

8. Take time with God

Take time with God can be downloaded as a PDF. Go to <https://www.dayone.co.uk/products/nothing-but-the-truth>

**Every morning lean your arms awhile
upon the windowsill of heaven
and gaze upon the Lord.
Then with the vision in your heart,
turn strong to meet your day.**

The seventeenth-century Anglican minister Thomas Blake captured in this verse all that, a hundred years later, the American Congregational minister Austin Phelps referred to as ‘The Still Hour’ and which, a further hundred years on, was known by evangelical Christians as the ‘Quiet Time’.

By whatever name it is known, the daily ‘Time with God’ has been lost in the busyness of the twenty-first century. In many Christian homes, husbands and wives do not pray together and children rarely hear their Christian parents pray at all. If prayers are offered, it is only occasionally and with as little time as we can manage to spare.

The rush of modern life is only one reason for the loss of what used to be an essential feature for every Christian home. We have lost an appetite for prayer because it is no longer seen as the privilege it really is: when a forgiven sinner can boldly approach the immediate presence of the Sovereign God of the universe and call him ‘Father’. His ever-listening ear is always open for the voice of his children (Jeremiah 29:12).

We have also lost confidence in prayer. So many of our prayers are seemingly unanswered. We do not get what we want or expect, so we give up. We agree with the importance of prayer, but leave it to others. Ours did not work, so why waste time?

There is another reason for our abandonment of ‘Time with God’. We have so many things for which we should pray that we never quite get started. We may have tried schemes without number, but they all come to nothing sooner or later.

Planned praying is rejected as unspiritual by some Christians, so they are content either not to pray at all or to enter the shallows of prayers that float around until the mind drifts away.

If the essentials for a healthy Christian life—time with God’s word and time with God himself—are not to be lost altogether, we must reassess their importance in our life and make time for them. But we must do more than make time. We must make both our reading and our praying meaningful.

What follows here is only a guide to keep us focused each day. It will ensure that we do not rush into prayer and badger God with a long list of requests before we have settled our minds on the God we are approaching. An adoring, thankful and repentant heart is what God desires from his people before they come with supplication and intercession.

We must each turn the guide here into our own ‘Time with God’. The suggested headings need to be filled out with our personal items for thanksgiving and intercession. There are reliable Christian missions that provide daily prayer guides for persecuted Christians. We cannot pray for everything and everyone each day, but over the course of a week we can bring before God many of those people and concerns that we have often promised to pray for.

The Scripture verses are intended to root our prayers in the word of God. And there can be no more persuasive prayers with God than those that are based upon his promise and pattern. Some of the deepest and strongest prayers ever written come from the hand of the apostle Paul, so we have taken one of these each day and turned it to our own use.

Our ‘Time with God’ and his word is intended to be an enjoyable privilege. Let’s make it so.

Sunday

ADORATION

For God in creation

‘Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens? Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket, or weighed the mountains on the scales and the hills in a balance? Who has understood the mind of the LORD, or instructed him as his counsellor? Whom did the LORD consult to enlighten him, and who taught him the right way? Who was it that taught him knowledge or showed him the path of understanding?’ Isaiah 40:12–14).

CONFESSION

‘Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself’”’ (Matthew 22:37–39).

THANKSGIVING

For the Lord’s day

‘By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done’ Genesis 2:2–3).

For our home and family

‘As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord’ (Joshua 24:15).

For preaching and Christian fellowship

‘I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now’ (Philippians 1:4–5).

SUPPLICATION

For ourselves, our family and our church

We pray that out of your glorious riches you will strengthen us with power through your Spirit in our inner being, so that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith. And we pray that, being rooted and established in love, we may have power, together

with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that we may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God (based on Ephesians 3:16–19).

For preachers to preach with attractive and Holy Spirit power

‘My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, so that your faith might not rest on men’s wisdom, but on God’s power’ (1 Corinthians 2:4–5).

For revival

‘Although our sins testify against us, O LORD, do something for the sake of your name. For our backsliding is great; we have sinned against you ... O LORD, we acknowledge our wickedness and the guilt of our fathers; we have indeed sinned against you. For the sake of your name do not despise us; do not dishonour your glorious throne. Remember your covenant with us and do not break it’ (Jeremiah 14:7, 20–21).

INTERCESSION FOR OTHERS

For persecuted Christians

‘Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow-prisoners, and those who are ill-treated as if you yourselves were suffering’ (Hebrews 13:3).

For our missionary friends and missions

‘Pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honoured ... And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith’ (2 Thessalonians 3:1–2).

For our church leaders and members

‘Respect those who ... are over you in the Lord ... Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other’ (1 Thessalonians 5:12–13).

Monday

ADORATION

For the providence of God

‘Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counsellor? Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him? For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory for ever! Amen’ (Romans 11:33–36).

CONFESSION

‘Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption’ (Ephesians 4:29–30).

THANKSGIVING

For our home and family

‘No good thing does [God] withhold from those whose walk is blameless’ (Psalm 84:11).

For God’s love and forgiveness

‘The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love ... He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him’ (Psalm 103:8, 10–13).

For his Holy Spirit and the Bible

‘All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work’ (2 Timothy 3:16–17).

SUPPLICATION

For ourselves, our family and our church

O God who gives endurance and encouragement, give us a spirit of unity among ourselves as we follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth we may glorify you, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Fill us with all joy and peace as we trust in you, so that we may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (based on Romans 15:5–6, 13).

For true wisdom from God

‘But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness’ (James 3:17–18).

For revival

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

INTERCESSION FOR OTHERS

For persecuted Christians

‘For a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials ... so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed’ (1 Peter 1:6–7).

For our friends

‘A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity’ (Proverbs 17:17).

For Christians involved in education

‘A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher’ (Luke 6:40).

For the moral and spiritual life of our nation

‘Seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you ... Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper’ (Jeremiah 29:7).

Tuesday

ADORATION

For the glory of God

‘All the angels were standing round the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, saying: “Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honour and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!”’ (Revelation 7:11–12).

For God’s faithfulness

‘Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands’ (Deuteronomy 7:9).

CONFESSION

‘I have strayed like a lost sheep. Seek your servant, for I have not forgotten your commands’ (Psalm 119:176).

THANKSGIVING

For our health and God’s provision of many good things

‘Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment’ (1 Timothy 6:17).

For assurance of salvation

‘I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord’ (Romans 8:38–39).

SUPPLICATION

For ourselves, our family and our church

O God of our Lord Jesus Christ, our glorious Father, we pray that you will give us the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that we may know you better. We pray also that the eyes of our hearts may be enlightened in order that we may know the hope

to which you have called us, the riches of your glorious inheritance in the saints, and your incomparably great power for us who believe (based on Ephesians 1:17–19).

To be filled with the fruit of the Spirit

‘The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control ... Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit’ (Galatians 5:22–25).

For opportunity to witness and the wise use of time

‘Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil’ (Ephesians 5:15–16).

For revival

‘We have heard with our ears, O God; our fathers have told us what you did in their days, in days long ago ... You have made us a reproach to our neighbours, the scorn and derision of those around us. You have made us a byword among the nations; the peoples shake their heads at us ... Awake, O Lord! Why do you sleep? Rouse yourself! Do not reject us for ever. Why do you hide your face and forget our misery and oppression? ... Rise up and help us; redeem us because of your unfailing love’ (Psalm 44:1, 13–14, 23–24, 26).

INTERCESSION FOR OTHERS

For persecuted Christians

‘Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart’ (Hebrews 12:3).

For Christians at work

‘Whatever you do ... do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him ... work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men’ (Colossians 3:17, 23).

For the elderly, all who are unwell mentally or physically, and those who care for them

‘Even to your old age and grey hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you’ (Isaiah 46:4).

Wednesday

ADORATION

For God's love and faithfulness

'Your love, O LORD, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies. Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your justice like the great deep. O LORD, you preserve both man and beast. How priceless is your unfailing love! Both high and low among men find refuge in the shadow of your wings' (Psalm 36:5-7).

CONFESSION

'... According to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight' (Psalm 51:1-4).

THANKSGIVING

For our home and family

'[Cornelius] and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly' (Acts 10:2).

For freedom and peace

'The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble' (Psalm 9:9).

For the intercession of Christ

'We have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God ... We have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need' (Hebrews 4:14-16).

SUPPLICATION

For ourselves, our family and our church

Lord, fill us with the knowledge of your will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding, in order that we may live lives worthy of you and may please you in

every way. Help us to bear fruit in every good work and to grow in the knowledge of God. Strengthen us with all power according to your glorious might so that we may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully give thanks to you, who have qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light (based on Colossians 1:9–12).

To be strong in Christ

‘Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes ... And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints’ (Ephesians 6:10–11, 18).

For revival

“Has God forgotten to be merciful? Has he in anger withheld his compassion?” Then I thought, “To this I will appeal: the years of the right hand of the Most High.” I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago. I will meditate on all your works and consider all your mighty deeds. Your ways, O God, are holy. What god is so great as our God? You are the God who performs miracles; you display your power among the peoples’ (Psalm 77:9–14).

INTERCESSION FOR OTHERS

For persecuted Christians

‘Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance’ (James 1:2–3).

For singles and those bereaved

‘If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose’ (Philippians 2:1–2).

For Christian parents

‘Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it’ (Proverbs 22:6).

Thursday

ADORATION

The Triune God and his electing love

‘[You have been] chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood ... Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you’ (1 Peter 1:2–4).

CONFESSION

‘He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy’ (Proverbs 28:13; see also 6:16–19).

THANKSGIVING

For the privilege of being a Christian

‘To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God’ (John 1:12).

For God’s promises

‘Through [God’s goodness and glory] he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires’ (2 Peter 1: 4).

For the certain hope of Christ’s return

‘... We wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ’ (Titus 2:13).

SUPPLICATION

For ourselves, our family and our church

Lord, we pray that you may count us worthy of your calling, and that by your power you will fulfil every good purpose of ours and every act prompted by our faith. We

pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in us, and we in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ (based on 2 Thessalonians 1:11–12).

To be kept pure

‘For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life’ (1 Thessalonians 4:7).

To be humble in assessing others

‘So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God. Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling-block or obstacle in your brother’s way’ (Romans 14:12–13).

For revival

‘Restore us again, O God our Saviour, and put away your displeasure towards us. Will you be angry with us for ever? Will you prolong your anger through all generations? Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you? Show us your unfailing love, O LORD, and grant us your salvation ... The LORD will indeed give what is good, and our land will yield its harvest. Righteousness goes before him and prepares the way for his steps’ (Psalm 85:4–7, 12–13).

INTERCESSION FOR OTHERS

For persecuted Christians

‘If you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name’ (1 Peter 4:16).

For unsaved relatives, friends, neighbours and colleagues

‘The Lord is ... patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance’ (2 Peter 3:9).

For those in the police and security forces

‘He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us’ (2 Corinthians 1:10).

Friday

ADORATION

For the power of God

‘Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth, sing praise to the Lord, to him who rides the ancient skies above, who thunders with mighty voice. Proclaim the power of God, whose majesty is over Israel, whose power is in the skies. You are awesome, O God, in your sanctuary; the God of Israel gives power and strength to his people. Praise be to God!’ (Psalm 68:32–35).

For the presence of God

‘O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD. You hem me in—behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?’ (Psalm 139:1–7).

CONFESSION

‘But if you harbour bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice’ (James 3:14–16).

THANKSGIVING

For our home and family

‘... Rejoice in all the good things the LORD your God has given to you and your household’ (Deuteronomy 26:11).

For the peace of God

‘... And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus’ (Philippians 4:7).

For the love of God

‘How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!’ (1 John 3:1).

SUPPLICATION

For ourselves, our family and our church

Lord, may our love abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that we may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to your glory and praise (based on Philippians 1:9–11).

To cultivate a Christian character

‘Make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love’ (2 Peter 1:5–7).

For revival

‘Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down ... to make your name known to your enemies and cause the nations to quake before you! ... Since ancient times no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who acts on behalf of those who wait for him. You come to the help of those who gladly do right, who remember your ways’ (Isaiah 64:1–2, 4–5).

INTERCESSION FOR OTHERS

For persecuted Christians

‘Those who suffer according to God’s will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good’ (1 Peter 4:19).

For evangelism across the nation

‘Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful ... that God may open a door for our message’ (Colossians 4:2–3).

For leaders in national and local government

‘I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness’ (1 Timothy 2:1–2).

Saturday

ADORATION

For the holiness of God

‘I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory”’ (Isaiah 6:1–3).

CONFESSION

‘You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence’ (Psalm 90:8).

THANKSGIVING

For the word of God in the Bible

‘Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path’ (Psalm 119:105).

For the hope of heaven

‘... We wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ’ (Titus 2:13).

For the universal and local church

‘All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing’ (Colossians 1:6).

SUPPLICATION

For ourselves, our family and our church

May you yourself, the God of peace, sanctify us through and through. May our whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (based on 1 Thessalonians 5:23).

To be wise and generous in giving

‘Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you’ (Luke 6:38).

For revival

‘I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants. They will spring up like grass in a meadow, like poplar trees by flowing streams. One will say, “I belong to the LORD”; another will call himself by the name of Jacob; still another will write on his hand, “The LORD’s”, and will take the name Israel’ (Isaiah 44:3–5).

INTERCESSION FOR OTHERS

For persecuted Christians

‘When you pass through the waters, I will be with you ... When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour’ (Isaiah 43:2–3).

For evangelism in prisons across our country

‘If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation’ (2 Corinthians 5:17–18).

For churches known to us

‘I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it’ (Matthew 16:18).

For those preparing for ministry

‘Pray for us ... that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ ... clearly’, ‘in truthful speech and in the power of God’ (Colossians 4:3–4; 2 Corinthians 6:7).