2017

SCHOOL OF PRAYER

SERIES

In Proyer
with dick EASTMAN

NINE "IN PRAYER" CLUSTER-THEMES FOR FRUITFUL PRAYING

LESSON EIGHT | THE GUIDANCE CLUSTER Listening in Prayer





## THE GUIDANCE CLUSTER

## Listening in Prayer

- · Communing in Prayer
- Searching in Prayer
- Meditating in Prayer

#### **VOICES OF PRAYER**

"Prayer is the soul's pilgrimage from self to God; and the most effective remedy for self-love and self-absorption is the habit of listening."

- Brigid Herman, Creative Prayer

#### Proverbs 3:5-6 (MSG)

Trust God from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own. Listen for God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he's the one who will keep you on track.

## **VOICES OF PRAYER**

"The purpose of all prayer is to find God's will and to make that will our prayer."

— Catherine Marshall

Revelation 2:7, 2:11, 2:17, 2:29, 3:6, 3:13, 3:22 (MSG)

Are your ears awake? Listen. Listen to the Wind Words, the Spirit blowing through the churches.

#### **VOICES OF PRAYER**

"Whenever the sounds of the world die out in the soul...
then we hear the whisperings of God. He is always
whispering to us, only we do not hear because of the noise,
hurry and distraction which life causes as it rushes on."

- F. W. Faber

## 1 Kings 19:11-13 (MSG)

Then [Elijah] was told, "Go, stand on the mountain at attention before God. God will pass by." A hurricane wind ripped through the mountains and shattered the rocks before God, but God wasn't to be found in the wind; after the wind an earthquake, but God wasn't in the earthquake; and after the earthquake fire, but God wasn't in the fire; and after the fire a gentle and quiet whisper [KJV: still small voice]. When Elijah heard the quiet voice, he muffled his face with his great cloak, went to the mouth of the cave, and stood there.

## **VOICES OF PRAYER**

"We are besieged by words in our society. Billboards blaze them into our minds as we go by. Headlines scream from the newspapers... Regular prayer builds into our lives those experiences of silence and concentration when the still, small voice of our Saviour can cut through life's howl and speak His words of peace and joy."

- David Hubbard

## **VOICES OF PRAYER**

"The heart of prayer is not to alter	God's will but to find it."
	<ul><li>Sam Shoemaker</li></ul>

Sull' Shochlake
George Mueller's Six Steps to Discerning the Will of Go
1. I seek at the to get my
into such a
that it has no of its own in regard to a
given
James 4:7-8 (NKJV) Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will fle from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you
2. Having done this, I do not leave the result to
or simple If
do so, I make myself liable to great
Isaiah 55:8-9 (NIV)  "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither aryour ways my ways," declares the LORD. "As the heaver are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher that your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."
3. I seek the of the through or
in connection with the of God.
John 16:13 (KJV)

...when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth...

At that time the Spirit of the Lord will come mightily upon you and you will feel and act like a different person. From that time on your decisions should be based on whatever seems best under the circumstances			
5. I ask God in	to		
His to me arigh	nt.		
Jeremiah 33:3 (NIV) Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.			
6. Thus, through	to God, the study of		
the and reflec	ction, I come to a deliberate		
	according to the best of		
my an	d knowledge.		
	with your own eyes, and you is the way; turn around and		

4. Next, I take into account providential

with His \_\_\_\_\_ and Spirit.

Case Study: A 747 Miracle Surprise

1 Samuel 10:6-7 (TLB)

\_\_\_\_\_. These often plainly

\_\_\_\_\_ God's \_\_\_\_\_ in connection

### **GUIDANCE CLUSTER - INSIGHT ONE**

## Listening

Foundational	to a	healthy	and	
prayer-saturat	ed life i	s the		of
spiritual listen	ing. Di	vine guid	ance i	mplies receiving
of specific		s	upern	aturally (i.e., of a
divine origin)	from th	ne Lord H	imself	. To receive such
	rec	juires the a	actof_	·
"He who has a	n ear, l	et him he	ar wh	at the Spirit says
to the churche	s" (Pay	valation 2	·7 NIK	IV)

### THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

## **Thoughts**

Based on Cluster Insight One, share your thoughts within your prayer cluster. What do you believe are the keys to listening in prayer? How can one be certain he or she is truly hearing the voice of the Lord in seeking guidance? (If you are alone as this teaching streams from our website or if you're watching on a DVD, take these moments to meditate on Insight One of this teaching.)

## **Prayers**

Take a few moments of silence in your prayer cluster (or even if you are alone and viewing or listening to this lesson) and then turn what your heart hears into a prayer. You may choose to write down the impressions of your heart and turn them into prayer.

# Supplemental (Partial) List of Ways God Speaks to His Children

- A particular scripture coming to mind (Acts 1:20; Acts 13:16)
- An audible voice (Acts 9:3-5)
- A still small voice a whisper in the heart (1 Kings 19:11-12)
- A picture or vision (Acts 10:11-17; Acts 16:9-10)
- A dream (Daniel 4:4-17; Daniel 7:1-14)
- An interpretation of a dream or vision (Daniel 4:18-27; Daniel 7:15-27)
- A picture or impression of a word (Acts 10:3)
- A sensation or pain in one's body (Acts 9:8-9)
- A spiritual song (Acts 16:25; Ephesians 5:19)
- Divinely sent messengers or angels (Acts 1:9-11;
   Acts 8:26) (Philip is told to go south to Gaza —
   that's all but along the way he bumps into a
   seeker, and it's obvious to Philip this is the reason he
   was told to come.)
- Signs and wonders (Luke 23:44-45; Acts 5:18-21; Acts 9:36-42; Acts 12:6-11)
- Restriction of movement and speech (Acts 16:6-8)

Taken from the article "Listening Prayer, the Centrality of Scripture, and Discernment" by Lina Sánchez-Herrera and Jon Ball (InterVarsity Christian Fellowship)

(Italicized bullets added by Dick Eastman)



#### PART 1

## Communing in Prayer

#### **VOICES OF PRAYER**

"Only in quiet waters does God cast His anchor. God only draws near to a soul that enters quietness, a soul whose thoughts and feelings have been stilled."

-Basilea Schlink

### Proverbs 3:5-6 (Passion Translation)

Trust in the Lord completely, and do not rely on your own opinions. With all your heart rely on him to guide you, and he will lead you in every decision you make. Become intimate [Hebrew word: yada] with him in whatever you do, and he will lead you wherever you go.

#### Note:

The word yada in Proverbs 3:6 is the same Hebrew word used for the intimacy of marriage and the act of conception (e.g., "and Adam knew — yada'd — Eve, and she conceived"). See Genesis 4:1: Yada means "direct, intimate contact." See also Daniel 11:32 (KJV): "...but the people that do know [yada] their God shall be strong, and do exploits." Direct intimate contact with God [yada] leads to supernatural strength and divinely-empowered accomplishments.

## Psalm 25:14 (MSG)

God-friendship is for God-worshipers; They are the ones he confides in.

## This same passage in the Passion Translation reads:

There's a private place reserved for the lovers of God. Where they sit near him and receive the revelation-secrets of his promises.

#### Psalm 63:1-2 (MSG)

O God, You are my God; with deepest longing I will seek You; My soul [my life, my very self] thirsts for You, my flesh longs and sighs for You, In a dry and weary land where there is no water. So I have gazed upon You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory.

#### **VOICES OF PRAYER**

"Quietness in a man or a woman is a mark of strength. Noise is not eloquence. Loudness is not power. In all the departments of life, it is the quiet forces that effect most. Therefore, if we would be strong, we must learn to be quiet. A quiet heart will give a quiet life."

-J. R. Miller

## Psalm 73:25-28 (MSG)

You're all I want in heaven! You're all I want on earth! When my skin sags and my bones get brittle, God is rockfirm and faithful... I'm in the very presence of God—oh, how refreshing it is! I've made Lord God my home. God, I'm telling the world what you do!

Case Study: A Song of Intimate Conception

## **GUIDANCE CLUSTER - INSIGHT TWO**

## Communing

The highest level of	prayer is		
the cultivation of a deep and personal			
with the Lord. Such intimacy often occurs	s with very		
few words other than words	of intimate		
as one quietly	in		
God's presence. Communing with the	Lord is to		
listen, love, and from the Mas	ter Himself		
through a, though o	ften silent,		
in God's glorious presence.			

## THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

## **Thoughts**

Based on Cluster Insight Two, share your thoughts within your prayer cluster regarding the role you think intimacy with the Lord has in a healthy prayer life. How might one cultivate intimacy in prayer? (If you are alone as this teaching streams from our website or if you're watching on a DVD, take these moments to meditate on Insight Two of this teaching.)

## Prayers

Turn your thoughts regarding Cluster Insight Two (or any impression from the Scripture passages shared in this teaching segment) into a prayer that expresses your desire to enter into new levels of intimacy in your prayer life.

#### HARVEST INCENSE National Focus

## Revelation 8:3-4 (MSG)

Then another Angel, carrying a gold censer, came and stood at the Altar. He was given a great quantity of incense so that he could offer up the prayers of all the holy people of God on the Golden Altar before the Throne. Smoke billowed up from the incense-laced prayers of the holy ones, rose before God from the hand of the Angel.

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#### PART 2

## Searching in Prayer

## 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (MSG)

There's nothing like the written Word of God for showing you the way to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. Every part of Scripture is God-breathed and useful one way or another—showing us truth, exposing our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God's way. Through the Word we are put together and shaped up for the tasks God has for us.

#### **VOICES OF PRAYER**

"...The Book has a voice of its own—a message and a power that remain untouched by the passage of time. To listen to that voice and test that power for oneself is well worth all the labor and discipline involved."

-Brigid Herman

## 2 Timothy 2:15 (AMP)

Study and do your best to present yourself to God approved, a workman [tested by trial] who has no reason to be ashamed, accurately handling and skillfully teaching the word of truth.

## Psalm 119:124-125 (Passion Translation)

Let me feel your tender love, for I am yours. Give me more understanding of your wonderful ways. I need more revelation from your word to know more about you, for I'm in love with you.

#### **VOICES OF PRAYER**

We should never pray without reading the Bible, and we should never read the Bible without praying.

-Armin Gesswein

#### Proverbs 2:1-5 (NIV)

My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding—indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.

#### **VOICES OF PRAYER**

"To me, this is real prayer — expecting God to talk to me through His Word as I talk to Him."

-Bill Bright

## Hebrews 4:12-13 (MSG)

God means what he says. What he says goes. His powerful Word is sharp as a surgeon's scalpel, cutting through everything, whether doubt or defense, laying us open to listen and obey. Nothing and no one is impervious to God's Word. We can't get away from it—no matter what.

## VOICES OF PRAYER

"God's Word is known at the throne. Use it every time you pray. It is your prayer language."

-Armin Gesswein

Case Study: Confirming Words of Guidance

## **GUIDANCE CLUSTER - INSIGHT THREE**

Searching

At the of all meaningful spiritual			
listening, and the _	of contemplative		
prayer, is the supreme importance of			
with the	of God during prayer. God		
most clearly to His children through His			
Word. Wise was the sage who said, "God's Word is			
at the	e Use it every time		
you pray. It is your	language."		

## THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

## **Thoughts**

Based on Cluster Insight Three, share your thoughts within your prayer cluster regarding the importance of engaging in God's Word during prayer. What have you experienced in praying God's Word during prayer? (If you are alone as this teaching streams from our website or if you're watching on a DVD, take these moments to meditate on Insight Three of this teaching.)

## **Prayers**

Practice praying God's Word by taking a favorite lifepassage you have (or select a Scripture passage shared in this teaching segment) and turn it into a prayer.



#### PART 3

## Meditating in Prayer

### **VOICES OF PRAYER**

"Meditation is... a spiritual act as definite and purposeful as a business engagement, a pledge of friendship, or a solemn undertaking. In it we apply spiritual facts and principles to ourselves as individuals and as citizens of the Kingdom of God... Having pondered them, we seek to appropriate their value by an outgoing of our loving desire toward God, and by exercising our will in the forming of resolutions... No meditation is really valid unless it leaves us with something to which we can return during the day's business and find it helpful there."

-Brigid Herman

## "Meditation" Defined:

"The act of meditating; deep, continued thought; solemn reflection on sacred matters as a devotional act; biblically speaking: the practice of quieting the mind by focusing one's attention on a theme from God's Word or His works."

## **Bible Definitions:**

The Old Testament definition for the word "meditation" is *hagah*, meaning "to mutter upon" or "to muse." This suggests a silent inner study of some spiritual theme.

The New Testament Greek word for "meditate" is *meletao*, meaning "to be careful" or "to show care" in a matter. It suggests a careful probing of a theme or spiritual insight so as to glean more from it than a casual or hasty review might provide.

#### Psalm 78:1-4 (MSG)

Listen, dear friends, to God's truth, bend your ears to what I tell you. I'm chewing on the morsel of a proverb; I'll let you in on the sweet old truths, Stories we heard from our fathers, counsel we learned at our mother's knee. We're not keeping this to ourselves, we're passing it along to the next generation—God's fame and fortune, the marvelous things he has done.

## Psalm 27:4 (AMP)

One thing I have asked of the LORD, and that I will seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD [in His presence] all the days of my life, To gaze upon the beauty [the delightful loveliness and majestic grandeur] of the LORD And to meditate in His temple.

## Joshua 1:8 (AMP)

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall read [and meditate on] it day and night, so that you may be careful to do [everything] in accordance with all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will be successful.



#### **VOICES OF PRAYER**

"The difference between the saints of old and ourselves is not one of inherent nature: it is simply that they took time to ponder God, to gaze upon Him in an act of supreme attention in which intelligent will and desire concurred in perfect harmony, while we are too greatly overrun with small activities and occupations to find leisure for such pondering."

-Brigid Herman

## Psalm 143:5 (AMP)

I remember the days of old; I meditate on all that You have done; I ponder the work of Your hands.

## Philippians 4:8 (NLT)

And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.

The Message paraphrase for this same passage (Phil. 4:8) reads: Summing it all up, friends, I'd say you'll do best by filling your minds and meditating on things true, noble, reputable, authentic, compelling, gracious—the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not things to curse.

## **VOICES OF PRAYER**

"A mind stretched by a new idea can never go back to its original dimensions."

-Oliver Wendell Holmes

### **GUIDANCE CLUSTER - INSIGHT FOUR**

Meditating

Meditating is the silent, _	probing		
and pursuing of the	and		
of God. It is, as ancient sages and psalmists said,			
"chewing on the	of a proverb"		
(Psalm 78:2, MSG), and to	gaze upon "the delightful		
and	majestic		
of the Lord" (Psalm 27:4,	AMP). Meditation is to		
"fix your thoughts" on th	ose things that are true,		
honorable, right, pure, lo	vely and admirable — things		
that are	_ and of praise		
(Philippians 4:8, NLT).			

## THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

## **Thoughts**

Based on Cluster Insight Four, share your thoughts within your prayer cluster regarding your insights on why meditation is such a vital aspect of contemplative prayer. Why do you think the enemy has "hijacked" the act of meditation in so many false religions? (If you are alone as this teaching streams from our website or if you're watching on a DVD, take these moments to meditate on Insight Four of this teaching.)



## **Prayers**

As individuals in your group, meditate for a brief moment (30 seconds) on Psalm 27:4. Then as a group (in your cluster), pray something you gleaned from this passage as you meditated upon it.

## Psalm 27:4 (AMP)

One thing I have asked of the LORD, and that I will seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD [in His presence] all the days of my life, To gaze upon the beauty [the delightful loveliness and majestic grandeur] of the LORD and to meditate in His temple.

#### HARVEST INCENSE Global Focus

## Revelation 8:3-4 (MSG)

Then another Angel, carrying a gold censer, came and stood at the Altar. He was given a great quantity of incense so that he could offer up the prayers of all the holy people of God on the Golden Altar before the Throne. Smoke billowed up from the incense-laced prayers of the holy ones, rose before God from the hand of the Angel.

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