

Practical Solutions for Impediments to Prayer

1. Minimizing distractions during prayer

Find a solution that works for you & your personality:

- Set aside a quiet place of prayer in your home.
- Leave your devices outside (& children if possible). Turn off notifications and ringer except for emergency calls.
- Write out your prayers to help you focus, and if distracted, it's also easy to pick up where you left it.
- Write down whatever you need to do that interrupts your mind on a piece of paper that you keep handy when you pray. If you can't let it go, pray about it.
- Speak your prayers aloud but in a low voice.

2. Varying boring and repetitive prayers

Using God's Word as a catalyst for your prayers is not only a good way to vary them but it calls you to respond personally to what God is telling you, perhaps to repent personally or for the church at large, or perhaps to simply praise God. You may need to take an action or change an attitude according to what you read.

Use the acronym PRAISE to cover the topics that Jesus did in the Lord's Prayer.

P (Praise)

R (Repent)

A (Ask)

Y (Yield)

3. Navigating Prayer Requests

How long and how often do you pray for a request?

- There is no rule. You aren't being graded. Ask God to guide and give you peace.
- If someone asks you to pray for her, pray immediately with her if you can.

- Pray as often as God brings the person to mind.
- Pray as long as God is nudging you to pray or until the prayer is answered. If the person hasn't updated you in a long time, pray about taking the request off or contact her for an update.

Organizing Prayer requests

(What works for someone else, will not necessarily work for you.)

- Idea 1: Organize your requests by groups or topics and pray for each one on a specific day a week (or a month). Examples: Your pastors on Sunday, your small group the day after you receive their requests, the sick on another day.
- Idea 2: If there is someone for whom you want to pray consistently, consider note cards or a notebook. Organize by— (1) name. Write a person's name at the top of each page. Add to the page as you get updated requests or as God leads you to pray, or (2) by topic like health and list people below.

4. Praying Aloud with Other People

- We have to get over ourselves and serve others by praying for them in person.
- Recognize that praying for others is about them and God, not us.
- Pray simply, remember we are talking to God who isn't impressed with an elaborate prayer.
- Speak from your heart.
- Raise your head and speak up so the others in the group can hear you.
- As others pray, pray in agreement silently or with a murmur or an amen. Jesus wants us to pray in agreement. We can't do that if we are thinking about what we want to pray instead of listening to the other prayers.
- Instead of sharing your prayer requests, pray them. Each person writes down her request, and then everyone passes her card to the right or left. Pray the requests by reading them. This prevents talking about prayer requests and leaving no time to pray. It also helps those uncomfortable with praying aloud to simply read a request. Hopefully, in time reading them she learns to be more comfortable.

Suggested Resources of Beautiful Prayers

- John Bailee – *Diary of Private Prayer*
- *Valley of Vision – A Collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions*
- *Every Moment Holy* – Volumes 1,2,3
- *Book of Common Prayer*
- Lectio 365 app
- *CSB Scripture Notebook*