH MAINTAIN CLOSE FRIENDSHIPS?

EVERY MEMBER NEEDS TO BE A PART OF A SMALL GROUP .

"(They met) day after day, in the Temple courts and from house to house." Acts 5:42

2 Types of Church Meetings

Large Group:

Small Group:

"Greet the church that meets in their home." Rom. 16:5

Also Acts 2:26, 8:3, 16:40, 20:20, 1 Cor.. 16:19, Col. 4:15

At Saddleback, we believe our church must ...

grow LARGER and SMALLER at the same time.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF OUR SMALL GROUPS?

Acts 2:42-47

1. BIBLE STUDY

"They **DEVOTED THEMSELVES** to the apostle's teaching..."

2. FELLOWSHIP

"...and to the fellowship ..."

3. COMMUNION

"... and to the breaking of bread ..."

4. PRAYER

"... and to prayer ..."

"OUR FATHER ... give US ... OUR daily bread ... forgive US ... OUR ... debts ... as WE have forgive OUR debtors ... lead US not into temptation ... deliver US ..." Matt 6:9-13

5. SUPPORT

"... they gave to anyone as he had a need ..."

"... you shared with me the **fellowship** of giving and receiving."

Phil. 4:15 (Ph)

6. SOCIAL

"... they ate together with glad and sincere hearts ..."

"Get into **the habit** of inviting guests home for dinner or if they need lodging, for the night." Rom. 12:13 (LB)

7. PRAISE

"... praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people."

8. OUTREACH

"And the Lord added to their number **daily** those who were being saved."

***HOW TO START
AND MAINTAIN
GOOD HABITS***

HOW TO START AND MAINTAIN GOOD HABITS

STEP ONE: _____ **DESIRE** _____

You must start with a strong desire. You must be internally motivated. External motivations don't last. If you start only half-heartedly, you will never make it to the success point.

STEP TWO: _____ **DECIDE** _____

Begin right now! Don't wait. Don't procrastinate. You don't slide into a new habit. "One of these days" never arrives. You must have a starting point. It's easier to break a bad habit today than it will be tomorrow!

"If you wait for perfect conditions, you will never get anything done." Eccl. 11:4 (LB)

STEP THREE: _____ **DECLARATION** _____

Announce your intentions publicly. Make a covenant or resolution. The power of a vow is awesome. It is particularly powerful if you put your commitment in writing.

"Make vows to the Lord your God and fulfill them." Ps. 76:11

STEP FOUR: _____ **DETERMINATION** _____

Never allow an exception until the new habit is securely rooted in your life. Each lapse will be fatal. A single slip unwinds many turns at first. Continuity and success at the start is essential. Never be swayed by "just this once". The act of yielding weakens the will and reinforces your lack of self-control. It takes 3 weeks to become comfortable with a new habit and it takes another 3 to 4 weeks (doing it daily) for it to become a part of your life.

IT TAKES _____ 7 _____ TO _____ 21 _____ REPETITIONS TO LEARN SOMETHING!

STEP FIVE: _____ **JUST DO IT!** _____

Whenever you feel the slightest urge or prompting to practice this new habit - DO IT THEN! Don't wait. Seize every opportunity to reinforce your habit. Those feelings will not last, so whenever you feel inclined to perform your new habit, do so!

STEP SIX: _____ **DOUBLE UP** _____

Get a partner who will support you and encourage you. Find someone who is willing to hold you accountable and check up on you especially in the early days before the habit is firmly rooted in your life.

"Let us consider and give attentive, continuous care to watching over each other, studying how we may stir up and stimulate each other to ... helpful deeds and noble activities." Heb. 1:25 (Amp)

"Two are better off than one, because together they can work more effectively. If one of them falls down, the other can help him up." Eccl. 4:9-10 (GN)

STEP SEVEN: _____ **DEPEND ON GOD** _____

Rely on God's power to help you establish the habit. Remember, Satan does not want you to develop habits that help you grow spiritually and make you like Christ so he will do all he can to tempt you, cause you to slip, or discourage you. Pray!

*"For the Spirit of God has given us ... fills us with power, love, and **self-control**." 2 Tim. 1:7 (GN)*

*"For it is God who is at work within you, giving you **the will and the power** to achieve his purpose."
Phil. 2:13 (Ph)*

