CHRISTIAN UNION

MARTUS

Prayer Guide

"Lord, teach us to pray"



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Necessary for Christian Leaders

Christian Union's mission is to develop leaders who will transform culture. This aspect of seeking the Lord, and knowing how to pray, is critical to us being Christian Leaders. Furthermore, it is this aspect, among others, that makes Christian leadership fundamentally different than how any other source outside of Christianity would define leadership. Ancient characters of the faith emphasize this point: Abraham, Moses, Hezekiah, Ezra, Esther, Deborah, King David, Nehemiah, Joseph, Daniel, the Apostles, Stephen, Philip, and of course Jesus.

"One of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray'"
- Luke 11:1

"Prayer does not fit us for the greater work; prayer is the greater work."
- Oswald Chambers

"God does nothing except in response to believing prayer."
- John Welsely

"To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing."
- Martin Luther

Goal, Purpose, and Intent

Goal: Fervent, wholehearted seeking of the Lord. The heartbeat of Christian Union is the intention which we take to seek the Lord wholeheartedly (Jeremiah 29:12-13, James 4:8). Our aim is to seek the Lord as the scriptures reveal so that God's kingdom would come (Matt 6:10), the gospel would be advanced, salvation would increase, and the Holy Spirit would bring reformation and revival (Acts 3-4, Matt 6:5-8, Luke 11:13).

2 Chronicles 16:9 is an excellent summary description of why we seek the Lord with all our hearts, "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him." NASB (1995) uses this phrase, "those whose heart is completely His."

Purpose: The intent of this guide is to help give substance, quality, and content for use during our corporate prayer gatherings, larger prayer events, and personal devotion times.

Intent: Often, when we come to the place of prayer, we find it difficult to know how or what to pray. Jesus' disciples even struggled with this and asked Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1). Asking this question is normal, and the scripture aids us in prayer, as this guide will show. Lastly, this guide is intended to aid in personal and corporate prayer. Its application can be used in either setting effectively.

Structure: This guide is constructed in two parts for each section: 1) precedence for certain types of prayer and 2) practicing prayer. Each section will first give the biblical precedence for a certain type of prayer, then have a sample of how praying that type of prayer could work. This is not to put a formula to each prayer

type, but to help guide in how these types of prayers can be used. We should remember that the power of prayer is not in the formula, or our words, but in the faith we exercise in prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit (Matt 6:5-8, Luke 11:13); however, Jesus does teach that we should "always pray," which involves us continually practicing prayer (Luke 18:1).

Scriptures aid for prayer

1. Perseverance and faith: Luke 18:1 Jesus tells a story to his disciples, "that they ought always to pray and not lose heart." Through this story Jesus is placing perseverance as a virtue to be had when praying. We often grow tired in prayer and cease praying due to discouragement; however, Jesus is teaching that we should continue to pray, because "will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily (Luke 18:7-8), and "I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" (Luke 11:9).
2. Scriptures as our guide: 1 John 5:14-15, "And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him." Basing the scriptures as the language and heart in prayer gives us confidence for when we proceed to pray.
3. Understanding that God is good: Sometimes, if we're honest, we don't believe that we're praying to a good God. In fact, our belief of who we think God is in prayer comes out in how and what we pray. The scriptures teach that we should expect to pray to a good God. Scripture teaches that we are praying to God in the manner of a good Father (Luke 11:11-13, and Matthew 6:8; 7:9-11).
4. Praying in community: Prayer in the early church was regularly conducted in community. We often see the disciples and the church in the second century praying together in community. Praying in community helps increase our fervor, perseverance, and encouragement to continue to seek the Lord faithfully. Here are a few scriptures that show how the early church would pray together in community:
    a. "The whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense" (Luke 1:10).
    b. "Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour" (Acts 3:1).
    c. "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near" (Hebrews 10:24-25).
    d. "I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day" (2 Timothy 1:3).
    e. "His delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night." Psalm 1:2

Praying for CU Martus Community

We strive to have a community at CU Martus that genuinely loves one another, cares for one another, and seeks the Lord with all our hearts. Let us continually pray the below scriptures to serve as our model:

Loving one another
Acts 2:42, "And they [the disciples, and those being added to the church] devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."

Acts 4:32-33, "Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. 33 And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all."

Hebrews 10:24-25, "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."

That our love for one another would abound
Philippians 1:9-11 "That your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, 11 being filled with the fruits of righteousness."

That our love would be a witness
John 13:35, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

That we would seek the Lord with all our hearts
God will draw near to us as we seek him
James 4:8, "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you."

Matthew 7:7-8, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened."

God has our future secure as we seek him
Jeremiah 29:11-13, "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart."

Jeremiah 17:7-8
"Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord,
whose trust is the Lord.
He is like a tree planted by water,
that sends out its roots by the stream,
and does not fear when heat comes,

for its leaves remain green,
and is not anxious in the year of drought,
for it does not cease to bear fruit."

Proverbs 3:5-7

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and do not lean on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.
Be not wise in your own eyes;
fear the Lord, and turn away from evil."

Matthew 6:33, "But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

Prayers to be in right relationship with one another

Matthew 5:23-24, "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift."

Praying the Scriptures

Precedence:

1 John 5:14-15, "And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him" (ESV).

Q: How do we know we're praying according to God's will?
A: If we pray the scriptures, that were inspired by the Holy Spirit, then we can be assured we are praying God's will. Why would God contradict His own word in prayer?

Why pray the scriptures
Psalm 119:10-11
"With my whole heart I seek you;
let me not wander from your commandments!
I have stored up your word in my heart,
that I might not sin against you."

2 Timothy 3:16-17
"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."

Practice:

What is the situation, or person, you are praying for? Which of the below scriptures most applies to the situation, or person, you are praying for?

Once you've selected your scripture, use the words of the scripture to help aid in the language of your prayer. Oftentimes, when praying the scriptures in this way, it builds the faith of the one praying and the one being prayed for, because they are being encouraged by the authority and promises of the scriptures.

Example one:
Praying for our friend that doesn't know Jesus, that they would come to know Jesus.

Praying from Ephesians 1:17-19 - "Father, I ask that you give my friend a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ; that they would come to know Jesus as Savior. That their eyes would be opened to see Jesus in the riches of his glory."

Example two:
Praying for Jesus and the gospel to be the most talked about person and message on campus.

Praying from 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5 - "Jesus, we pray that your name be glorified on our campus. That every student on campus would know you through the gospel, and as your word says, that your gospel would run ahead speedily and grow in influence and impact on our campus."

Cited prayers within the Bible, to include headings to help aid in application:

Pray for revelation of Jesus' beauty that we might walk in our calling and destiny by God's power.

"17 That the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, 18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power…" (Eph. 1:17-19)

Pray to receive the Spirit's power so that Jesus' presence would be manifest in us, so we experience God's love.

"16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, 17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God." (Eph. 3:16-19)

Pray for God's love to abound in us by the knowledge of God, resulting in righteousness in our lives.

"9 That your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, 10 that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, 11 being filled with the fruits of righteousness…" (Phil. 1:9-11)

Pray to know God's will and to be fruitful in ministry and strengthened by intimacy with Him.

"9 That you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10 that you may have a walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy…" (Col. 1:9-11)

Pray for unity in the Church and to be filled with supernatural joy, peace, and hope (confidence).

"5 May the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another...6 that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the...Father...13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Rom. 15:5-6, 13)

Pray for leaders to live peaceable godly lives pleasing to God.

"1 First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, 2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and

dignified in every way. 3 This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2:1-4)

Pray to be enriched by all the gifts of the Spirit, including powerful preaching and prophetic revelation.

"5 That you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, 6 even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, 7 so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of...Jesus Christ, 8 who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 1:5-8)

Pray in thankfulness to God for faith, love, endurance, and hope in the Church.

"2 We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, 3 remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thes 1:1-3)

Pray for the release of grace to bring the Church to maturity, and especially to abound in love and holiness.

"10 Praying exceedingly that... perfect what is lacking in your faith?... 12 And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all... 13 that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father." (1 Thes. 3:10-13)

Pray to be worthy (prepared or made spiritually mature) to walk in the fullness of our destiny in God.

"11 We pray always for you that God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power, 12 that the name of...Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God." (2 Thes. 1:11-12)

That the Word will increase its influence (effectiveness) in the city as God releases His power on it.

"1 Pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you... 3 The Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one... 5 May the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ." (2 Thes. 3:1-5)

For impartation of boldness (singing and speaking the Word) by releasing healing, signs, and wonders.

"29 Lord... grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, 30 by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus. 31 And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness." (Acts 4:29-31)

Release of God's promise to be endued with power for all who tarry (labor in prayer) for breakthrough.

"49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high. 50...He lifted up His hands and blessed them…" (Lk. 24:49-50)

For the Lord to release His zeal for His people and for His manifest Presence to shake all that resists Him.

"15 Look down... and see from Your habitation, holy and glorious. Where are Your zeal and Your strength, the yearning of Your heart and Your mercies toward me? 16...You, O Lord, are our Father, Our redeemer from Everlasting is Your name. 64:1 Oh, that you would rend the heavens! That You would come down! That the mountains might shake at Your presence—2as fire burns brushwood, as fire causes water to boil—to make Your name known to Your adversaries, that the nations may tremble at Your presence! 3 When You did awesome things for which we did not look... 4 Since the beginning of the world men have not heard...nor has the eye seen any God besides You, who acts for the one who waits for Him. 5You meet him who rejoices and does righteousness, who remembers you in Your ways." (Isa. 63:15-16; 64:1-7)

For the release of God's promise to pour out His Spirit and release dreams, visions, and prophecy.

"17 In the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. 18 On My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy. 19I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: blood, fire and vapor of smoke. 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord. 21 Whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved." (Acts 2:17-21)

For desire and action to be the light of the world.

1. (Luke 19:1-10) Don't Just Pretend that You Love Others, Really Love Them
2. (Mark 11:15-17) Hate What is Wrong. What should you do if someone gives you the answers to a test before the test? How did Jesus show he hated what was wrong?
3. (Matthew 14:19) Love Each Other – Jesus shows compassion.
4. (John 2:1-11) Care About Others – Jesus helps someone in need.
5. (John 13:1-17) Serve Others – Jesus washes the disciple's feet.
6. (Romans 12:9-21) – States many ways we can stand out in a crowd.

Prayers of Repentance

Precedence:

Repentance is always a place that leads to further, and greater, faithful obedience to Jesus. When repentance is seen as a means to further faithfulness, then it becomes a lifegiving act that frees us from the weight of sin (Heb 12:1) and allows us to take on the yoke of Christ to find rest for our souls (Matt 11:28-30). Scripture makes it clear that there has to be consistency with our confession of Christ and our faithful obedience toward him.

Luke 6:46, "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?"

James 1:21-25, "Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing."

Given these scriptures, obedience should accompany our confession and commitment to the Lord. We cannot be a people who profess faith, yet do not obey the Lord. We would be wise to consider how we are, as James says, enduring in faithful obedience.

Similarly to this idea, A.W. Tozer says, "Have you noticed how much praying for revival has been going on of late - and how little revival has resulted? I believe the problem is that we have been trying to substitute praying for obeying, and it simply will not work."`

With this in mind, repentance is portrayed in scripture as a fitting response for sin, a way of purifying our hearts before God, our act by which we are justified with God, and a prerequisite for kingdom advancement. In Matthew and Mark's gospels, Jesus opens his ministry proclaiming the need for repentance as the kingdom is at hand. Repentance is the way in which all people enter the kingdom. Furthermore, King Saul and King David show us that repentance (as a means to which we strive to fully obey) acts as the means by which we abide with the Holy Spirit at the revelation and/or conviction of our sin (Psalm 51:10-11, 1 Samuel 13:13-14; 15:22-29).

Turning away from sin

Luke 6:46, "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?"

Matthew 3:1-2, "In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.'"

Matthew 4:17, "From that time on Jesus began to preach, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.'"

Mark 1:14-15, "Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.'"

2 Chronicles 7:14, "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land."

- Testimony video of how people took to heart 2 Chronicles 7:14, and saw God heal the land in the Fiji islands because of their seeking Him and repentance of their sin.

Psalm 130,

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord!

O Lord, hear my voice!
Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my pleas for mercy!

If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,
O Lord, who could stand?

But with you there is forgiveness,
that you may be feared.

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;

my soul waits for the Lord
more than watchmen for the morning,
more than watchmen for the morning.

O Israel, hope in the Lord!
For with the Lord there is steadfast love,
and with him is plentiful redemption.

And he will redeem Israel
from all his iniquities.

Psalm 130 is a Psalm of repentance. J. Stephen Yuille comments on this Psalm stating, "repentance involves change…we've only repented of our sin when we're prepared to let go of our sin…Lots of people *lament* their sin…Esau lamented. Saul lamented. Ahab lamented. Judas lamented. But none of them ever repented. We repent when we see our sin without making excuses."[1]

[1] Yuille, J. S. (2015). *Longing for Home: A journey through the psalms of ascent*. Shepherd Press. 108, 114.

Purifying our hearts before God

1 Samuel 13:13-14, "'And Samuel said to Saul, 'You have done foolishly. You have not kept the command of the Lord your God, with which he commanded you. For then the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought out a man after his own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you.'"

1 Samuel 15:22-2

"Samuel said, 'Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices,
as in obeying the voice of the Lord?
Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,
and to listen than the fat of rams.
For rebellion is as the sin of divination,
and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry.
Because you have rejected the word of the Lord,
he has also rejected you from being king.'
'Saul said to Samuel, 'I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice. Now therefore, please pardon my sin and return with me that I may bow before the Lord.' And Samuel said to Saul, 'I will not return with you. For you have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you from being king over Israel.' As Samuel turned to go away, Saul seized the skirt of his robe, and it tore. And Samuel said to him, 'The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you. And also the Glory of Israel will not lie or have regret, for he is not a man, that he should have regret.'"

Psalm 51:10-11

"Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me."

Psalm 119:8, 11

"I will keep your statutes;
do not utterly forsake me!...
I have stored up your word in my heart,
that I might not sin against you."

Repentance as a means of justification (and humility)

Luke 18:10-14, "'Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

Repentance for refreshing and healing
Acts 3:19-20, "Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus."

James 5:14-16 , "Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed."

Practice:

Repentance, in practice, should be seen as a life-giving, fellowship restoring, transformational act. As the scriptures above show, repentance has many benefits. But how should we go about repenting? Should we do it with just ourselves, in public, be vague about it, or specific? What should repentance look like for it to be a fruitful practice in our lives?

When practicing repentance, we may think that it should only be done under conviction, or when someone points out a need for repentance in our life, but what if we took time to take the initiative on repentance? King David did this in Psalm 139:1, 23-24, "O Lord, you have searched me and known me!...Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me." King David was asking God to search his heart and reveal any "grievous way" in him. We, too, should consider this in the context of repentance. Yes, we should repent when convicted or confronted, but we should also be diligent in searching our heart for any way that may not please the Lord or be right in his eyes.

Examining our own heart, like King David
The following scriptures give insight into what we can examine our hearts for to see if there may be any need for repentance:

Galatians 6:19-20, "Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these."

James 1:26, "If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless."

James 3:14-17, "if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice."

James 4:1-2, 3 "What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel…You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."

James 5:9, "Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door."

1 John 2:15-17, "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever."

Read of the 5 of 7 churches in Revelation 2 - 3 that have specific sins against God.

Repentance should be specific
As seen in the scriptures above, there are very specific things that can ill and sicken our heart before God. During our times of repentance, it is wise to be specific of what it is exactly that we are repenting from. The scriptures say that the Holy Spirit will bring conviction (John 16:8), and since our God is not a God of confusion (1 Cor 14:33), we should expect that he is able to bring about specific things that we need to repent of.

Here is a link to a comprehensive list of over 1,000+ commands in the New Testament. Use this list to identify any specific things that need to be repented of, according to the scriptures.

We should expect a gracious God to respond to our repentance
Romans 2:4 illustrates this truth by saying, "Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?"

Luke 15:18-20 shows the Father heart of God in responding to sinners who repent. Luke 15:10 and 32 go on to say: "I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents…It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'"

Repentance is the means by which we seek the Lord and are in right relationship with Him
The parable in Luke 15:11-32 is the most famous illustration.

2 Chronicles 7:14, "if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land."

Jeremiah 29:11-13, "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart."

Imperative Prayer

Precedence:

The below scriptures show the model for imperative type prayers. These prayers petition God within the bounds of what scripture reveals to us about who God is, how he moves, and what he commands as normative.

These types of prayer are "reminding" God of his own promises. Within this type of prayer we are communicating back to God the promises he's made to us within scripture, and asking him to fulfill his own promises.

Scripture basis for imperative prayer:

Daniel 9:3-19, "3 Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. 4 I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession, saying, "O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, 5 we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules. 6 We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. 7 To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us open shame, as at this day, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those who are near and those who are far away, in all the lands to which you have driven them, because of the treachery that they have committed against you. 8 To us, O Lord, belongs open shame, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against you. 9 To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him 10 and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God by walking in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. 11 All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice. And the curse and oath that are written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against him. 12 He has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled us, by bringing upon us a great calamity. For under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what has been done against Jerusalem. 13 As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this calamity has come upon us; yet we have not entreated the favor of the Lord our God, turning from our iniquities and gaining insight by your truth. 14 Therefore the Lord has kept ready the calamity and has brought it upon us, for the Lord our God is righteous in all the works that he has done, and we have not obeyed his voice. 15 And now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and have made a name for yourself, as at this day, we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

16 "O Lord, according to all your righteous acts, let your anger and your wrath turn away from your city Jerusalem, your holy hill, because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and your people have become a byword among all who are around us. 17 Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his pleas for mercy, and for your own sake, O Lord, make your face to shine upon your sanctuary, which is desolate. 18 O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name. For we do not present our pleas before you because of

our righteousness, but because of your great mercy. 19 O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, for your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people are called by your name."

Matthew 6:9-13, "9 Pray then like this:
"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
10 Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
11 Give us this day our daily bread,
12 and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
13 And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

Practice:

The below prayers are a few examples of imperative type prayers based on the scriptures:

1. Father, place your hand on our ministry, to bring about righteousness, strength, favor, your pleasure, and your power for signs and wonders (Ephesians 6:10, Psalm 16:11; 18:29, 1 Kings 18:45-46, Exodus 31:18, Isaiah 41:13, Acts 4:30).
2. Holy Spirit, go before us to proclaim the truth of scripture to every student at Penn, that they would repent and turn toward you God (Ephesians 1:17 - 18, John 14:26; 16:13 - 15)
3. Father, hear the prayers of your people on our campuses and grant us good gifts and your Spirit (Luke 11:13, Matthew 7:11).
4. Micah 7:8-10, 18-20 is also a biblical example of imperative prayer:

> "8 Rejoice not over me, O my enemy;
> when I fall, I shall rise;
> when I sit in darkness,
> the Lord will be a light to me.
> 9 I will bear the indignation of the Lord
> because I have sinned against him,
> until he pleads my cause
> and executes judgment for me.
> He will bring me out to the light;
> I shall look upon his vindication.
> 10 Then my enemy will see,
> and shame will cover her who said to me,
> "Where is the Lord your God?"
> My eyes will look upon her;
> now she will be trampled down
> like the mire of the streets…

18 Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity
    and passing over transgression
    for the remnant of his inheritance?
He does not retain his anger forever,
    because he delights in steadfast love.
19 He will again have compassion on us;
    he will tread our iniquities underfoot.
You will cast all our sins
    into the depths of the sea.
20 You will show faithfulness to Jacob
    and steadfast love to Abraham,
as you have sworn to our fathers
    from the days of old."

Forming your own Imperative prayers:

Situation (identify what/who/why you're praying)	**Scripture Basis** (what scripture are you using to base your prayer?)	**Prayer** (give words to your prayer)
Seeking God when he is silent	Luke 11:13, Matthew 7:11	…You said you would answer… …You said you would come if we seek you…

Intercessory Prayer

Precedence:

Many times in scripture we see biblical figures interceding on behalf of people. These figures, in intercession, are "standing between" God and people for various reasons: to bring about God's purposes, withhold the consequences of sin and unrighteous living, or to bring about God's victory. These biblical figures include such instances of intercession as:

1. Moses, Aaron, and Hur interceded so that Israel would win in battle: **Exodus 17:8-15**, "Then Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim. 9 So Moses said to Joshua, 'Choose for us men, and go out and fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand.' 10 So Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. 11 Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed, and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. 12 But Moses' hands grew weary, so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side. So his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. 13 And Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the sword. 14 Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Write this as a memorial in a book and recite it in the ears of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.' 15 And Moses built an altar and called the name of it, The Lord Is My Banner."
2. Abraham praying on behalf of Sodom and Gomorrah: **Genesis 18:22-33**, "Abraham still stood before the Lord. 23 Then Abraham drew near and said, 'Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? 24 Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city. Will you then sweep away the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous who are in it? 25 Far be it from you to do such a thing, to put the righteous to death with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?' 26 And the Lord said, 'If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will spare the whole place for their sake.'"
   27 Abraham answered and said, "'Behold, I have undertaken to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes. 28 Suppose five of the fifty righteous are lacking. Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?' And he said, 'I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there.' 29 Again he spoke to him and said, 'Suppose forty are found there.' He answered, 'For the sake of forty I will not do it.' 30 Then he said, 'Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak. Suppose thirty are found there.' He answered, 'I will not do it, if I find thirty there.' 31 He said, 'Behold, I have undertaken to speak to the Lord. Suppose twenty are found there.' He answered, 'For the sake of twenty I will not destroy it.' 32 Then he said, 'Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak again but this once. Suppose ten are found there.' He answered, 'For the sake of ten I will not destroy it.' 33 And the Lord went his way, when he had finished speaking to Abraham, and Abraham returned to his place."
3. Esther intercedes on behalf of Israel, that they would not face annihilation: **Esther 7:3-6**, "So Queen Esther answered, 'If I have found favor in the eyes of the king, and if it pleases the king, grant me my life—this is my petition. And spare the life of my people—this is my request! 4 For we have been sold, I and my people, for destruction, slaughter and annihilation. If we had simply been sold as male and female slaves, I would have remained silent, for such distress would not be worth

disturbing the king.'
5 King Ahasuerus responded to Queen Esther, 'Who is he? Where is the man that presumed to do this?'
6 Esther replied, 'The man—the adversary and foe—is this wicked Haman!'"

4. The apostles pray with the church community to intercede on behalf of spreading the gospel: **Acts 4:29-33**, "'And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, 30 while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.' 31 And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness…33 And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all."
5. Jesus as our intercessor:
    a. **Romans 8:34**, "Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us."
    b. **1 John 2:1**, "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."
    c. **Hebrews 7:25**, "Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them."

Practice:

Intercession exists in the "already, but not yet" reality of the new covenant through Jesus Christ. The primary aim of intercession is illustrated by Jesus when he teaches concerning prayer, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt 6:9-10). The aim of intercession is two fold: 1) to honor God's name (i.e. that God be glorified), and 2) that God's kingdom would be advanced in the earth (i.e. his purposes be fulfilled, which will glorify God).

As the biblical figures above show, their acts of intercession brought about God's glory and purposes in the earth. Likewise, during intercession, we are "standing between" God and people for the purpose of his glory and will on the earth.

Refer to the "Praying the Scriptures" section to help guide the heart and practice of intercessory prayer. Praying scripture, especially in intercessory prayer, is important because it helps us understand and discern God's will from our own will/desires in prayer.

Example one:
Praying for boldness to share the gospel with a friend/family member/classmate to hear and respond to the gospel.

"Father, like the early church, I ask that you'd fill me with your spirit, that I may be bold to speak the gospel. I also pray that you would help me speak my testimony of Jesus in my life, and that my testimony would glorify your name and help my friend/family member/classmate to hear and respond to the gospel."

Meditative Prayer

Precedence:

Meditation has two main purposes: 1) greater understanding, and 2) transformed life. Richard Foster, says that meditation involves "listening to God's word, reflecting on God's works, rehearsing God's deeds, ruminating on God's law…in each case there is stress upon changed behavior as a result of our encounter with the living God. Repentance and obedience are essential features in any biblical understanding of meditation…it is this continual focus upon obedience and faithfulness that most clearly distinguishes Christian meditation…Christian meditation, very simply, is the ability to hear God's voice and obey his word."[2]

The following scriptures emphasize Richard Foster's points on Christian meditation:
Psalms 119:97, 101-102, "Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long…I hold back my feet from every evil way, in order to keep your word. I do not turn aside from your rules, for you have taught me."

Psalms 1:2-3, "but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers."

Psalms 19:14, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer."

Isaiah 26:3, "You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you."

Joshua 1:8, "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success."

Philippians 4:8, "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."

Ecclesiastes 5:1-2, "Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. To draw near to listen is better than to offer the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they are doing evil. Be not rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven and you are on earth. Therefore let your words be few."

Practice:

In a sincere effort to faithfully and beneficially practice this type of prayer, Richard Foster offers further insight, "I am not speaking of some mushy, giddy, buddy-buddy relationship. All such sentimentality only

[2] Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (San Francisco, Harper & Row: 1988), 15-17.

betrays how little we know, how distant we are from the Lord high and lifted up who is revealed to us in Scripture. John tells us in his Apocalypse that when he saw the reigning Christ, he fell at his feet as though dead, and so should we (Rev. 1:17). No, I am speaking of a reality more akin to what the disciples felt in the upper room when they experienced both intense intimacy and awful reverence."[3]

In practice, we are not seeking to just feel, or even simply experience, God. We are seeking to both experience his grace, presence, and power, but also to be transformed by him, to repent of sin, to be purified into his image (that is Jesus), and to further obey and follow in God's ways, so that as the scripture states, "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing" (James 1:22-25). As we meditate on scripture, we seek to further understand (Eph 1:17-19), but let us also, in our understanding, live out our newly encouraged faith so that we will not deceive ourselves.

Example meditation one:
Choose a passage of scripture, the Psalms are particularly helpful. Below is a brief list of categorized Psalms to help guide you:

Types of Psalms to guide meditation:[4]

- Prayer for help (individual): Psalms 3-7, 13, 16, 23, 27, 56, 62, 88.
- Prayer for help (corporate): Psalms 44, 74, 79, 80, 83, 98, 105-106.
- Thanksgiving (individual): Psalms 30,107, 116.
- Of praise/exaltation: Psalms 29, 47, 98, 113, 145.
- Of Instruction (for encouragement and enablement of trust and obedience): Psalms 1-2, 19, 33, 37, 49, 51, 73, 119.

1. Begin by reading the Psalm, or scripture passage, several times.
2. Ask yourself as you read:
    a. What stands out to you within the scripture passage?
    b. What phrase, sentence, or sense is being impressed upon you as you read the passage?
    c. How is this scripture passage speaking to you?
    d. How is the Holy Spirit ministering to you as you read the scripture passage?
    e. How is the Holy Spirit taking the information of scripture and imparting the truth of scripture into your heart?
3. Take time to reflect on how the Holy Spirit is working in you.
    a. How is the Holy Spirit leading you to now live?
    b. Do you need to confess and repent of anything in order to live in a new way of obedience to scripture and the work of the Holy Spirit in your life?
4. How will you now live in response to the Holy Spirit working in you?

[3] Foster, 19-20.
[4] List derived from James L. Mays, *Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011).

Example meditation two:
Palms down, palms up is the practice of giving things up to God (palms down), particularly sins, weights, or burdens, then receiving from God whatever he may have for you in response, or replacement, of the sin, weight, or burden (palms up).

Here are a few scriptures that help conceptualize the practice palms down, palms up, so that we can live in the truth and blessing of that these passages mention:

Matthew 11:28-30, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Hebrews 12:1-2, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith."
1 Peter 5:6-7, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you."

Psalm 55:22, "Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you."

How will you now live in response to the working of the Lord in you?

Prayer as Thanksgiving

Precedence:

God is always worthy of praise. Prayer of thanksgiving is our act of praise toward God, even if we do not "feel" thankful. As Hebrews 13:15 states, "Through him [Jesus] then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name."

1 Thessalonians 5:18, "give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

David's prayer of thanksgiving for establishing his house

1 Chronicles 17:16-27 "Then King David went in and sat before the Lord and said, 'Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house that you have brought me thus far? 17 And this was a small thing in your eyes, O God. You have also spoken of your servant's house for a great while to come, and have shown me future generations, O Lord God! 18 And what more can David say to you for honoring your servant? For you know your servant. 19 For your servant's sake, O Lord, and according to your own heart, you have done all this greatness, in making known all these great things. 20 There is none like you, O Lord, and there is no God besides you, according to all that we have heard with our ears. 21 And who is like your people Israel, the one nation on earth whom God went to redeem to be his people, making for yourself a name for great and awesome things, in driving out nations before your people whom you redeemed from Egypt? 22 And you made your people Israel to be your people forever, and you, O Lord, became their God. 23 And now, O Lord, let the word that you have spoken concerning your servant and concerning his house be established forever, and do as you have spoken, 24 and your name will be established and magnified forever, saying, "'The Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, is Israel's God,'" and the house of your servant David will be established before you. 25 For you, my God, have revealed to your servant that you will build a house for him. Therefore your servant has found courage to pray before you. 26 And now, O Lord, you are God, and you have promised this good thing to your servant. 27 Now you have been pleased to bless the house of your servant, that it may continue forever before you, for it is you, O Lord, who have blessed, and it is blessed forever.'"

Praise of the one leper

Luke 17:11-19, "11 On the way to Jerusalem he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. 12 And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance 13 and lifted up their voices, saying, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.' 14 When he saw them he said to them, 'Go and show yourselves to the priests.' And as they went they were cleansed. 15 Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; 16 and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. 17 Then Jesus answered, 'Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? 18 Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?' 19 And he said to him, "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well."'

Scriptures of Thanksgiving unto God

Lamentations 3:21-25, "But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 'The

Lord is my portion,' says my soul, 'therefore I will hope in him.' The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him."

Psalm 33:1, "Shout for joy in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the upright. Give thanks to the Lord with the lyre; make melody to him with the harp of ten strings!"

Psalm 95:2, "Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!"

Psalm 100:4, "Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!"

Hebrews 13:15, "Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name."

Practice:

In all circumstances, prayer as thanksgiving enables us to see God, and how he is working in our life and the world, rightly. The life of Israel (as a community of people) when they were in the desert shows how immediate complaining, and not careful consideration for how God is working, further birthed an unfaithful people whose hearts were hard and faith was weak; therefore, not allowing them to enter God's promised land. For us, their example shows how our complaining and lack of thankfulness for God can prevent us from seeing God rightly and living in the life he has called us to.

When practicing prayer as thanksgiving, we can always be thankful to God for who he is. God is holy, righteous, slow to anger, patient, loving, forgiving, just in all his ways, provider, counselor, savior, deliverer, King of kings, Lord of lords, all powerful, all knowing, always present, to name a few. We can also be thankful for God's faithfulness in our lives, for his promises to us, and for his future work in our lives. Below is a helpful pattern of thanksgiving to God to help guide prayer:

1. Thank God for who he is (his attributes/his character).
    a. Colossians 1:15 says, Jesus "is the image of the invisible God"
    b. Read through the gospels to see how Jesus is revealing the "image of the invisible God" and be thankful to God for that revelation.
2. Thank God for his faithfulness.
    a. Numbers 23:19, "God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?"
    b. Isaiah 55:11-12, "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it."
    c. How has God proven faithful in your life so far? Praise him for it.
3. Thank God for his promises to you.

    a. What promises has God given to you within the scriptures?
    b. What promises has God given to you personally through the ministry of the Holy Spirit?
4. Thank God for his future work in your life.
    a. Habakkuk 2:2-3, "Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay."
    b. Philippians 1:6, "And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."
    c. Romans 8:28, "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."

Prayer as Laments

Precedence:

Grieving and sorrow (lamenting) is often overlooked in prayer, but should not be neglected in order to appear happy or unauthentically joyful. Scripture clearly shows the purpose of grief in our life and that life will have times of grief (Book of Lamentations, Matthew 5:3-4, Psalm 34:18; 42:3; 147:3, Proverbs 13:12). When we push aside, or avoid, our grief it can be damaging to our spirits, hearts, mind, and body. Scripture reveals that we have a God who we can go to with our grief; furthermore, that we have a God (Jesus) who is familiar with our grief, "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 55:3), "You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book (Psalm 56:8 NLT), and "we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses" (Hebrews 4:14).

Grief and sorrow, as described in the scriptures, primarily has two forms: 1) a passionate plea to God to intervene on behalf of our grief, and 2) expressed grief or sorrow over something that is irreversible.

The following Psalms show these expressions of grief and sorrow: Psalms 3-7, 10, 13, 22, 89.

Practice:

We feel grief, but we don't always know what to think about grief, or how to handle it. The psalms give us a very helpful pattern in dealing with grief: 1) a raw expression of grief, 2) statement of trust in God, and 3) praise that God has heard our cry/prayer.

This pattern of expressing and processing grief is like a first aid kit to our soul, because we often think that God does not want to hear of our grief, that we somehow need to be proper in our grief, or that we simply do not know how to put words to our grief (sometimes expressing grief comes in the form of tears, cries, or moans from the heart and soul).

Lastly, processing grief with the same pattern that we see in the Psalms allows us to not only "get it off our chest" but to also find healing and transformation. A journal is recommended to help process grief in this way. Begin writing/praying by:

1. Expressing your raw grief to God.
    a. Hold nothing back, the Psalmist held nothing back in their grief; neither should you.
    b. Grief does not have to be prescriptive, express the grief: how it's caused you to grieve, express the reasons for the grief, express how the grief has impacted your life and others lives around you.
2. Express a statement of trust in God.
    a. How can you begin to trust God to care for you in your grief?
    b. How can you trust God with the circumstance, relationship, or reasons for your grief?

    c. How, or what, will you pray to express trust in God? What specific prayer can you pray to express trust in God?
3. Praise God.
    a. Explore the "Prayer as Thanksgiving" section to express gratitude and praise that God has heard your prayer.

Personal Devotional Prayer Aids

Prayer Exercises:

Here is a list of some Christian meditation and prayer exercises you can do during daily prayer. You are of course free to choose from any of them or adapt them as you feel would be beneficial.

- **Psalms.** Pick a Psalm to pray through. Spend some time reading and contemplating it individually. Then transition into a time of corporate prayer. Pray through the psalm, using it as a guideline for your prayer. Convert the general prayers and praises into specific ones for your own life.
- **Silent meditation**: could be a theological concept, attribute of God, image, the cross, etc.
- Repetition of the **Jesus prayer:** "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."
- Pray through the **Lord's Prayer** as a guide.
- **Lectio Divina.**
  Lectio– Select a passage of Scripture and read it to yourself several times. Let the words sink in, but don't feel the need to exegete the literal meaning of the passage. Listen for a word or phrase that catches your attention. Focus on that word or phrase and allow the Spirit to begin speaking to you.

  Meditatio—Meditate on the word or phrase that caught your attention. Don't limit your thoughts or reflections to the confines of the original passage. Allow the Holy Spirit to continue to speak to you. What thoughts, memories, emotions, ideas, or images are stirred? Pay attention to those. Listen to what God might be saying.

  Oratio— As you feel led, begin conversing with God in response to the *meditatio*. Listen and respond. Listen and respond.

  Contemplatio—As the conversation winds down, enter into contemplative rest with your new understanding, the new insight God has given you, and the perspective that this time has provided.
- **Desire identification.** Spend some time meditating and journaling your desires. Making a list of your desires, good, bad, and neutral. Then spend some time comparing those desires against Scripture. Finally, pray for purity of heart and tell Him your requests in thanksgiving. (Jam 4:1-10; Ps 119; 1 Jn 2:15-17)

- **Anxiety/Worry identification.** Using Philippians 4:6-7 as a guide, meditate on what are you anxious about? Turn your anxious thoughts into declarations of God's goodness. Meaning, if you're anxious about the future, we can be thankful that God is trustworthy of our future. Find scripture to support your reasoning to be thankful. Examples: I'm anxious about the future, but I thank God that as I trust him, He will make my paths straight (Pro 3:5-7); I'm anxious about the future, but I thank God that He is all knowing, and that all the days of my life are written in his book before I was born (Psa 139:16); I'm anxious about the future, but I thank God that as I walk on the narrow path he will lead me into righteousness (Matt 7:14); I'm anxious about the future, but I thank God that His word is a lamp unto my feet that will guide me in following Him (Psa 119:105).