

SERIES: 40 DAYS OF PRAYER

Spiritual Growth Campaign

Part 5: Praying Throughout Your Day

Welcome back home to your CVCHURCH family. If you are our guest today, we're so pleased that you're here, and we see you as being a part of our family. We are a multicultural and intergenerational church. We are so excited about what God is doing in us and through us. 2018 is THE YEAR OF BREAKTHROUGH. As we have positioned ourselves to partner with God for the breakthroughs we desire and the breakthroughs God desires for us, we are focusing the entirety of our lives on prayer. Without a concerted effort to pray and seek God's face, purposes and plans, you will only experience breakdowns. We want breakthroughs. Yes, they are uncomfortable and often times painful. Psalm 119:67 & 71 say, **"I used to wander off until You disciplined me; but now I closely follow Your word.... 71 My suffering was good for me, for it taught me to pay attention to Your decrees."** Difficulties, suffering, failures are all meant to open our eyes and prepare us for all of the breakthroughs and successes that God has for each one of us and as a local church. Please hear me, church, whatever you have experienced up to this time with Jesus, He is going to do a new thing. It is going to take your participation and all of your focus and energy. He is taking us in directions we have never been before. So if you have the need for everything to be comfortable because you can control it, get ready. The breakthrough that God has for you is to enlarge your heart so

you have a greater capacity for the things of His Kingdom, His purposes, plans and His agenda. As I was preparing this teaching this week I came across an article in a prophetic magazine, and it was entitled **“2018: THE YEAR OF THE BULL RIDE.”** This caught my attention because at the elite levels of bull riding a breakthrough will take place. It either happens to the rider or to the bull. Look and listen to what the writer Bill Yount states: **“I sense this new year will be like a rodeo bull ride for many of us. The stirring, shakings and heavenly interruptions will feel like we’re on a championship bull that defies us to hold onto it. We will need to learn quickly how to hold on and how to let go. This bull ride will expose what is in us. We must be fully persuaded that greater is He who is in us, than he who is in the world. And that He, Christ in us, is not afraid of being bullied by any bull.”** To experience the breakthroughs as we ride the bull this year in 2018 it is necessary that each one of us learn to effectively pray throughout our day. The more you are being led by the Holy Spirit, believe me, the more you will have to pray about. When you learn to pray throughout your day you tenderize your heart, and you realize if you’re going to experience God’s best for you, you need His leadership and guidance in your life more than ever. To truly follow Jesus in your daily life—this kind of prayer becomes like the very oxygen you need to breathe. How do you do this? You learn to pray without ceasing. Please read out loud with me Ephesians 6:18 from the NCV, let’s begin, **“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 God's people." This means two things. First, that you allow the Holy Spirit to lead, guide you and you follow the impressions the Holy Spirit gives to you in what and how you're to pray. When you get an idea about something, pray at that moment. If you get a thought about someone or you see an image in your mind, ask the Holy Spirit for clarification and pray about it. Don't wait, but do it immediately. When a concern comes to you, stop and pray. In 1 Corinthians 14:13-18 it is the only place in the N.T. where Paul defines speaking in tongues as one way of how a person prays in the Spirit. 13 **"So anyone who speaks in tongues should pray also for the ability to interpret what has been said. 14 For if I pray in tongues, my spirit is praying, but I don't understand what I am saying. 15 Well then, what shall I do? I will pray in the spirit, and I will also pray in words I understand. I will sing in the spirit and I will also sing in words I understand. 18 I thank God that I speak in tongues more than any of you. But in a church meeting I would rather speak five understandable words to help others than ten thousand words in an unknown language."** Another form of praying in the Holy Spirit is to ask the Holy Spirit to give you your own prayer language, and you can pray in the Spirit that way also. This makes it quite easy for me to pray all throughout my day. So the Bible says we're to pray at all times. How do I do this? This is what I want to look at with you for the remainder of our time together today. There are two ways to do this so you get the full benefit of having a fulfilling, intimate and successful prayer life.

I. First develop two important habits

A. Develop an ongoing conversation with God

We just read Ephesians 6:18 together. Paul gives us five things we can do. First, pray in the Spirit. Second, pray all the different kinds of prayer. Gratitude prayers. Thanksgiving prayers. Prayers of request or supplication prayers. Prayers of petition, which you are calling out to God for His intervention. Third, you ask for everything you need. As you begin to see how much Father God loves you and He is interested in everything you're thinking, feeling and needing, you will discover that you have a lot to pray about in a given day. Fourth, always be ready, which simply means be prepared to pray at every moment, and be resolved to never give up. Fifth, this means pray for people all over the world. You talk to Father God like I'm talking to you today. You keep a running prayer conversation all day long. You don't end the conversation. An ongoing conversation with God is similar to breathing. You don't think about breathing. You just do it. Prayer is spiritual breathing. Prayer is to your soul what breathing is to your body. As you get serious about believing that your Father God cares about everything you're involved with, and you understand that He has His will and plan for everything you're involved in, then you realize that you want to discuss with Him all that you're thinking. Jesus said in the Disciple's Prayer, Pray, **"Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."** The word **"kingdom"** means **God's rule and reign**. What does a King do? He wants His vision, His purpose and His plan for those

in His Kingdom to be their experience. So Jesus says you're ongoing prayer life is to be made up of, as you live each day, all the key areas of your life: your **Spiritual, Emotional, Relational, Financial, Vocational, Intellectual and Physical**. In each one of these areas of your life you develop an ongoing conversation with God about how He desires to extend and advance His Kingdom purposes in your life in all seven of these areas. In 1 Thessalonians 5:17 Paul says, **“Never stop praying.”** To commit to an ongoing conversation with your Heavenly Father means that you're willing to see your faith, growth and obedience keep growing.

B. Schedule prayer times throughout your day

I want to teach you a very simple way to create a schedule in which you are conversing with Father God on a daily basis. This is not a new idea. From the beginning of time people have scheduled their prayer times. The Jews in the O. T. scheduled their prayer times. Psalm 119:164 says, **“I will praise you seven times a day because all Your regulations are just.”** Many scholars argue that the number 7 can mean many times in a day. The Bible tells us in Daniel that he was a man of prayer daily. Daniel 6:10 says, **“But then Daniel learned that the law has been signed, he went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room, with its window open toward Jerusalem. He prayed three times a day; just as he had always done, giving thanks to His God.”** I want to take the Disciples prayer that Jesus taught them to pray and

show you how you can use this model in a typical day in your life. Let's look at the first thing you do when you wake up.

II. Create a daily schedule based on the disciple's prayers

A. Get up with gratitude: Thanksgiving

The first thing you can do to start your conversation with God when you first get out of bed is to start your prayer of thanksgiving by telling God how grateful you are for Him. The truth is, friend, you choose how you will wake up. Some one said to my wife, "Do you wake up grumpy?", and she said, "No, I usually let him sleep." You can get up complaining, fretting and speaking and thinking negatively or you can discipline yourself to wake up being grateful for all that God has given you and what He has done for you. The medical community has discovered that the single healthiest emotion known to the human family is gratitude. The attitude of gratitude actually makes you healthier mentally, emotionally and physically. It's actually good for your health. I recommend that you start every morning expressing your gratitude to God. If you have purchased one of our 40 Days of Prayer study guides, and if you haven't done this yet, there is a gratitude list you can make for yourself using the english alphabet. If you speak another language, please make it in your language. You can put it on your nightstand, and, first thing in the morning when you wake up, you starting praying and talking to God from A-Z what you're grateful to Him for. Here are some of the things I thank God for in the morning.

Letter D: I'm grateful that You have designed my life for

Your great plan and purpose. Thank You, Father. E: I am grateful that You empower me with Your Holy Spirit. F: I am grateful that You forgive me my sins. You free me from shame and You fill my life with meaning. Boom. You just read some of the gifts God has given to you that you are grateful for. It will change your life. I read this week that psychologists have proven that the attitude that you have for the day is set in the first eight minutes of your day. Do you want to grumble, grouse, groan, and grunt, or do you want to be grateful? The power of gratitude, loved ones, is that it gets you to focus on the loving Father Abba God who gives me all that I need. You start your day by focusing on the goodness of God, and that's the first phrase of the Disciple's prayer. Look at Matthew 6:7-9 with me. Jesus said, **“When you pray, don't babble on and on as people of other religions do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. 8 Don't be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask Him! 9 Pray like this: Our Father in heaven.”** Start your day with thinking about how good God is. He's a good, good Father. **He is a Father who cares for me. He's close to me. He's consistent towards me, and He's competent to fulfill His purpose and plan for my life.** **“Father, I am so grateful for Your faithful character that You demonstrate towards me every day.”** You start your day confessing what is true about your Heavenly Father, not by asking requests. You start an ongoing conversation for the day by expressing your gratitude. James 1:17 says, **“Whatever is good and perfect comes down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens.**

He never changes or casts a shifting shadow.” Please write in for your fill in, **“I thank my Father in heaven for His consistent love, and I recall all the ways He has been good to me.”**

B. Bless God’s name at breakfast: Praise

This is praise. You have started your day with thanksgiving and gratitude, now you turn to praising God in your conversation. Matthew 6:9b says, **“May Your name be kept holy.”** This is where you choose to bless, honor, praise, and give respect to God for His name. This is where we get the word to adore God. Psalm 145:2 says, **“Yes I will praise You every day; yes, I will praise You forever.”** One of the reasons Jesus says when you pray and you hold this ongoing conversation with the Father, you want to keep His name Holy, because His name represents who He is. His name represents His character, His person and His attributes. By attributes I mean a characteristic that is attributed to God’s nature as an essential trait of God. This is where I review God’s names and think about the promises they imply. I put some of the Father’s names on your notes. **1) Yahweh: The Self-Existent One. He has always existed and will always exist. He is the “I Am that I Am,” a covenant-keeping God. 2) Adonai: God is Lord over all. You can find safety in Him and Him alone. 3) Yahweh-Rohi: The Lord is my Shepherd. He cares for you like a shepherd does His sheep. 4) Yahweh-Shammah: The Lord who is present. He never leaves you or forsakes you. 5) Yahweh-Rapha: The Lord our Healer. Isaiah 53:4-5 “Yet it was our**

weaknesses He carried; it was our sorrows that weighed Him down. And we thought His troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for His own sins! 5 But He was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.” 6) Yahweh-Jireh: The Lord will provide. 7) Yahweh-Shalom: The Lord is peace. Whenever there are storms in your life, hide in Him. He is your shelter. I recommend that you Google the names for God in the Bible. There are at least 100 names for our loving God. The more you get to know His names, the more you get to know His character. God is good. God is love. God is immutable, which means He is unchanging. God is transcendent, which means He is not only here now or imminent, but He exists beyond and above the created universe. God is just. God is righteous and holy, fair and equitable in all things. We can trust Him to always do what is right. God is holy. God’s holiness is not simply our best image of perfect, but God is utterly and supremely untainted. His holiness stands apart and is unique and incomprehensible. God is omniscient, which means He is all-knowing. God is omnipresent—God is everywhere. God is merciful. Through Jesus Christ, He took the judgment that was rightfully ours and placed it on His own shoulders. He waits and works now for all people to turn to Him and to live under His love and protection. Your ongoing conversation with God through your day begins with thankfulness and gratitude and then moves to praise.

C. Remember what matters most: Dedication

This is when you move to your dedication to partner with God's Kingdom purposes in your life. If you will do this every day so it becomes a habit, it will help you keep focused on what is really the most important in your life. Matthew 6:10 says, **“May Your Kingdom come soon. May Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.”** As I learn to pray this part of the disciple's prayer during the day at midmorning, **“I align myself with God's purposes and plans for my life.”** This is where I say, “I choose Your Kingdom purposes over my own purposes and plan for my life.” When I pray, “Your Kingdom come,” what I am saying is that, “I want Your rule and reign for every area of my life.” The Kingdom belongs to the King. Where God's Kingdom is you will have His rule and His reign. The Bible says that this world is under the sway of the kingdom of darkness. Ephesians 2:1-5 says, **“Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins. 2 You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. 3 All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God's anger, just like everyone else. 4 But God is so rich in mercy, and He loves us so much, 5 that even though we were dead because of our sins, He gave us life when He raised Christ from the dead. It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!”** God's will is not always done. This is why He says, “I want you to pray for My rule, My reign, My purpose, My plan, My desires, My goals and wishes for your life.” So around 9:00 a.m. or 10:00

a.m., you simply say, “God I want to realign myself with Your Kingdom purposes and plans. I want Your will, Your Kingdom to have its way in my life.” Jesus says this in Matthew 6:33, **“Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and He will give you everything you need.”**

D. List my needs at lunch: Petition

At lunch time it is a great time to talk with God about what you presently need in your life. Matthew 6:11, Jesus says pray this: **“Give us today the food we need.”** The KJV says “bread.” What is bread and food? Bread represents everything you need for the day. It can represent money. Resources. Contacts. Contracts. It can represent a husband, wife, boyfriend or girlfriend. It can represent anything you need in your life for the day. For the fill in...

- **I ask for anything I need**

John 14:13 says, **“You can ask for anything in My name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father.”**

- **I ask for what other people need: Intercession**

This is called intercession. When you pray for yourself this is called **petition**. When you pray for others this is called **intercession**.

E. I ask for forgiveness in the afternoon: Confession

This is the prayer of confession.

This happens early in the afternoon. You simply take a break where no one can hear you, and you say, “Jesus, is there anything in my life I need to clean out? Is there any sin? This works the best if when you know you have said something or did something that was against God’s Word or purposes for your life, or you know you sinned against another person, the best thing you can do is go to God right then. The goal is to stay current in your relationship with God. Matthew 6:12 says, **“And forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us.”** These are the different kinds of prayers Paul tells us to pray in Ephesians 6:18. We have prayed the prayer of thanksgiving and adoration. We have prayed the prayer of praise for His name and character. We have prayed the prayer of dedication. We have prayed the prayer of petition. Now we pray the prayer of confession. In confession I own up to my own wrong reactions. I admit my sins against God and against others. When I hold onto grudges and revenge for what others do to me, ultimately my hurt will turn into bitterness, anger, rage, and ultimately hatred. When that happens I will be buried in my own guilt, shame, humiliation, inferiority, hopelessness, and despair because I block myself from being able to receive God’s forgiveness. Many people who live feeling unforgiven—that is a great sign that they probably are withholding forgiveness from others, so they don’t experience God’s forgiveness. Please look at me. The Bible never tells us to forgive ourselves. When you confess

your sin to God and you take responsibility for what you have done the Bible says you are forgiven immediately. You cannot add on to your experience of forgiveness by forgiving yourself. You have nothing to forgive. Jesus has forgiven you everything. When someone says they have to forgive themselves, I always get the joy of telling them, I don't think you have been honest about your own sin. Tell Jesus about your sin and receive His forgiveness and cleansing and you will be free. Psalm 32:5 says, **“Finally I confessed all my sins to You and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, ‘I will confess my rebellion to the Lord.’ And You forgave me! All my guilt is gone.”** Notice that. There is no residual guilt or shame when you are honest and confess your sin.

F. Ask God to help me make wise decisions: Protection

This is the prayer of protection.

Matthew 6:13a says, **“And don't let us yield to temptation but rescue us from the evil one.”** I like this translation better than the one that says, **“And lead us not into temptation,”** because the Scripture says God will never tempt us. He does test us. The difference is temptation is meant to cause us to fail and then to feel shamed, guilty and damaged. God tests us to approve us and our faith. The test is meant to prove that we have faith. Temptation is meant to prove we don't believe. We're to pray for God's protection when we are tempted to rebel against Him and to pray for Him to, **“Rescue us from the evil one.”** 1 Corinthians 10:13

says, **“The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, He will show you a way out so that you can endure.”** When people say the temptation was just too strong, what they’re really saying is that I didn’t pray for God to help me make a wise decision in looking for God’s way out of the temptation. God is not a human that He would lie. He says for every temptation you experience your Heavenly Father is trying to show you the way out. You need to develop the ability to hear, see and feel His way out. I dare say there are some of us here today that part of your breakthrough is breaking some addiction you are involved with. Some sin that is getting the best of you. I encourage you to develop how to pray throughout your day and ask God to show you the way out that He is making available to you. It could be to start attending CR on Friday nights. It might be to get yourself into a step study, which is a methodical process of how to walk through the steps to forgiveness and freedom.

G. I end my day with an encouraging truth: Blessing

This is called the benediction.

You end your day with a good word. Matthew 6:13, **“For Yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever! Amen!”** These words, according to most scholars, agree that the most reliable and oldest Greek manuscripts all lack these words which is the reason why these words are omitted from most modern translations. But I like what the

footnote in the ESV Study Bible says, **“However, there is nothing theologically incorrect about the words, nor is it inappropriate to include these words in your public or private words.”** There are three things this sentence says that are biblical. **1) God is in control. The disciple’s prayer helps you learn to partner with praying His will into existence in your life. 2) This is not the end of your story or His story. 3) God and His family win in the end.**

What I have taught you today will transform your life if you actually practice it. You’ll grow closer to Jesus. You’ll have more energy. You will make better decisions. You’ll have less stress. You’ll be healthier. Let’s pray.