

## Breath Prayer Walk

**Introduction:** With a breath God brought mankind to life (Genesis 2:7) and that first moment of consciousness was experienced in the very Presence of God. Our lives continue to be sustained by the breath God provides us and He continues to desire that we would live our lives in awareness of His Presence with us. The average person is said to take roughly 20,000 breaths per day. The Breath Prayer Walk is designed to utilize our breathing as a tool for prayer. *Breath prayer* can be said or thought in a single breath. In doing so, our prayers are made simple, and in the repetition of that prayer we are inviting God to be at work in our hearts, forming *US* through the prayer. The breath prayer is well described as a prayer of the heart, and it is part of a long history of Christian prayer that aims to move us from the HEAD to the HEART. Repeated prayers tend to deepen and expand in meaning as they are used in various contexts of our life. Practicing breath prayer while walking is a powerful way to engage this spiritual practice. Over time, a sensitivity to God is deepened in our heart and a single breath can return us from our distraction, inviting us again to be present to the Presence of God with us in that moment.

**Starting your walk:** To engage this simple walk, begin standing still. Take some time to feel the ground beneath your feet and to breathe deeply. Now in a context of turning your heart to God, invite His Spirit to direct you to the “name” of God your heart most needs to encounter at this time [Good Shepherd, Heavenly Father, El Shaddai, Savior, Holy Spirit, Prince of Peace]. During the breath prayer walk, the name of God will be the inhaling part of your breath prayer. Next, consider the simple prayer your heart wants to direct to God (usually 4 words or less). The praise or request will be the exhaling part of your breath prayer. For example, your breath prayer could be, “Good Shepard (spoken while inhaling).” “Lead me to life (spoken while exhaling).” Or, “Holy Spirit (spoken while inhaling).” “Draw me closer (spoken while exhaling).” As you select the two components of your prayer, take a moment to invite God to meet you during this time of prayer. Then, say your breath prayer several times quietly as you continue standing. Now you are ready to start walking, finding a pace that is conducive to your praying the breath prayer. You may notice that as you walk and pray, your perception of what is taking place within you and what is going on around you is being impacted. Even more importantly, you may sense your heart present and awakening you to God in a unique way.

**After Your Walk:** When your walk concludes set some time aside to go through the same process you started with of paying attention to your body and your breath. As you finish your walk, offer a brief prayer of thanksgiving for the time and ask God if there is something specific, He wants you to take with you from this walking experience.

NOTE: Breath prayer fits well with many solitary activities from common household chores and routine tasks to standing in line and sitting in traffic jams! It is a good companion for rhythmic exercise such as walking, jogging, or swimming as well. (*The source for some of this material is taken from the book “Soul Feast”, by Marjorie J. Thompson.*)