

## PRAYER

We lead others to pray by first learning to pray ourselves.  
Prayer is our way to grow close to God.  
Use this as a guide for your prayer time.

**P**repare yourself. Find a location that is comfortable and where you will not be disturbed. In chapter 5, verse 16, Luke tells us that Jesus "would go away to lonely places, where he prayed."

**R**epeat a simple verse or prayer. Learn a short Bible verse or prayer or song. Breathe slowly for several seconds, being conscious of your breathing, and then repeat the verse or prayer or sing the song quietly. You might try 1 Timothy 1:2b or a verse from Psalms, perhaps 8:1a or 46:10. Or sing "Spirit of the Living God" or pray Brother Lawrence's prayer, "Lord, make me according to thy heart."

**A**cept God into your heart. To do this, center into the very heart of you. Consider the part of you that feels love, that feels sadness, the part that is happy when you do for others. Then ask God to come into that part of you. The psalmist recognized the importance of asking God to be with him in Psalm 89:15: "Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim you, who walk in the light of your presence, O Lord" (NIV).

**Y**ield all that bothers you to God. Peter suggested, "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7). Whatever is troubling you, turn it over to God. Perhaps there are people with whom you have problems. Talk it over with God. Know that God understands your problems.

**E**njoy God's presence. Just spend some time "looking and loving" God. Relax in the joy of being loved by God. Feel God's strength and peace, as Paul wrote in Philippians 4:7, "And God's peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe in union with Christ Jesus."

**R**eview how you felt. I would suggest that you begin a prayer journal, writing down some of the feelings and thoughts that came to you as you prayed. Writing it down makes your feelings and thoughts more concrete. As Paul wrote in Philippians 4:13, you will "have the strength to face all conditions by the power that Christ gives me." Your journal should be private. There might be something you will want to share with someone at times, but it is basically between you and God.<sup>1</sup>