

Practice.



SIMPLE

BE PRESENT

One of the most profound ways to pay attention to the activity of God in our lives is in silence.

LET GO

Just like a closet or a drawer—there are things that need to stay and things that need to go.

CREATE RHYTHM

Making time to be with Jesus in our daily lives has the incredible ability to change the way we engage with those around us.

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Welcome

In the Simple life, we are invited to let go of the ways our lives have become overly complicated and to more simply focus on the main thing: Jesus.

At the core of simplicity is the deep desire to practice the Presence and Way of Jesus. We are simply with Him, remaining in His love.

Our primary practice in this season is to cultivate and develop a daily life of prayer as we explore our journey, seeing what still fits and what does not.

Regardless of where you're at on the journey with prayer and simplicity, let's keep it simple...and simply be with Jesus.

In this booklet, you'll see a few ways that you can do just that! Ways that may invite you or spark a desire to practice the rhythm of prayer in your ordinary, everyday life.

Welcome to this wild journey to live openly to God in becoming more fully alive through prayer, enjoyment and satisfaction in the simplest things.

But before we jump deeper, turn the pages to read a little more about the heart behind the larger view of the Intentional Life.

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.”

JOHN 15:9

The Intentional Life

The word “intention” is defined as an aim, target or purpose. Something that you shoot for, regardless of whether you hit it or not, it’s a direction.

At Open Door, we have a desire to be a community of people radically committed to spiritual formation (the ongoing, lifelong process of becoming more like Jesus), for the sake of others. This sort of commitment allows our very selves (mind, heart, soul and body) to be transformed by the Spirit into the likeness of Christ.

This incredible and mysterious formation process requires both our attention and our intention, an aim and a bit of a rhythm to help us practice, together.

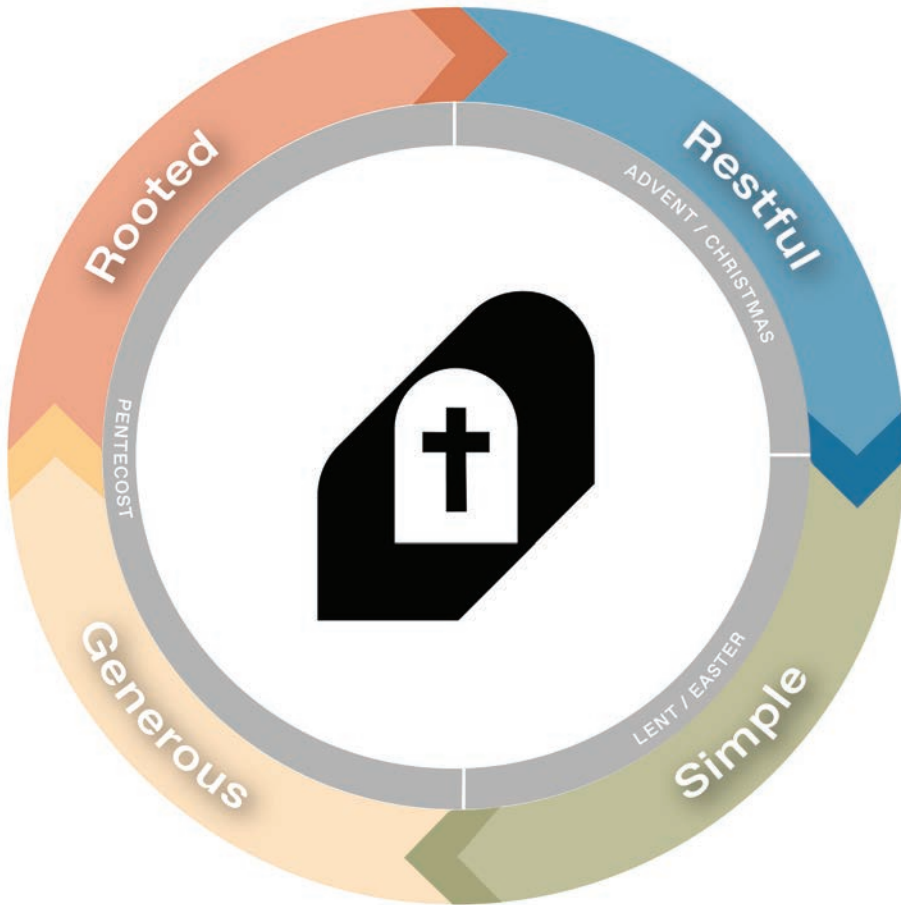
That said, we have identified four seasonal rhythms that help us practice living more intentionally.

They include:

The Rooted Life
The Restful Life
The Simple Life
and The Generous Life.

These rhythms are informed by the ancient church calendar, and are a part of the larger desire we have to live an intentional life.

They invite us into and equip us to practice the Presence and Way of Jesus in an authentic way where we can grow in our faith while actively living in community and loving others.



The Intentional Life

A Prayer Journey

REFLECTING ON MY PRAYER LIFE



Some of my earliest memories of prayer are from when I was a little girl living with my family in an old farmhouse out in the countryside.

In the evenings, my family would sit down for dinner and my mom or dad would start saying a prayer..."Come Lord

Jesus, be our guest"... perhaps you know it?

After dinner, my siblings and I were often quick to be back outside to play in the fields, swing on the old rope swing, or be in the hayloft with the kittens.

At night we would fall into bed tired from the

adventures of the day and we would pause to pray as our heads hit the pillow..."Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep"...at the end of the prayer we would ask God to bless our family, friends, and anyone else who came to mind.

I am older now and have children of my own. I no longer live in that old farmhouse or spend my days in the hayloft with kittens, but as my family gathers to eat at night, we still say the same dinner prayer from all those years ago.

And I still pray each evening before I close my eyes, but my bedtime

I picture Jesus and I walking together on a dirt road. The road winds through the deep woods and ends at a small cabin with a lovely front porch.

Walking that dirt road, Jesus and I talk about the day. Sometimes we stop for a while and sit on a nearby bench to visit more deeply about something.

At some point we walk into the cabin and sit down on the couch where I fall asleep in that safe and cozy little space, sitting right next to Jesus.

This story is part of my prayer journey.

I wonder what your journey with prayer looks like?

Prayer is simply the medium through which we communicate and commune with God. The practice of prayer is learning to set aside dedicated time to intentionally be with God, become like him and partner with him in the world.

- John Mark Comer


prayers look a little different these days.

I find that as the dark of night falls in my room and my eyes start to close, my prayer tends to look more like walking with Jesus at the end of the day.

The conversation usually continues all the way into the cabin, but sometimes it is simply just us walking next to one another hand in hand. I find that sometimes when I pray, words simply aren't needed at all.



JENN TJEPKES
Associate Pastor of Formational Life



**Come to God the way you
are, not the way you think you
ought to be or wish you were.
If you're going to learn to be
at home with God in prayer,
you're going to have to be
yourself when you get there.
You don't have to be all
cleaned up first.**

DAVE JOHNSON

Gasping for Breath

Be Present

One of the most profound ways to pay attention to the activity of God in our lives is in silence. Silence allow us to turn down the volume of our lives to listen and to turn our attention towards Jesus. If this is a new practice for you, we recommend that you start small—with just a few minutes.

What do you notice? What comes to the surface?

Our life of prayer has a journey. And like much of life, it goes through changes, seasons, ups and downs. The Simple Life offers us an opportunity to stop and take inventory of where we have been and where we are at now with prayer. No shame or judgment—just noticing.

Practicing the Presence of God can be more simple than it sounds. When we become more aware of Him, listening and acknowledging His activity in our lives—we are practicing the Presence of God, with us.

He is with us, in us and all around us.

PRACTICE

Spend some time in silence this week, quietly turning your attention to God. Start simply and realistically.

"Once I experienced a variety of ways to pray and listen to the Spirit, I began to get to know God, enjoy God, and be at peace with God's creation a whole lot more. I stopped seeing prayer as a remedy and allowed it to become a living relationship with the living God."

-Teresa A. Blythe, *50 Ways to Pray*

Reflect on how your prayer life has been shaped.

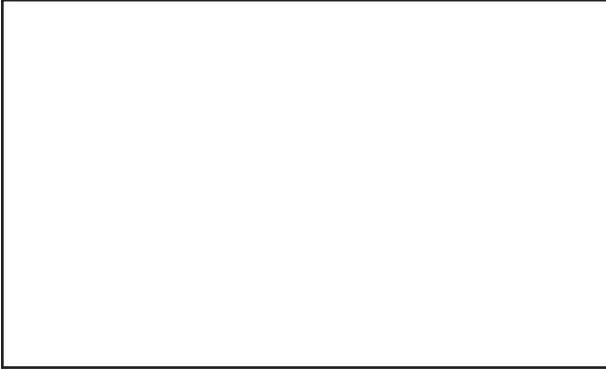
RECALL HOW YOU PRAYED AS A CHILD, AS A TEENAGER, AND AS A YOUNG ADULT.

- Who and/or what has influenced your experience and practice in praying?

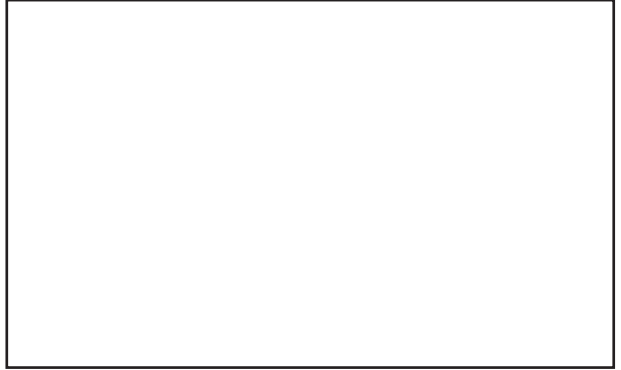
- How has your prayer life changed over time?

NOW REFLECT ON HOW YOU CURRENTLY EXPERIENCE YOUR PRAYER LIFE.

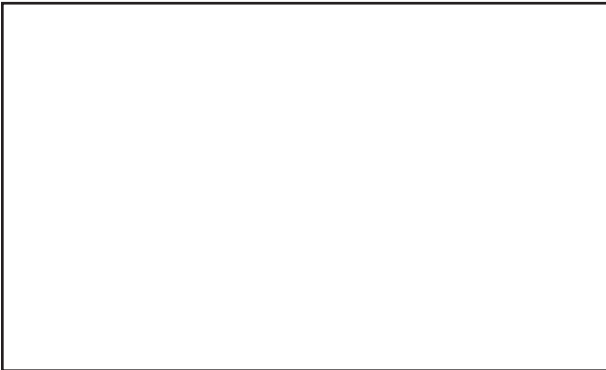
- What are your desires for being in relationship with God now?



- Where do you sense aliveness in prayer now? What ways of praying feel draining? Why?



- What are your prayer practices now? Why have you chosen these particular ways of praying?



TAKE TIME TO REFLECT ON THE WAY FORWARD.

- What is the Holy Spirit's invitation to you for your prayer life in this coming season?



“Be still, and know that I am God...”

PSALM 46:10

Let Go

PART 1

Do you long for a simpler way of living? A way of living that is less complicated, less attached, less entangled and more free?

Life can get overwhelming with the daily management of our relationships, circumstances, commitments, responsibilities and possessions. We may even feel as though we have more than we can handle!

Just as our inward lives and hearts can get complicated and accumulate, so can the parts of our lives that are outward and exterior. Many of us have a drawer, a trunk or a closet that is overflowing and unorganized. A place where we can dump, shove or hide.

Our spiritual lives can be incredibly similar! And over time we can quickly pile on or accumulate messages, worries,

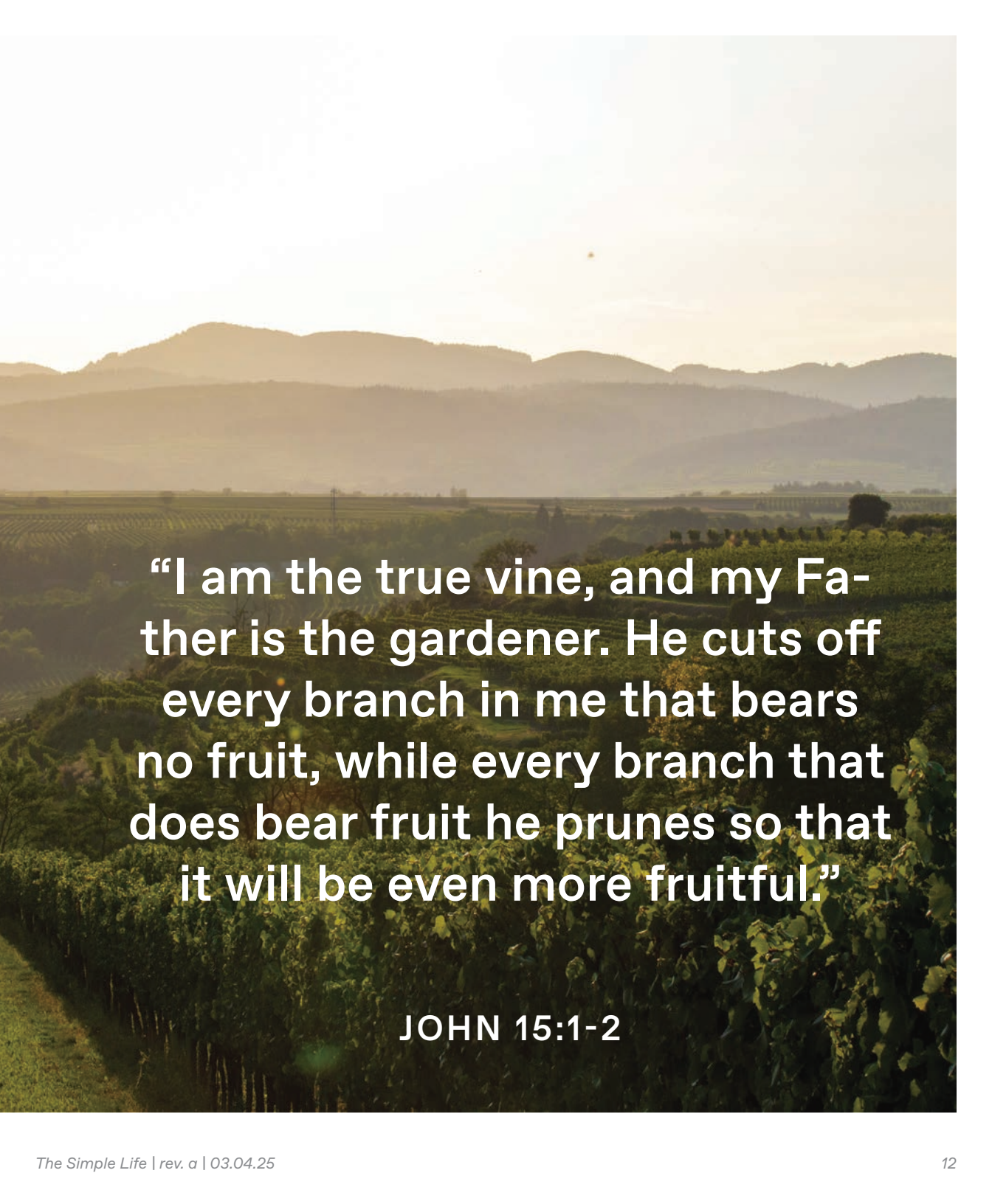
relationships and responsibilities. And just like a closet or a drawer—there are things that need to stay and things that need to go.

The freedom of simplicity offers so much beauty when our inward longing to let go of worry and simplify, matches our outward expression of letting go and uncomplicating.

PRACTICE

Sit with God, with the complicated parts of your life and ask Him to help you simplify.

What is challenging?
What is easy?



“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.”

JOHN 15:1-2

Let Go

PART 2

Jesus' invitation to a simpler life in Matthew 6:34 allows us enough of a breather to see and to focus on what matters most.

"Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

He invites us to pursue this kind of kingdom, to experience His Presence and to follow His Way.

Let go of the worry of tomorrow, what you will wear, eat or drink and follow Jesus.

What might simplicity in action look like?

Slow down long enough to enjoy the simplest things in life, like a sip of coffee, the sun shining through the trees or throwing a snowball. Pause, breathe deeply, and soak in it...even for just a few moments.

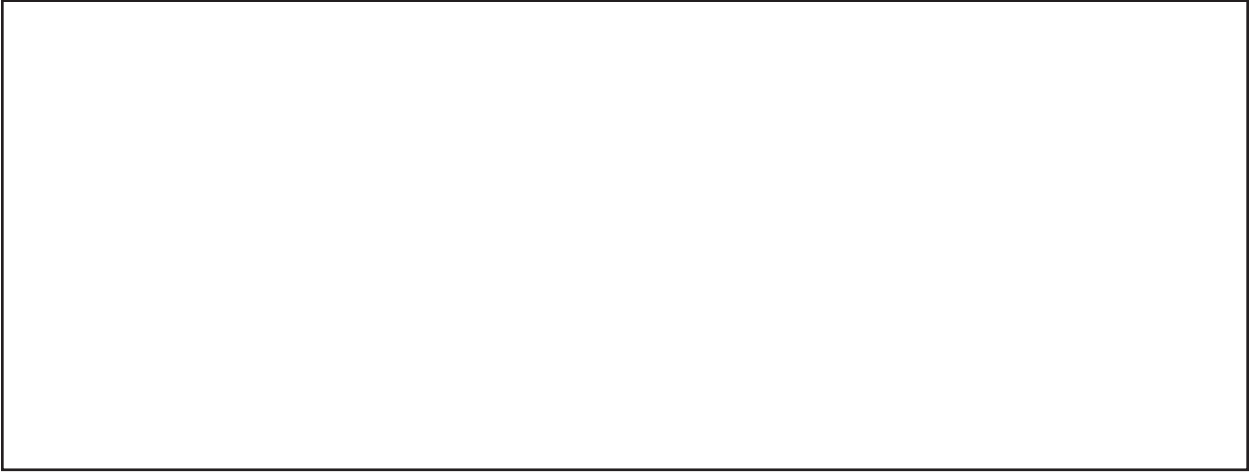
Spend time in a cluttered space wondering if there are things you want to let go of or no longer need. What can you give away? How can you consume less or make more space for the generosity of time and resources?

What is it that you are longing to share with others?

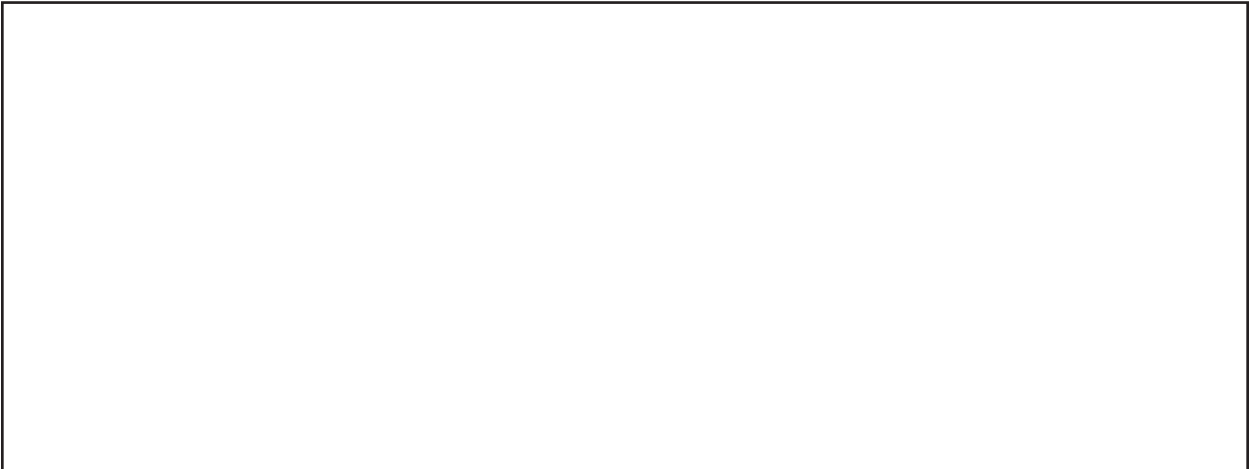


Write it down...

How would you like to practice simplicity in your life? What would it look like?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their response to the question above.

Is there anything that you sense God is inviting you to let go of?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their response to the question above.

Create Rhythm

“We yearn for prayer, and we hide from prayer. We are attracted to it, and we are repelled by it. We believe that prayer is something we should do, even something we want to do, but it seems like a chasm stands between us and actually praying—so we don't pray.”

- Richard Foster

Have you ever found it challenging to find the time to pray? Or maybe when you do find the time, you don't know what to say or do?

Making time to simply be with Jesus in our daily life has the incredible ability to change the way we engage with those around us. Through prayer, we practice Jesus' Presence and Way by being with Him.

It might sound a little silly, but let's not make this too complicated... let's just keep it simple...and simply be with Jesus.

Choose a time and place to pray that works.

Here are few examples and ideas to spark your curiosity of what it can look like:

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

The Lord's Prayer

“This, then, is how you should pray:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we also
have forgiven our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.”

MATTHEW 6:9-13

USING BORROWED PRAYERS

Make Me an Instrument of Your Peace

“Lord, make me an instrument of your
peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
And where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master, grant that I may not so
much seek to be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in the pardoning that we are
pardoned;
And it is in the dying that we are born to
eternal life. Amen”

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

PRAYING THROUGHOUT THE DAY

Here's what it might look like to turn our attention towards Jesus in prayer at the start, middle and end of a full, ordinary day.

AS YOU WAKE

Acknowledge Jesus with you! Take a deep breath and surrender the day to Him. Invite Jesus to help shape your heart and your day.

MIDDLE OF YOUR DAY

Take a few minutes around the lunch hour to pause and pray for someone. It could be someone with whom you are in close relationship or someone you just met.

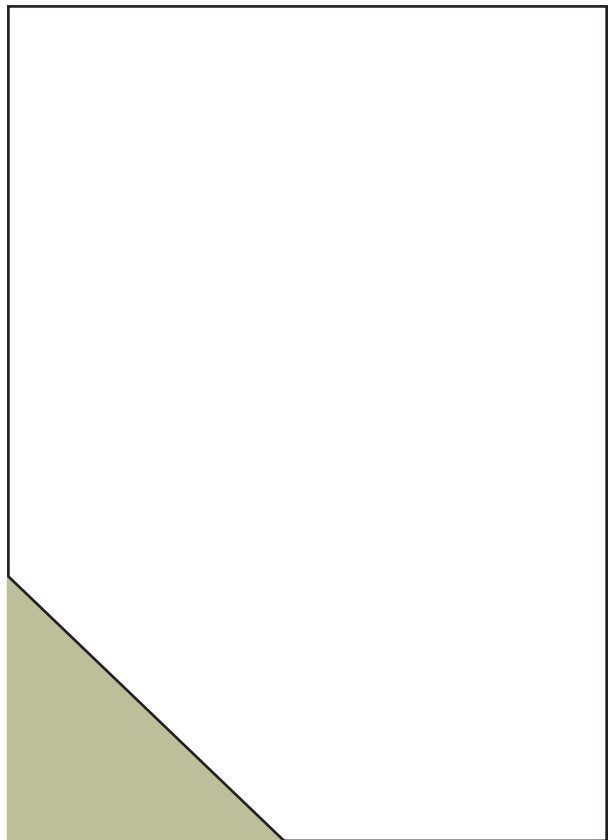
AS YOU FALL ASLEEP

Reflect back over your day. What do you see? Where did you notice God? End your waking hours with a prayer of gratitude for the ways God showed up today.

PRACTICE

Choose a time and place to pray that works. Write it down and commit to it, each day for a week.

What do you notice?





GASPING FOR BREATH

**Dave Johnson &
John Busacker**

<https://qr.me-qr.com/N858JJhS>



PRACTICING THE WAY

John Mark Comer

<https://qr.me-qr.com/i2glUoIP>



SACRED RHYTHMS

Ruth Haley Barton

<https://a.co/d/57LRsfp>



THE WONDER OF RHYTHMS & SEASONS PODCAST

Church of the Open Door

<https://apple.co/4gxjmaN>

RES OUR CES



PRAYER: FINDING THE HEART'S TRUE HOME

Richard Foster

<https://qr.me-qr.com/S89Gimq5>

PRAYER ROOM

Anyone is welcome, and there are no sign-ups or time restrictions. Just take the elevator to the second floor and enjoy.



Open Door

www.thedoor.org