

SESSIONS

ONE

Praying With Others

Prayer Ministry 101

TWO

Role of the Holy Spirit

THREE

Image of God

FOUR

Identity in Christ

FIVE

Healing Power
of Forgiveness

SIX

Physical Healing

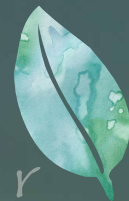
SEVEN

Fear & Anxiety

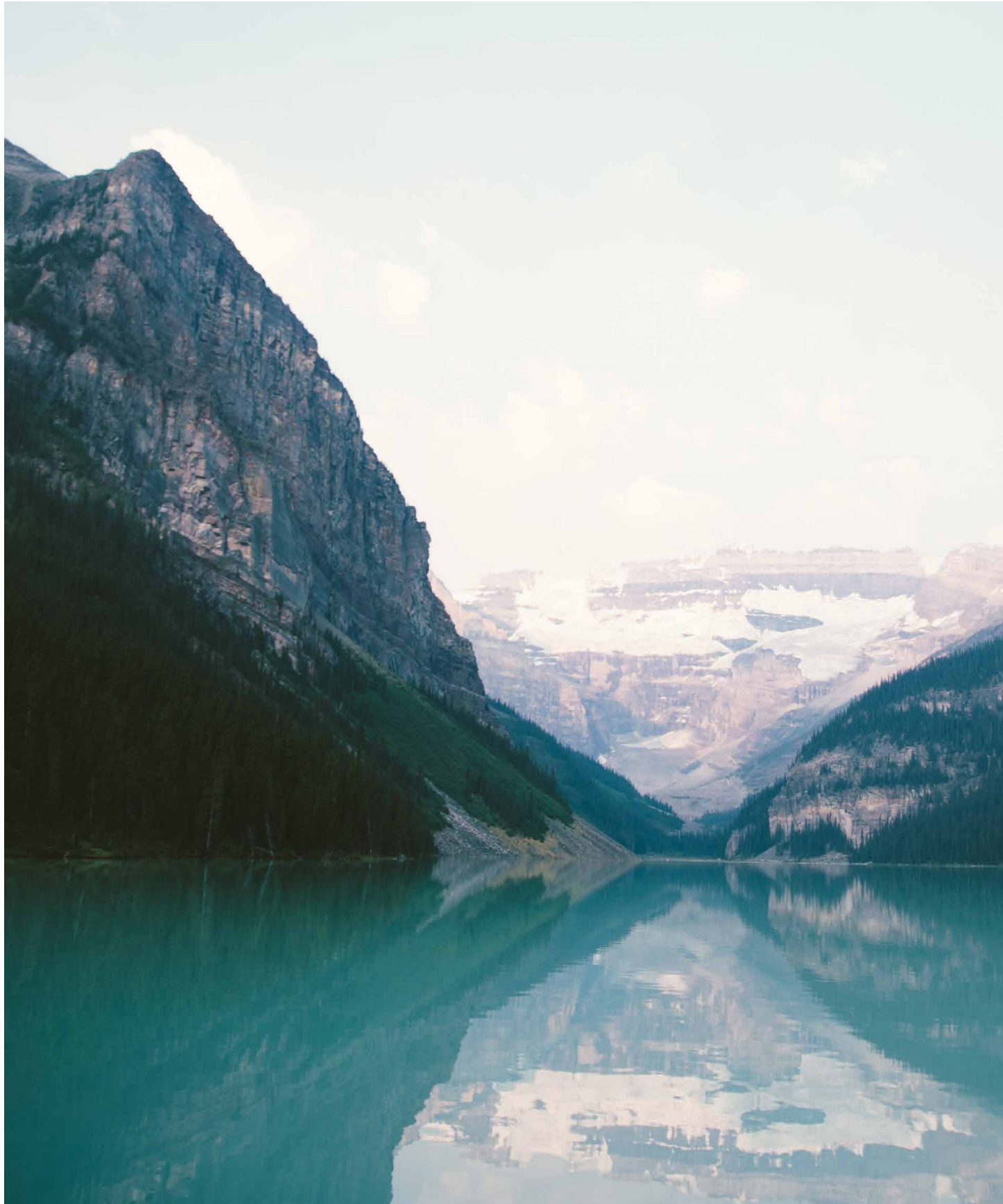
PRAYING WITH OTHERS

LEVEL ONE

TEACH AND
RESOURCE
prayer



THIRD
CHURCH





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The prayer training videos are on available online at:
trcpella.com/prayertraining

INTRODUCTION

Praying with Others—Level One

THE DOORWAY



Important things often happen in the doorway...

- A kiss good-bye
- Sending a child to school
- Greeting a stranger
- Saying good-bye to a beloved friend
- Dropping off a gift

A doorway is a symbol of hospitality—of welcome. Hospitality is actually the core of the gospel. In the Praying with Others class, we will reference the doorways to different topics. We know that each doorway leads to a wealth of teaching and experiences—much more than a short class could begin to cover. Besides this material and the class teaching, you'll find a healing prayer library outside the Place of Prayer that we encourage you to use. Along the way, we will reference trusted teachers and books and hope

this class will further open your experiences and knowledge of healing prayer. While praying for others can be a spiritual gift, it is also the role of every believer.

So.... Welcome to the Praying with Others—Level One class. This class initially was intended for those who wanted to be involved in prayer ministry at Third. As it grew, we recognized that it's also been a place where we've approached our own healing, and that freedom has propelled ministry.

In that spirit, we welcome the Lord into the spaces He wants to occupy. And, He wants to occupy all of us—our mind, body and spirit.

May He also equip us to walk with others to His truth, wisdom, healing and comfort.

As a Member of This Class

Besides being actively involved as participants in the class, it would be important for the members to consider the following:

Be open.

Be aware of any personal healing the Holy Spirit brings. We minister out of our own healing.

Be trusted.

Keep confidences and speak from a place of love.

Be present.

Commit through prayerful listening, sharing and attendance. (We know that there are occasions when you can't come.)

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Think & Reflect

If you believe in God as healer,
then you surely know that He heals in
different ways.

Creative God that He is.

Inviter of people,
host at the table,
doorman at the entry,
protector, nurturer.....

If you are an author,
you may seek healing in writing.

If you are a nurse,
you may seek healing in caregiving.

If you are a teacher,
you may seek healing in a classroom.

If you are a counselor,
you may seek healing in question asking.

If you are a pastor,
you may seek healing in study.

If you are an artist,
you may seek healing in creativity.

If you are a musician,
you may seek healing in worship.

If you are a student,
you may seek healing in a library.

If you are an architect,
you may seek healing in a blueprint.

If you are an archeologist,
you may seek healing in the finding.

Along the way,
may we all be in some way authors,
nurses, teachers, counselors, pastors,
artists, musicians, students,
architects and archeologists.

STUDY

PSALM 139:1-5

¹Praise the Lord, my soul;
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.

²Praise the Lord, my soul,
and forget not all his benefits—

³who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases,

⁴who redeems your life from the pit
and crowns you with love and compassion,

⁵who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

In the space below, list the benefits of God choosing and redeeming you.

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DISCUSSION



What are you in need for prayer right now?

What has been your experience praying for others?

- ☐ I just haven't had that much experience
- ☐ I'm skeptical
- ☐ I'm eager to learn more
- ☐ It's very familiar to me
- ☐ I've experienced physical healing in myself or with others
- ☐ I've experienced inner healing in myself or with others

How do you take care of yourself in mind, body and spirit?

MINISTRY

This is the space where you will find an explanation of ministry each group time. You will experience praying scripture, blessing, silent soaking prayer, breath prayer, making exchanges from lies to truth, confession, forgiveness and praying Shalom Peace. We desire that you would be blessed with rich times of intimacy with God when you are going through the materials and connectedness with others in class.

Guidelines for Praying with Others

Praying Responsibly

Praying with others is a sacred call. Prayer should always be directed by the Holy Spirit. When we pray with others, we enter into a sacred trust, acting as the Lord's representatives of mercy, truth and grace to others. Prayer is often offered when people are most vulnerable, so great care is needed to pray in ways that bring healing, not hurt. These guidelines are meant to protect both you and those you pray for.

Third Church Prayer Ministry Team

If you are an official member of the Third Church Prayer Ministry team serving at Third Church prayer ministry event, you are representing Third Church.

Preparing to Pray

Prepare your heart beforehand through prayer, fasting, Bible reading, confession, repentance, worship, etc.

Check your motives. Do you come with humility and a servant-heart? "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves."—*Philippians 2:3-11*

Personal appearance. Check your breath, dress in ways that are modest and non-distracting.

Pray in pairs, whenever possible. Determine ahead of time which of you will lead the prayer time. It's helpful to take turns with one of you praying while the other prayer partner listens to the Holy Spirit and intercedes.

It's best if men pray for men, women for women if you are alone unless you are in a public place. You don't want to create a compromising situation for yourself or for the person you are praying with. If you feel uncomfortable praying for someone for whatever reason—take time to call for someone to help you.

Pray the prayer of protection before prayer ministry begins.

The Prayer Session

Listen, Love and Pray.

Bring people to the Lord in prayer and let Him do the healing.

Put people at ease.

Greet them warmly and be encouraging.

Listen well.

Listen to what they are saying and not saying. Being understood is one of the most basic human desires.

Show love, respect & acceptance.

Offer mercy and compassion. Try not to judge what they have done or what has been done to them. Many people do not feel loved and accepted by God or by others.

Be sensitive to prayer requests.

Be careful not to minimize their prayer request in any way.

Explain silence during prayer.

When you stop to listen to the Holy Spirit for His direction during your prayer time, there may be silent times. Start the prayer time with silent listening prayer. Periodically stop to listen throughout the prayer time.

Ask permission.

- Ask to touch people while praying. *Touch shoulder, arm or head. Exceptions can be made when praying for physical healing, but permission is needed.*
- Ask to anoint with oil for healing. *See James 5:13-16.*
- Ask to use a prayer language

Observe responses.

Consider praying with your eyes open. Be sensitive and observant of facial expressions, emotions or physical changes. Some people become unsteady during prayer and may wish to sit down.

Be straightforward.

With individuals receiving ministry, don't try to skirt the issues, hoping they will get the point. Use simple language so they can clearly understand what you are saying.

Watch for common problem areas.

Familiar ones are feelings of fear, rejection, shame, bitterness and unforgiveness over past hurts.

Direct conversation if needed.

At times, it might be necessary to direct the conversation with comments such as:

- "What I am hearing you say is you need prayer for..."
- "What do you need God to do today?"
- "What of God's character do you need to experience now?"

Pray "light and life" into people.

Use Bible verses that the Lord brings to mind or prayers such as:

- Inviting the Holy Spirit to be present.
- Asking for a deeper revelation of the Father's love.
- Praying blessings over their life, family, ministry, work.
- Asking God to fill them with His Power.
- Asking for the refreshing presence of God.

Learn about their support.

A good question is, "Who is supporting you?" Answers might be a pastor, friend, family member, doctor, counselor. Affirm the fact that they have invited people into a circle of support. You might ask, "Who could be added to your circle?" You might suggest Seasons of Prayer or seeking counsel.

Practices that Honor

Know your place.

Remain under the authority of Third Church, staff and prayer leadership.

Ask permission.

Always ask for permission for touch, anointing with oil and using a prayer language.

Pray for the person in the room.

Always pray for the person in the room, even though the request might be for someone else.

Trust God.

Trust that God will give wisdom, truth, healing and comfort. We are there as witnesses to His Presence!

Give options.

When you sense that there may be more, invite the person coming to consider: Seasons of Prayer, Counsel (recommended counselors available from prayer & pastoral staff), Harvest House.

See the individual for who they are.

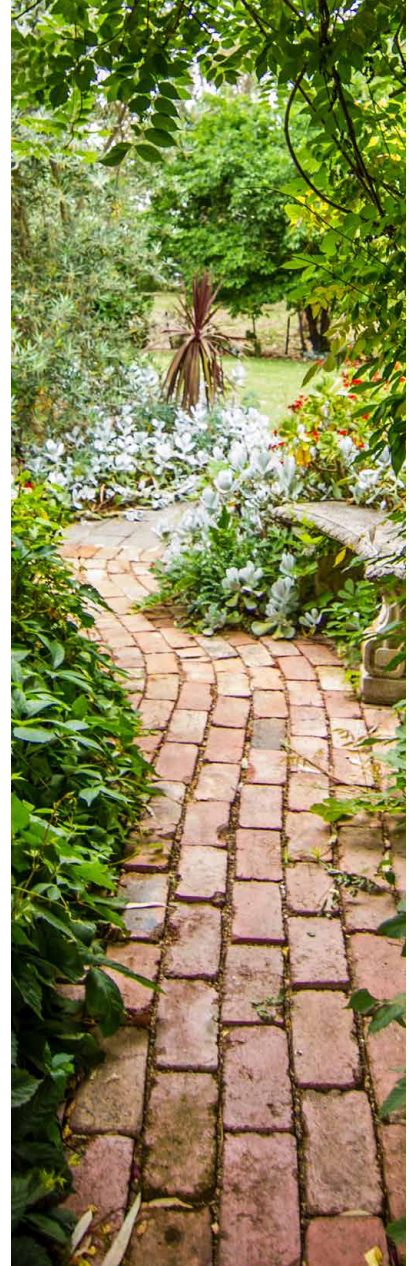
Recognize that everyone has their own story and their own pathway. Be full of grace and patience.

Maintain confidentiality.

There is nothing that will damage your credibility or create high levels of distrust more than when confidential information is shared inappropriately. Share concerns and debrief with your prayer partner or team leader when you have questions or concerns, but never discuss prayer times outside these boundaries. The only exception to this is when there are issues of safety that may need action [e.g. suicide, abuse, etc.]

Realize that you will make some mistakes.

If a mistake is made, ask for forgiveness, rectify the mistake, if possible, and release it to the Lord.



Post Prayer

Debrief your prayer time afterwards with your prayer partner. If you are serving on the prayer team, alert the team leader of any concerns or follow up that may be needed.

Pray the cutting free prayer after you've completed prayer ministry.

SESSION ONE

Praying with Others | Prayer Ministry 101

PRAYING WITH OTHERS | LEVEL ONE



Praying with Others | Prayer Ministry 101

THE DOORWAY



Praying for others is a sacred call—a holy privilege. It invites us to listen to the Spirit, to others. It calls for love and availability and willingness to give when it is not convenient. We are representatives of God's truth and grace. Prayer is often offered when people are most vulnerable, so great care is needed to pray in ways that bring healing.

There is a powerful word in Hebrew that sums up three words in English. The word is **Hineni** (meaning "Here I am!") It is a

הִנְנִי

way of expressing total readiness to give oneself—it's an offer of total availability. When we pray for others, we are saying to God, "Here I am." It is a sincere response to an assignment from God. There are several examples in scripture, where people responded with "**Hineni**."

When God called out to Moses from the burning bush,

Moses replied, "**Hineni**." He was given the assignment to lead his people into the promised land. When God approached Abraham to ask him to offer his only son as a sacrifice, Abraham responded, "**Hineni**," not knowing what God was about to ask. God called out to the young boy Samuel three times before Samuel finally responded, "**Hineni**! I'm listening!"

Hineni means being fully available, ready to pay attention and obey instructions. And so, when we hear of someone's joy or heartache or need, we can respond with an offer to pray. "Here I am."

As astounding as it might seem, God actually makes himself available to us. He invites us to share our requests and needs with him, and is always listening to our cry. "**Hineni**" – "Here I am," the Great I Am stoops to assure us. He hears us, He sees us, He knows our struggle, and He is always there. Multiple times in scripture Jesus says, "What do you want?"

Here I am, Lord! **Hineni**! Send me!



Preparing to Pray

- ☐ Prayer
- ☐ Fasting
- ☐ Bible reading
- ☐ Confession
- ☐ Repentance
- ☐ Worship
- ☐ Checked my motives
- ☐ Checked personal appearance
- ☐ Asked someone else to join you in prayer
- ☐ Prayed the prayer for protection

The Honor of Praying with Others

LISTEN | LOVE | PRAY | WELCOME | RESPECT | MERCY
SILENCE | WATCH | PERMISSION | OIL | SIMPLE | FOCUS
LIGHT | LIFE | AUTHORITY | AWARE | WISDOM
GRACE | CONFIDENTIALITY | PROTECTION

MINISTRY



"Soaking Prayer" is the prayer of other Christians that "penetrates and saturates you completely with peace and power of God in your body, mind and emotions as you rest and soak in the Lord."

—John David Hicks

Silent Soaking Prayer

Environment—soft music, lower lights, candle

Share—what soaking prayer is

Permission—to touch

Welcome—the Spirit (open to images, scriptures, Jesus)

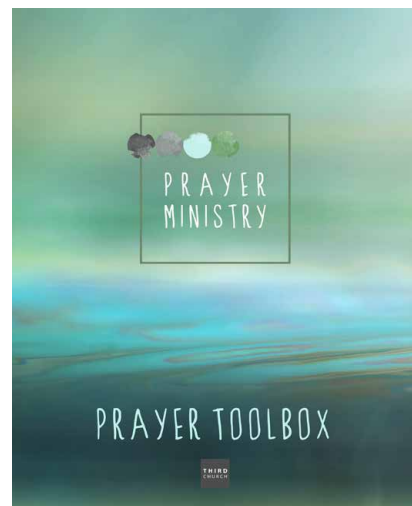
Observe—tears, joy, heaviness, weariness, refreshment

Speak—Prayer of Blessing

Many times people will share that soaking prayer has the same sensation as a "spiritual massage." It's often a time when distractions are removed and people simply rest in His power and presence without striving toward anything. Sometimes people are reminded of a memory, some scripture, a promise of God or His character of love, peace and joy. As we are soaked in prayer, the Holy Spirit ministers to our body, mind, spirit and emotions, and we are refreshed with a sense of God's presence, peace and rest.

The Prayer Toolbox

Along with this material we have created the "Prayer Toolbox" that is a collection of the prayers that we use most often in ministry. This can serve as a quick reference tool when you are in a ministry setting and need some guidance on how to pray. The topics in this book include things like: Prayer of Protection and Cutting Free, Forgiveness, Prayer of Relinquishment, Father/Mother Blessings, etc.



Silent Soaking Prayer

Soaking prayer is a time of concentrated silent prayer. It is like standing in a rain shower of prayer allowing prayer to penetrate and saturate you with the peace and power of God. It's letting your body, mind and spirit rest and soak in the healing Spirit of the Lord.

What should I do when receiving soaking prayer?

Rest, both physically and spiritually—don't "do".... just "be."

Quiet the distractions of mind and spirit.

Create an openness for God's work within you in the quiet.

Surrender and mentally lay your burdens at the feet of Jesus.

Intentionally invite the presence of the Holy Spirit to speak to you.

Be still so you can focus on God and on what His word is for you.

Create a space for the deepest of changes: forgiveness, healing, renewed strength, visions, confirmations, affirmations from God.

Why We Use Silent Soaking Prayer Ministry for Others

Soaking prayer is effective because it takes us out of the picture and allows God to work. *No words are spoken and therefore:*

There is **less distraction** for the person being prayed for. They can focus on God...not on you.

There is **less chance of saying something wrong** and distracting from the prayer time.

There is **less pressure** on the prayer minister to have a word from the Lord and wondering if it is the right word for the person receiving prayer.

Personal Soaking prayer allows **God to speak directly to us** without words getting in the way.

How to Provide Soaking Prayer for Others

Turn on some soft soaking prayer music and **lower the lights**.

Consider **lighting a candle** to represent the presence of the Holy Spirit.

An **explanation** should be given to people as to what you will be doing before the soaking prayer begins.

Ask the person to find a **relaxed position** to receive with open hands, closed eyes.

Ask permission to lay your hand on their shoulder. Touch can be a prayer that has power all its own.

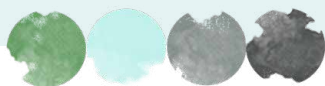
Lift up a **brief prayer** calling on God for help and inviting the Holy Spirit to minister.

Begin to **pray silently**. You may want to keep your eyes open to see the person's response. You may visualize an image that will help you focus in prayer (light flowing into the person, Jesus laying his hands on them).

Close with a verbal prayer of blessing or a verse of scripture that came to you during the silent prayer.



"The Lord bless and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace."
—Numbers 6:24



What to Expect During Soaking Prayer

These are common:

- Tears
- Sensations of joy
- Increased energy/feelings of revitalization
- Release of burdens and refreshment
- Overwhelming outpourings of love
- Recollection of certain scriptures
- Greater peace and a feeling of being blessed by God
- Total relaxation or even falling asleep
- Greater infilling of the Lord's presence and power

Practicing Soaking Prayer

The class will divide up into small groups of 3-4 people.

The leader will turn on quiet soaking prayer music and light a candle.

The leader will pray the prayer of protection over the entire group.

Within the small groups, take turns soaking each other in prayer for 5 minutes using the steps listed above.

The leader will close the soaking prayer time.

Using God's Word in Prayer Times

Our Greatest Weapon of Spiritual Warfare

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground.

Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.
—Ephesians 6:12, 17

It is flawless.

As for God, His way is perfect; the Word of the LORD is flawless. —2 Samuel 22:31

It is a light in darkness.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. —Psalm 119:105

It is powerful.

Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your Word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus."
—Acts 4:29-30

It is alive.

For the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword. —Hebrews 4:12

It never lets us down.

It is the same with my Word. I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it.
— Isaiah 55:11

It was a tool that Jesus used.

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God'." —Matthew 4:4



How can we use the Bible during prayer times?

Become familiar with your own personal Bible and bring it with you. It's your greatest prayer tool!

Consider committing several scriptures to memory or write down where to find scriptures related to common issues such as comfort, hope, peace, thanksgiving, forgiveness, illness, fear, despair, etc. Keep the scripture short and to the point.

Get familiar with the "Sword of the Spirit" book by Joy Lamb—great tool!

Share what you are hearing from God during the prayer time...example-"This scripture came to mind as I was praying for you, you may want to spend some time in it this week and see what God might be saying through it."

Consider writing down the reference for the scripture and giving it to the person being prayed for.

Try putting someone's name into the scripture to personalize it.



Praying Psalm 23 in a personal way

"The Lord is your Shepherd, [name] He has everything you need.

[name], The Lord invites you to lie down and rest in a green pasture. He desires to lead you beside still water.

[name], May the Lord restore your soul in this place. [Pause]

[name], May the Lord guide you along the right path and give you direction so you may glorify His name.

Even though you may walk through a valley of darkness and death, God is with you, [name], so there is nothing to fear.

He is right there comforting you. God desires to refresh you even in the midst of your troubles.

May he revive you and make you feel secure. May your cup overflow with blessings.

I pray that goodness and love will follow you all the days of your life, [name], and that you will seek to dwell with the Lord forever.

A Prayer for Protection

History of the Prayer of Protection

Back in the 1980s when Francis and Judith Mac Nutt were beginning their healing ministry; they spent time with Betty Breenen and Father McAlear [her priest] who had a deliverance ministry. Betty came out of one of the higher levels of witchcraft leadership and the occult before she put her faith in Christ. The references to the spirit world come directly from the occult practices of prayer against Christians and the Kingdom of God.



Prayer of Protection

[to be prayed before ministry]

In the name of Jesus Christ, and by the power of His Cross and His Blood, we bind up the power of any evil spirits and command them not to block our prayers. We bind up the powers of earth, air, water, fire, the netherworld and the satanic forces of nature. We break any curses, hexes or spells sent against us and declare them null and void. We break the assignments of any spirits sent against us and send them to Jesus to deal with them as He will. Lord, we ask You to bless our enemies by sending Your Holy Spirit to lead them to repentance and conversion. Furthermore, we bind all interaction and communication in the world of spirits as it affects us and our ministry. We ask for the protection of the shed blood of Jesus Christ over [name]. Thank you, Lord, for Your protection and ask that you send your angels to help us in the battle. We ask you to guide us in our prayers; share with us Your Spirit's power and compassion. Amen.

Note from the Mac Nutt's

"Earth, air, fire, and water" are unfamiliar categories to most of us. But these are the main elements of the world as the ancients divided them. The reason we put them in the prayer are simply the categories that Satanists use in casting curses. For instance, demons that inhabit the "air" can cause hurricanes. You need not use these categories, of course, if you had rather not. We are simply breaking curses by reversing them in the same terms that Satanists use against us."

Supporting Scriptures

When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases. —*Luke 9:1*

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses. —*Acts 1:8*

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. —*Ephesians 6:12*

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth. —*Philippians 2:10*

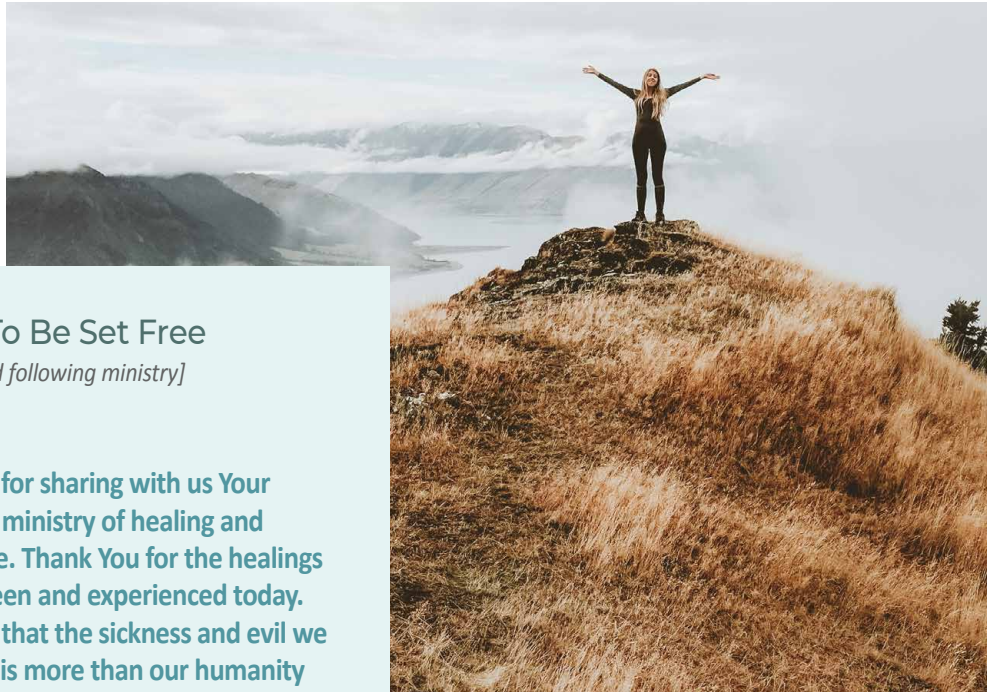
Bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. —*Luke 6:28*

Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth. —*2 Timothy 2:25*

Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name--the name you gave me--so that they may be one as we are one. —*John 17:11*

My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. —*John 17:15*

Prayer To Be Set Free



Prayer To Be Set Free

[to be prayed following ministry]

Lord Jesus,
Thank You for sharing with us Your wonderful ministry of healing and deliverance. Thank You for the healings we have seen and experienced today. We realize that the sickness and evil we encounter is more than our humanity can bear. So cleanse us of any sadness, negativity or despair that we may have picked up. If our ministry has tempted us to anger, impatience or lust, cleanse us of those temptations and replace them with love, joy and peace. If any evil spirits have attached themselves to us or oppressed us in any way, we command them to depart—now—and go straight to Jesus Christ for Him to deal with as He will. Come, Holy Spirit, renew us, fill us anew with Your power, Your life and Your joy. Strengthen us where we have felt weak and clothe us with Your light. Fill us with life.

And, Lord Jesus, please send Your holy angels to minister to us and our families—guard us and protect us from all sickness, harm and accidents. We praise You now and forever, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and we ask these things in Jesus' Holy Name that He may be glorified.

Supporting Scriptures

But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"

—Jude 1:9

Note from the Mac Nutt's

As far as giving instructions to the demons, at Christian Healing Ministries we practice with the humility of Jude 1:9, when even Michael the archangel did not presume to give the devil direction, but said, "The Lord rebuke you." We choose to let Jesus deal with the spirits as he sees fit. [the Bible does also have Jesus sending demons to the "abyss or bottomless pit" in Luke 8:31 or having them go to "dry places" as in Matthew 12:43]

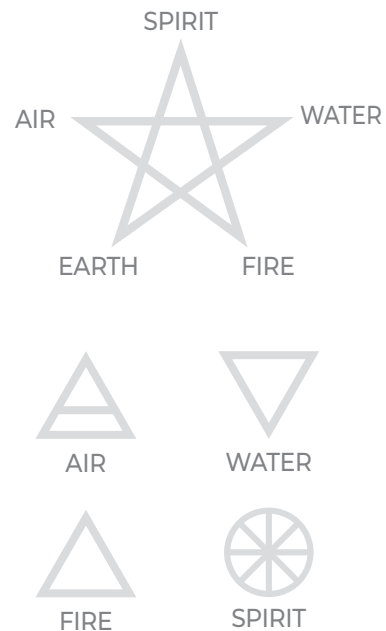
Fire, Water, Earth, Air and Spirit

Five Elements of Magic and Ritual

The five elements of fire, water, air, earth, and spirit are used by neo-pagans and occultists in magic and ritual to represent the forces of nature and spiritual aspects of ourselves and our relationship to the divine. They are not the same as the table of elements in science.

Illustrated to the right are the symbols of each element from ceremonial magic which is part of the western magical tradition that has influenced much of our current magical thought. Along with these symbols are given the physical and spiritual attributes associated with each element.

Nature elementals and other correspondences such as neo-shamanic totems (animal correspondences) are outside the scope of this article. The symbols and attributes given here are but one strand of thought on this topic but they do come from an established and time-tested tradition.



RESOURCES

Books

Prayer Toolbox

The Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God

by Joy Lamb

Daily Spirit Blessings

by Sylvia Gunter

SESSION TWO

Role of the Holy Spirit

PRAYING WITH OTHERS | LEVEL ONE



Role of the Holy Spirit

THE DOORWAY



The Holy Spirit guides believers into all truth from what He hears from the Father and Son. The Spirit (The Helper) honors the Father and Son by helping the community of believers. The Holy Spirit's attitude and ministry are marked by generosity; His chief function is to illumine Jesus' teaching, to glorify His person, and to work in the life of the individual and church.

Ruach (Roo-akh): Hebrew word meaning breath or spirit, wind, can be construed as "force".

רוח

It is invisible like the wind, because it can be felt or experienced, but not seen. The New Testament equivalent is the Greek, "pneuma," an ancient Greek word for breath, and in religious contexts, for "spirit" or "soul."

In the Bible, names carry particular significance. They are sources of revelation and a

glimpse into the mystery of the bearer's identity. Names and titles for God express something of the character, presence, authority, and nature of His divine being. The Hebrew word behind spirit is Ruach—it means "air in motion". It is the same word for breath. It also means "life." By resemblance to breath and air in motion, it means "spirit." If we rely on our English word "spirit," we're not getting the full attributes of what the Bible is trying to describe.

It's from the breath of God that we actually get our life (Gen 2:6-7) "...and the Lord God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life."

Just as God breathed on Adam and gave him the breath of life (imagine how close God would've been to Adam to breathe into him), Jesus breathed on His disciples (John 20) and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

The Holy Spirit is as close to you as your very breath. "In Him, we live, we move, and have our being." We can literally breathe in

the Presence of God and be filled with the Holy Spirit with our breath. (Our very breath, as we breath Him in, can be filled with Him).

The Holy Spirit is the power by which believers come to Christ and see with new eyes of faith. He is closer to us than we are to ourselves. Like the eyes of the body through which we see physical things, He is seldom in focus to be seen directly because HE is the one THROUGH whom all else is seen in a new light. It is from the eye of the Holy

Spirit that the Father-Son relationship is viewed. It should not surprise us that the images for and names of God can be more mysterious than comprehensible. They invite us into contemplation of the Holy One. They compel us toward worship rather than explanations.

Behold. Look. Mediate. Open wide to the God who is beyond and above, yet at the same moment — God in and with us.

Compiled by Amy Childerston



Foundational Beliefs About The Spirit

The Holy Spirit—a Divine Person

We can have an intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit.

- The Holy Spirit has a mind. —*Romans 8:27*
- The Holy Spirit has a will. —*1 Corinthians. 12:11*
- The Holy Spirit has emotions. —*Romans 15:30, Galatians 5:22, Ephesians 4:30*
- The Holy Spirit will comfort. —*Acts. 9:31*
- The Holy Spirit will speak. —*Hebrews 3:7*
- The Holy Spirit will teach. —*1 Corinthians 2:13*
- The Holy Spirit can be insulted. —*Hebrews 10:29*
- The Holy Spirit can be resisted —*Acts 7:51*
- The Holy Spirit can be lied to. —*Acts 5:1-11*
- The Holy Spirit can be our friend. —*John 14:16, 2 Corinthians 13:14*

The Spirit's Presence in Our Lives

Spirit Within

INDWELLING PRESENCE

Comes at Salvation/Sonship—*Romans 8:15*

Associated with fruits and character

Often for us—in growing wisdom and faith

"God, what fruit of the Spirit do you want to work on in me?"

Spirit Upon

EMPOWERING PRESENCE

Comes at any point He wants for what He wants

Supernatural works

Associated with Gifts of the Spirit

Often for ministry to others

"May the gifts you have placed on my life never supersede the fruit you have developed in me"

The Dynamic Partnership Between Word and Spirit

- "The Bible is our map and the Spirit is our guide."—John Bevere
- The Holy Spirit brings us revelation from the word.
- We embrace the dynamic partnership of the Word and the Spirit because personal transformation and powerful ministry results when we hold these two together.
- There is a danger of dividing Word and Spirit.
 - If our focus is on the Word alone, we may miss personal encounter.
 - If our focus is on the Holy Spirit alone, we may not be in line with the Word.
 - The Holy Spirit NEVER contradicts scripture.



There is a lovely mystery to the Spirit's workings in us. We are encouraged to continue to "fan the flame"—cultivate the fruit and yield to the Spirit's empowering presence.

Experiencing the Empowering Presence of the Holy Spirit

Often but NOT always:

- Ask for the Spirit's empowerment in your life. —*Luke 11:13*
- Someone who operates in the gifts of the Spirit lays hands on and prays for a release of the gifts in others (impartation prayer). —*Acts 9:17*
- Repentance can play a strong role in this dynamic reality for empowerment (sin can quench the Spirit's work).

Fruits of the Spirit

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

—Galatians 5:22-23



What is one Fruit of the Spirit that you are needing right now in your life? Ask God for that now:

.....

.....

.....

Gifts of the Spirit

Look up these passages and list the Gifts of the Spirit.

Romans 12:6-8	1 Corinthians 12:8-10	1 Corinthians 12:28	Ephesians 4:11

Other gifts:

.....

MINISTRY

Praying a Breath Prayer

"Breath Prayer" is saying a word (usually inaudibly) as you inhale and saying a word as you exhale.

1. Close your eyes and recall the line "Be still and know that I am God" —*Psalm 46:10*. Be open to the presence of God.
2. Imagine that God is calling you by name and asking, "(Your name) what do you want? Like the blind man on the road to Jericho, Jesus kindly looks you in the eyes and asks, "What do you want from me?"
3. Give God a simple and direct answer that comes from your heart. Write down the answer. If you have more than one answer, write them down. Your answer may be one word such as peace or love or help. It may be several words or a phrase such as "feel your presence" or "lead me into life." Whatever your answers, they are the foundation of your breath prayer.
4. Select the name that you are most comfortable using to speak with God. Combine it with your written answer to the question God asked you. This is your prayer.
5. Breathe in the first phrase/word (generally your invocation of God's name) and breathe out the second phrase/word (request or need).

Inhale GOD'S NAME	Exhale NEED
Ruach	<i>You are enough</i>
Lord Jesus Christ	<i>Have mercy</i>
Jesus	<i>Let me feel your love</i>
Mighty God	<i>Show me your way</i>
Great Physician	<i>Heal me</i>
Speak Lord	<i>I'm listening</i>
Lord, My Guide	<i>Here I am</i>
My Father	<i>I will trust in you</i>
You are Good	<i>Your will alone</i>
Lord, Our King	<i>Bring your kingdom</i>
Our Redeemer	<i>Come, Lord Jesus</i>
Lord	<i>Help</i>

Third Church Statement of Faith

The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ baptizes believers in the Holy Spirit whom also we are sealed for the day of redemption. The Holy Spirit regenerates, forever indwells and graciously equips the Christian for Godly living and service. Following conversion, the Spirit desires to continuously fill, empower and anoint believers for ministry and witness. We also believe that signs and wonders, as well as the gifts of the Spirit described in the New Testament, are operative today and are designed to testify to the presence of the kingdom and to empower and edify the church to fulfill its calling and mission.

—*Matthew 3:11; John 1:12-13, 3:1-15; Acts 4:29-30; Romans 9:9, 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Galatians 3:1-5; Ephesians 1:13-14, 5:18*

RESOURCES

Books

***Receiving the Power:
Preparing the Way for The Holy Spirit***
by Zeb Bradford Long & Douglas McMurry

The Word and Power Church
by Douglas Banister

***God's Empowering Presence:
The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul***
by Gordon D. Fee

The Baptism and Gifts of the Spirit
by David Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Life in the Spirit
by Robertson McQuilkin, J. Robertson
McQuilkin, Philip Yancey

***Chaos and Grace: Discovering
the Liberating Work of the Holy Spirit***
by Mark Galli

Videos

Relationship with the Holy Spirit
by John Bevere [YouTube]

An Intro to the Holy Spirit
by John Bevere [YouTube]

Search for additional videos on YouTube by
John Bevere, Chris Gore and Shawn Bolz.

SESSION THREE

Image of God

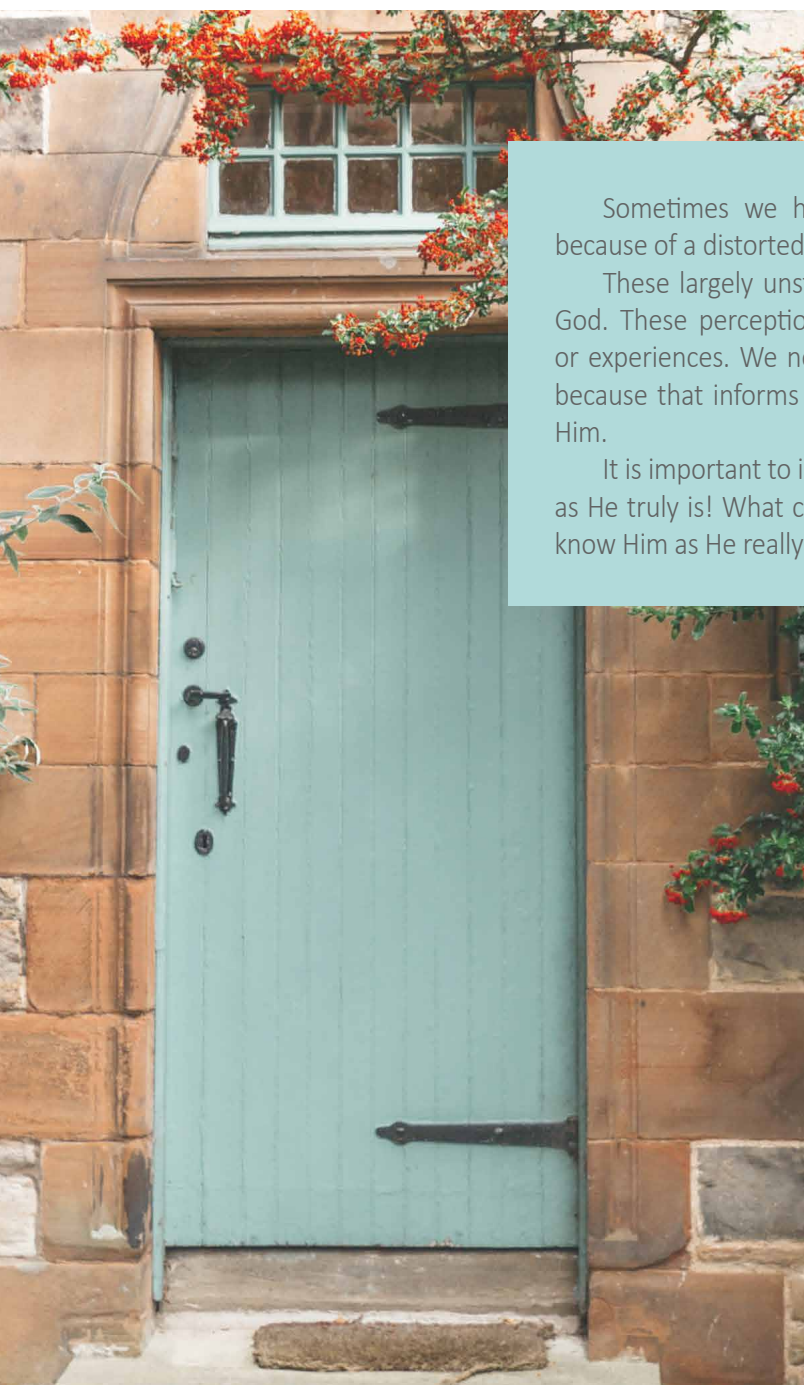
PRAYING WITH OTHERS | LEVEL ONE



SESSION THREE

Image of God

THE DOORWAY



Sometimes we have difficulty hearing and relating with God because of a distorted perception we have of Him.

These largely unstated misperceptions affect what we expect of God. These perceptions are often deeply rooted in our upbringing or experiences. We need to have an awareness of how we see God because that informs how we relate to Him and how we hear from Him.

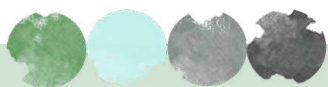
It is important to identify false views of God so we relate with Him as He truly is! What could be better than that? Tell God you want to know Him as He really is.

Lord, I've seen you as:

Use the Names of God you've experienced.

Lord, I want to know You as:

Use the names of God you want to experience.



Mark the following misconceptions about God that you can relate to.

- **When you are doubting whether God cares about you or will speak with you.**
- **When you are angry at God, frightened of Him, or shy away from Him.**
- **If you have been deeply hurt or abused by a significant family member, a pastor or a church (we often unwittingly transfer those experiences onto God).**
- **When you have an intensely negative gut reaction to something you read in the Bible.**
- **During times of great stress or intense trial.**
- **When you sense spiritual warfare; Satan will attempt to get you to believe lies about God.**
- **When you sense something fundamentally wrong in your relationship with God.**
- **When you attempt to hear God and end up feeling condemned, misunderstood, disconnected, judged or abused.**

Common Misconceptions

There are elements of truth in many of these following perceptions—however, they are distorted enough that they block our ability to relate to God as who He is.

- God uses hardships and trials to teach me things. If I learn something, that's good. If I don't get it, I will repeat similar scenarios until I get it right.
- God loves and is there for the poor and the oppressed. I don't have any "real" problems. Therefore, I shouldn't expect much of His attention or time.
- God's standards are high—and rightly so. He wants me to behave. Talking to Him means reviewing what I'm doing wrong. It's up to me to get things right.
- God wishes I would be appreciative of all He has done and just be joyful and obedient. He is rightfully frustrated with me being so messed up and needy.
- God has forgiven me, but if I do something I know is wrong, I must do penance and clean myself up before I can be close to Him again.
- God loves me (I suspect); He just doesn't like me.
- God has shown me what He wants; His commands are all over the Bible. I shouldn't be asking Him for anything more when I already know what He wants from me. Since I don't do what He wants—pray, read my Bible, go to church, witness, serve others—how can I expect much from Him?
- God doesn't have much use for me. Because of the magnitude of my past sin(s), I cannot expect God to bless me or use me.
- God wasn't there for me when I really needed Him. I can't depend upon Him, therefore what's the use in getting close to Him now.
- God is most happy with me when I'm working for Him.
- God gave people good minds. I'm supposed to use the mind God gave me and do what I know is right. Closeness (or intimacy) with God is a concept made up by touchy/feely people.
- God loves me too much to let really bad things happen to me. He wants me to be happy. Because He wants the best for me, my life will be blessed and worry-free.
- God is almighty and sovereign. If I talk to Him as if He is just my father or friend, I will be irreverent and flippant.

STUDY

What is your image of God? *Policeman? Father? Parent? Judge? Comforter? Friend? Distant? Tyrant?*
How long have you had this image? Is this image Biblical?

How have your misconceptions blocked your ability to talk with God as your perfect Father and friend?

In what ways would a different image of God challenge your regular practices?

How does God want you to know Him in this season of your life?

DISCUSSION



Have you ever thought about your image of God before?

Were you surprised by any of your responses to the misconceptions of God?

MINISTRY

Bring to the Lord any image of Him that has damaged your relationship with Him or others, and thank Him for how you've experienced the truth about Him. Ask the Lord to replace any false image with who He truly is. Ask Him how He wants you to know Him in this season.



Exchanging Lies

It's time to change how you have seen God to the real presence of who He is. Fill in the chart below.

Renounce
HANDS DOWN

I renounce this lie. I once saw Him as:

Receive
HANDS UP

I receive this truth. I now see that He is:

Renounce
HANDS DOWN

I renounce this lie. I once saw Him as:

Receive
HANDS UP

I receive this truth. I now see that He is:


Prayer

Make time each day to pray the Lord's Prayer.

Names of God

Circle the names of God in the list below that you have experienced. The names of God are also included in the Prayer Toolbox.

A faithful God who does no wrong	Father	God of the living
A forgiving God	Father of compassion	God of the spirits of all mankind
A fortress of salvation	Father of our spirits	God of truth
A glorious crown	Father of the heavenly lights	God our Father
A jealous and avenging God	Father to the fatherless	God our strength
A Master in heaven	God	God over all the kingdoms of earth
A refuge for his people	God Almighty (El Sabaoth)	God the Father
A refuge for the needy in his distress	God Almighty (El Shaddai)	God who avenges me
A refuge for the oppressed	God and Father of our Lord J.C.	God who gives endurance and encouragement
A refuge for the poor	God Most High	God who relents from sending calamity
A sanctuary	God my Maker	Great and awesome God
A shade from the heat	God my Rock	Great and powerful God
A shelter from the storm	God my Savior	Great, mighty and awesome God
A source of strength	God my stronghold	He who blots out your transgressions
A stronghold in times of trouble	God of Abraham, Isaac & Jacob	He who comforts you
An ever present help in trouble	God of all comfort	He who forms the hearts of all
Architect and builder	God of all mankind	He who raised Christ from the dead
Builder of everything	God of glory	He who reveals his thoughts to man
Commander of the Lord's army	God of gods	Helper of the fatherless
Creator of heaven and earth	God of grace	
Defender of widows	God of hope	
Eternal King	God of love and peace	
	God of peace	
	God of retribution	



Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine	Lord will Provide	The compassionate and gracious God
Him who is able to keep you from falling	Love	The Eternal God
Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead	Maker of all things	The consuming fire
Holy Father	Maker of heaven and earth	The everlasting God
Holy One	Most High	The exalted God
Holy One among you	My advocate	The faithful God
I AM	My Comforter in sorrow	The gardener (husbandman)
I AM WHO I AM	My confidence	The glorious Father
Jealous	My help	The Glory of Israel
Judge of all the earth	My helper	The God who saves me
King of glory	My hiding place	The God who sees me
King of heaven	My hope my light	The great King above all gods
Living and true God	My mighty rock	The just and mighty One
Lord (Adonai)	My refuge in the day of disaster	The living Father
Lord Almighty	My refuge in times of trouble	The Majestic Glory
Lord God Almighty	My song	The Majesty in heaven
Lord is Peace	My strong deliverer	The one who sustains me
Lord (Jehovah)	My support	The only God
Lord Most High	One to be feared	The potter
Lord my Banner	Only wise God	The rock in whom I take refuge
Lord my Rock	Our dwelling place	The spring of living water
Lord of all the earth	Our judge	The strength of my heart
Lord of heaven and earth	Our lawgiver	The true God
Lord of kings	Our leader	You who hear prayer
Lord my God	Our Mighty One	You who judge righteously and test the heart and mind
Lord my Maker	Our Redeemer	You who keep your covenant of love with your servants
Lord my shield	Our refuge and strength	You who love the people
Lord who heals me	Righteous Father	Your glory
Lord who is there	Righteous judge	Your praise
Lord who makes me holy	Rock of our salvation	Your very great reward
Lord who strikes the blow	Shepherd	
	Sovereign Lord	
	The Almighty	

Upgrading Your Image of God

Thanksgiving

We enter His gates with thanksgiving... What are you thankful for? What has God given you? What gifts has He lavished upon you?

Offer Him a heartfelt psalm of thanksgiving, focusing on the blessings He has given you. If your current circumstances are difficult or hard, what can you be thankful for in terms of God's heart toward you? That He said "He would never leave nor forsake you" is worthy of thanks alone.

Worship

Adore God. Magnify His name. If thanksgiving opens His gates, then worship opens His heart. Magnify has two meanings: First, to see something bigger than it is in actual size. Second, to see something as big as it really is. We tend to magnify our problems and not the Lord. See Him as big as He is.

Stillness

It is in stillness and peace that God begins to speak. His voice is in the still and quiet. Be still and know that He is God. Rest there. Live there. Connect with the Almighty there. Still the clamoring in your thoughts. We all have a background conversation in our minds that either feeds our fears or lifts our spirits. Stillness promotes a God-consciousness.

Prince of Peace

Embrace God as your Prince of Peace, draw on His restful nature to sustain you. As troubles rise in your heart, ask the Prince of Peace to soothe you. He is your refuge, your strong tower. If it helps, picture a strong tower, ruled by God. Live in it.

Man of War

God is your protector. He is gentle as a Lamb, and fierce as a Lion. He is your shield, your sword, your strength. Let Him fight your battles for you... don't take matters into your own hands. Allow Him to be fully God in your life—the provider of peace, and the protector of your life.

Season

Tell God what you are coming into. Examine your new season. Share your fears, your dreams. Hide nothing—He knows and sees all anyway. Listen as He whispers to you. Expect the Lord to give you a "spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him" (Eph. 1:17).

Teach

Begin to ask God questions. What does HE want to teach you in this next season of life that He could only teach you this way? What lessons are there for you to learn? What pitfalls does He want you to avoid? Write down questions and expect God to answer. The revelation that comes will lead you into a new experience of Him.

Experience

God has a plan to reveal something new and fresh about himself to you. Ask God what it is. He will give you a vision of all that He wants to be for you. Your circumstances will then be filled with promise. Perceive problems as opportunities to experience all that God longs to be to you. Consider crafting a prayer asking for everything heaven holds for you.

Abide in Him

Just be. Just be with God. In the Garden of Eden, God and Adam would sit and talk with one another. Abide in Him. Love Him. Minister to Him.

RESOURCES

Books

***The Pleasure of His Company:
A Journey to Intimate
Friendship With God***
by Dutch Sheets

***Beautiful Outlaw: Experiencing
the Playful, Disruptive, Extravagant
Personality of Jesus***
by John Eldredge

***Abba's Child: The Cry of the
Heart for Intimate Belonging***
by Brennan Manning

***The Nature of God, Upgrading
Your Image of God and Who
He Wants to Be for You***
by Graham Cooke

Videos

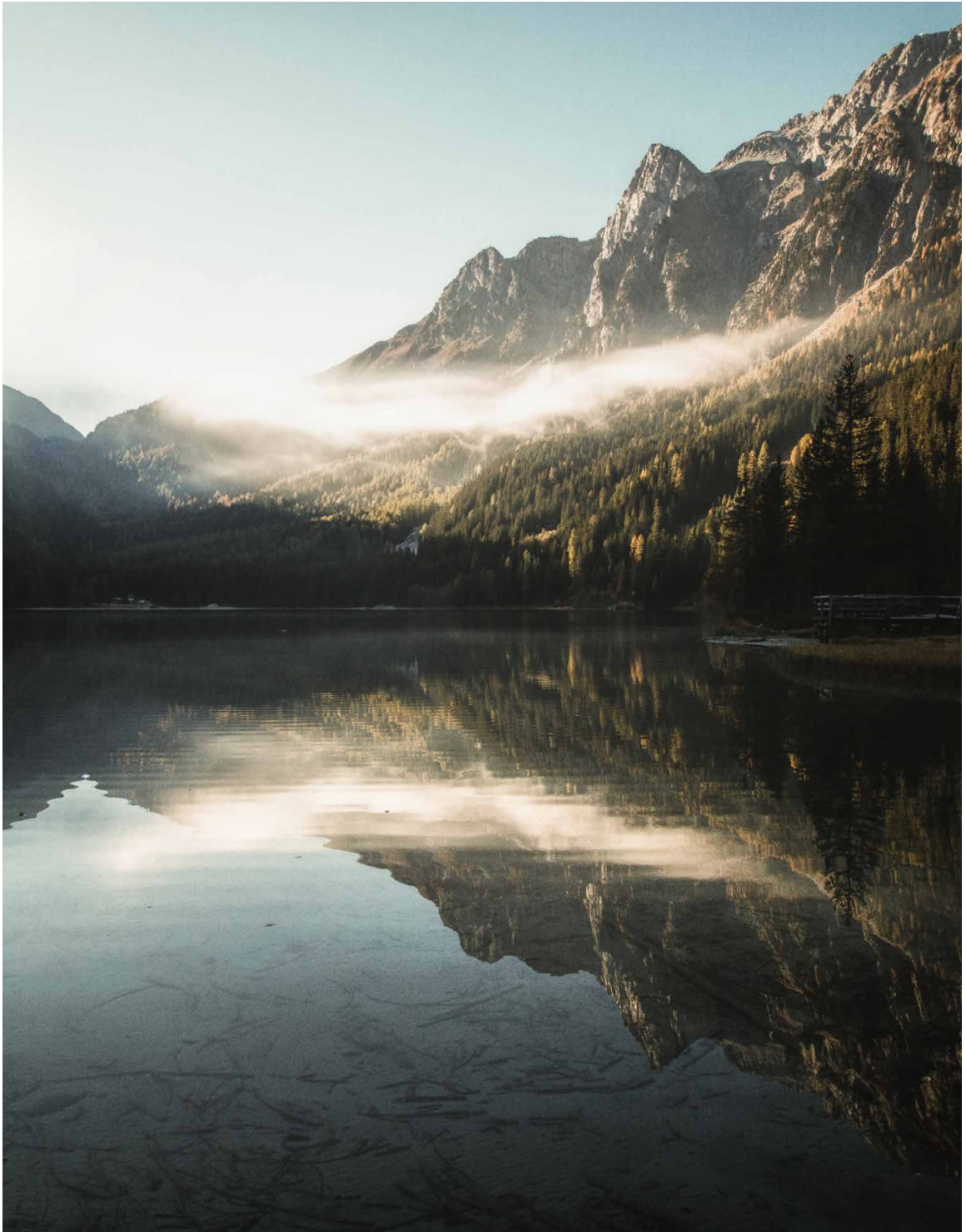
Just Give Me Jesus
by Anne Graham Lotz [YouTube]

Healing Our Image of God and Ourselves
by Brennan Manning [YouTube]

SESSION FOUR

Identity in Christ

PRAYING WITH OTHERS | LEVEL ONE



SESSION FOUR

Identity in Christ

THE DOORWAY



The movie "The Help" depicts a time in the 1950's when it was acceptable for the wealthy rich to employ African American servants. The picture depicts a scene where the maid was the one in the home telling the little girl who she was. Who put words to who you were as a child?



Looking at the story of Jesus temptation in Matthew 4:1-11, the demons said to Jesus:
"Turn stones into bread" – *Show that you can do something.*
"Jump from the temple" – *People will speak well about you.*
"Kneel in front of me." – *You will have a lot of possessions; everyone will love you.*

Jesus says that's a lie.

Now, in the story, Jesus knows who he is. Because before Jesus was tempted, the Spirit came on him and said, "You are the Beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased, with whom my favor rests."

How Would You Respond? These answers might be important to consider, but this is not who God says we are. It takes energy to manage this type of identity.

I AM—what I do:

I AM—what I have:

I AM—what others say:

My Identity in Christ

Check the circle in front of the statements below that are your favorites.

I AM ACCEPTED

- ☐ I am God's Child. —*John 1:12*
- ☐ I am Christ's friend.—*John 15:15*
- ☐ I have been justified (made right in God's eyes).— *Romans 5:1*
- ☐ I am united with the Lord and one with Him in spirit. —*1 Corinthians 6:17*
- ☐ I have been bought with a price. I belong to God. —*1 Corinthians 6:20*
- ☐ I am a member of Christ's Body. —*1 Corinthians 12:27*
- ☐ I am a saint. —*Ephesians 1:1*
- ☐ I have been adopted (chosen) as God's child. —*Ephesians 1:5*
- ☐ I can go right to God through the Holy Spirit. —*Ephesians 2:18*
- ☐ I have been redeemed (bought by God) and forgiven of all my sins. —*Colossians 1:14*
- ☐ I am complete in Christ. — *Colossians 2:10*

I AM SECURE

- ☐ I am free from punishment. —*Romans 8:1, 2*
- ☐ I am sure that all things work together for good. —*Romans 8:28*
- ☐ I am free from any condemning charges against me. —*Romans 8:33, 34*
- ☐ I cannot be separated from the love of God. —*Roman 8:35-39*
- ☐ I have been established, anointed and sealed by God. —*2 Corinthians 1:21, 22*
- ☐ I am hidden with Christ in God. —*Colossians 3:3*
- ☐ I am sure that the good work that God has begun in me will be perfected. —*Philippians 1:6*
- ☐ I am a citizen of heaven. —*Philippians 3:20*
- ☐ I have not been given a spirit of fear but of power, love and a sound mind. —*2 Timothy 1:7*
- ☐ I can find grace and mercy in time of need. —*Hebrews 4:16*
- ☐ I am born of God and the evil one cannot touch me. —*1 John 5:18*

I AM SIGNIFICANT

- ☐ I am the salt and light of the earth. —*Matthew 5:13, 14*
- ☐ I am a branch of the true vine, joined to Christ. —*John 15:1, 5*
- ☐ I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit. —*John 15:16*
- ☐ I am Christ's personal witness —*Acts 1:8*
- ☐ I am God's temple. —*1 Corinthians 3:16*
- ☐ I am a minister of peace (bringing others to God). —*2 Corinthians 5:17-21*
- ☐ I am God's coworker. —*2 Corinthians 6:1*
- ☐ I am seated with Christ heaven. —*Ephesians 2:6*
- ☐ I am God's workmanship. —*Ephesians 2:10*
- ☐ I may approach God with freedom and confidence. —*Ephesians 3:12*
- ☐ I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. —*Philippians 4:13*

Identify the Lies

Identify lies that you have believed throughout your life. Note the root/where you may have heard the lie and write what is actually true.

BELIEF/LIE	ROOT	TRUTH
1— I'm not good enough.	<i>I was criticized a lot as a child.</i>	<i>God is my perfection and I have everything I need in Him.</i>
1— I'm not good enough.		
2— I don't belong like others do.		
3—I don't have anything to offer.		
4—I'm stupid.		
5—My needs aren't important.		
6—It's not OK for me to be who I really am.		
7—If something is wrong, it's my fault.		
8—Conflict must be avoided; I must keep peace at all costs.		
9—It's not OK to express anger.		
10—I don't have what it takes to be a success.		
11—I'm too much for people to handle.		
12—It's not OK to cry, especially in front of others.		

BELIEF/LIE	ROOT	TRUTH
13—It’s not OK to ask for help.		
14—It’s not OK to say, "I don’t know."		
15—If I say no, then others won’t like me.		
16—I don’t have the right to be alive.		
17—I must be perfect.		
18—It’s not OK to make a mistake.		
19—I’ll always be a failure.		
20—I must protect the public family image.		
21—I must do whatever it takes to get people's love and approval.		
22—It’s my responsibility to make others happy.		
23—What I do makes me what I am.		
24—You always get what you deserve.		
25—You shouldn’t need anybody.		

What We Make of Our Memories

One way we can help others learn about their identity in Christ is to look back at critical memories in their lives. Have them write down memories from key phases in their lives. Have them identify if the memory was painful. Go over if they were able to see any lessons learned. Lastly, look at if or how the memory influenced how they saw themselves, and how they saw God. Identify if/any forgiveness was part of the memory.

Early Childhood
(birth-age 5)

Elementary
School Years

Middle School
Years

High School
Years

College Years

Young Adult
Years

Middle Age
Years

Recent
Memories From
Where You Are
Now in Life

Questions for Further Thought

How would your life be different if you were able to rely on and live out of a place of having internalized God's love for you?

Are there barriers that hinder you from embracing your identity as one deeply and unconditionally loved by God?

MINISTRY

Exchanging Lies

Is there an exchange you need to make?

Renounce

HANDS DOWN

I renounce this lie in Jesus name:

Receive

HANDS UP

I receive this truth from Jesus:

Renounce

HANDS DOWN

I renounce this lie in Jesus name:

Receive

HANDS UP

I receive this truth from Jesus:

Renounce

HANDS DOWN

I renounce this lie in Jesus name:

Receive

HANDS UP

I receive this truth from Jesus:



Receive a Blessing

From the book of blessings, choose a blessing to have read over you.

RESOURCES

Books

Daily Spirit Blessings

by Sylvia Gunter

The Gift of Being Yourself:

The Sacred Call to Self-Discovery

by David Benner

Prayer Toolbox

- Orphan Spirit vs. Sonship
- Blessing of Belovedness
- Identity
- Living as Sons & Daughters
- Exchanging Lies for Truth

Videos

Healing the Orphaned Spirit

by Leif Hetland [YouTube]

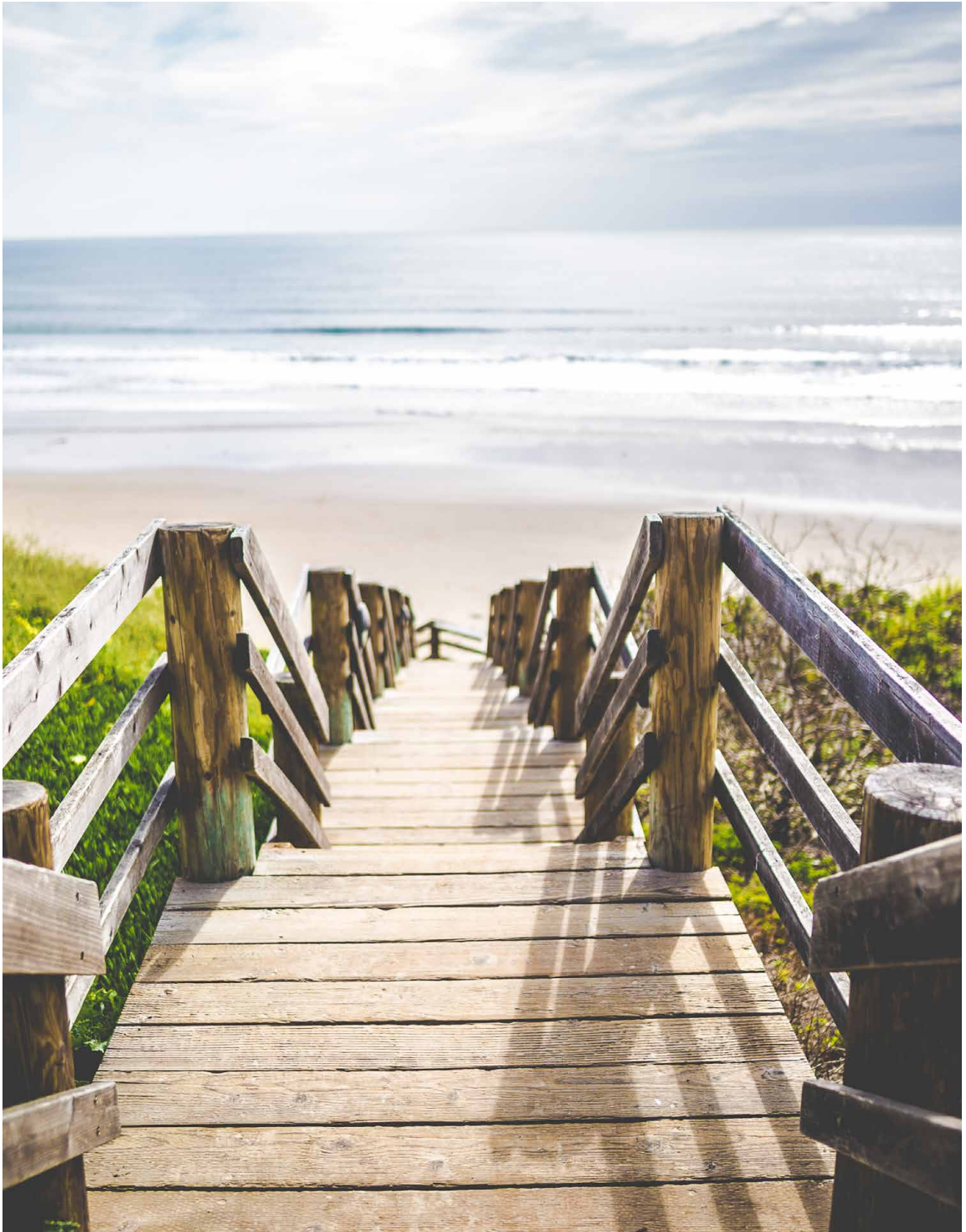
How He Loves Us

by Kim Walker-Smith [YouTube]

SESSION FIVE

The Healing Power of Forgiveness

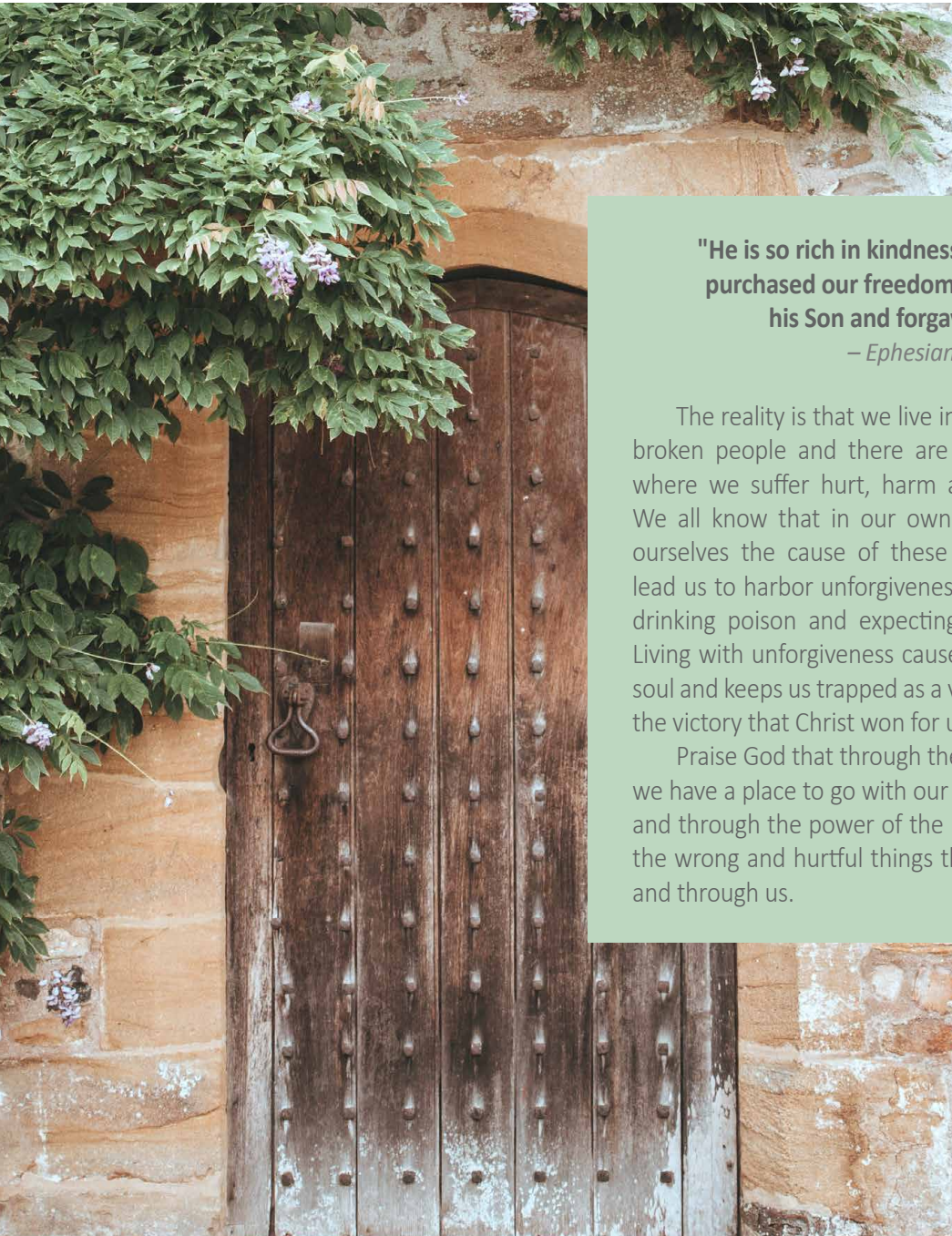
PRAYING WITH OTHERS | LEVEL ONE



SESSION FIVE

The Healing Power of Forgiveness

THE DOORWAY



"He is so rich in kindness and grace that He purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins."

— Ephesians 1:7

The reality is that we live in a fallen world, filled with broken people and there are many times in our lives where we suffer hurt, harm and offense from others. We all know that in our own brokenness we can find ourselves the cause of these things as well. Pain can lead us to harbor unforgiveness in our lives which is like drinking poison and expecting another person to die. Living with unforgiveness causes great harm to our own soul and keeps us trapped as a victim rather than living in the victory that Christ won for us.

Praise God that through the cross of Christ Jesus that we have a place to go with our own pain and brokenness and through the power of the Holy Spirit we can release the wrong and hurtful things that have been done to us and through us.

Quotes About Forgiveness

Read through the following quotes about forgiveness. Mark the two that most resonate with you.

We all agreed that forgiveness is a beautiful idea until we have to practice it.

—CS Lewis.

Human power alone is insufficient to reach full forgiveness. There is an element of forgiveness that is divine. It cannot be reached without God.

—Frank Minirth

When we forgive, we forgive with help over and over. These are the questions: Who has wronged you? What would it look like to be a forgiver? Because how badly do you want to be free?

—Shauna Niequist

Forgiving does not erase the bitter past. A healed memory is not a deleted memory. Instead, forgiving what we cannot forget creates a new way to remember. We change the memory of our past into a hope for our future.

—Lewis B. Smedes

You will know that forgiveness has begun when you recall those who hurt you and feel the power to wish them well.

—Lewis B. Smedes

Forgiving does not erase the bitter past. A healed memory is not a deleted memory. Instead, forgiving what we cannot forget creates a new way to remember. We change the memory of our past into a hope for our future.

—Lewis B. Smedes

When we forgive evil we do not excuse it, we do not tolerate it, we do not smother it. We look the evil full in the face, call it what it is, let its horror shock and stun and enrage us, and only then do we forgive it. —Lewis B. Smedes



To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you.

—Lewis B Smedes

When you don't forgive someone, in some way that person is in jail, and you are the warden. You're incarcerated, too, because you have to make sure the prisoner stays there.

—Kerney Franston



Consider what you think about Forgiveness.

T **F** I can forgive if the person in the wrong is sorry.

T **F** Forgiveness will set me free to move on with my life.

T **F** Forgiveness will keep me from becoming like the person who hurt me.

T **F** Forgiveness will open further my relationship with God.

T **F** Forgiveness will keep me from becoming bitter.

T **F** Scripture commands us to be forgiving.

T **F** It's impossible to forgive certain things.

T **F** It's impossible for God to forgive certain things.

T **F** Forgiveness refuses to let the person who hurt me have any power over my life.

T **F** Unforgiveness doesn't hurt the perpetrator at all; it hurts only me.

T **F** When we forgive, it is only with God's help ... over and over.

T **F** Forgiveness is a decision; it's not a feeling.

T **F** There is a difference between remembering a transgression and lacking forgiveness.

T **F** It is good to have something "concrete" to help you remember the day you set your offender free.

Examen = review of the day: "The review of the day is an opportunity for us to go back over our day with God—to do it in conversation with God" Do you have a pattern of "examen" or confession?

It's important to recognize the difference between reconciliation and forgiveness. What is it?



What Forgiveness is and What it is Not

- Does NOT mean that any wrongs done to you were acceptable or condoned.
 - Does NOT diminish the evil done against you, nor is it a denial of what happened.
 - Does NOT necessarily mean forgetting ... it means remembering without the pain.
 - Is a key part of not letting those wrongs hurt you any longer.
 - Does NOT take away the consequences the other person will face because of his sin.
 - Is NOT weakness; it is the most powerful thing you can do; refusing to forgive allows Satan to continue to hurt you; forgiveness stops the destructive power of Satan in one's life.
 - Is an act of obedience; God knows it will bring you freedom.
 - Is NOT something you do for someone else. It is something that you do for yourself.
 - Is NOT reconciliation; it takes two to reconcile but only one to forgive.
 - Does NOT depend on the other person's actions and it is not probationary (e.g. saying, "I will forgive you as long as you aren't drinking.")
 - Is a gift you give to the offender; trust, on the other hand, must be earned! You must set boundaries.
 - Does NOT wait for the offender to repent; unlike God, who provides forgiveness when we repent, humans cannot demand repentance before granting forgiveness IS about how much you trust God to take care of you.
 - Is experiencing empathy for the offender, humility about your own sinfulness, and gratitude for being forgiven by God and others.
 - Does NOT seek revenge. Revenge never gets what it wants; it never evens the score. Vengeance is personal satisfaction, justice is moral accounting.
 - Is letting go of your desire to hurt the other person; simply put, forgiveness means you "cancel a debt."
 - Is a difficult and uncomfortable process; when you make a decision to forgive, God provides the grace and strength to forgive and to maintain a heart of forgiveness.
 - Does NOT require you to become a "doormat." nor does it require you to allow the offender to hurt you again. You can forgive someone almost anything, but you should not tolerate everything.
 - Human forgiveness does NOT do away with human justice.
- Compiled by Louan Hietbrink

STUDY

Read through Psalm 139 below. Mark the section you think you need to focus on the most at this time.

SECTION 1

Awakening to the Presence of God

¹You have searched me, Lord, and you know me.

²You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.

³You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.

⁴Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely.

⁵You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me.

⁶Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

⁷Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

⁸If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

⁹If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,

¹⁰even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

¹¹If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,"

¹²even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

SECTION 2

Celebrating Your Created Goodness

¹³For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

¹⁴I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

¹⁵My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.

¹⁶Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

¹⁷How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them!

¹⁸Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand—when I awake, I am still with you.

SECTION 3

Inviting God to Search Your Heart

¹⁹If only you, God, would slay the wicked! Away from me, you who are bloodthirsty!

²⁰They speak of you with evil intent; your adversaries misuse your name.

²¹Do I not hate those who hate you, Lord, and abhor those who are in rebellion against you?

²²I have nothing but hatred for them; I count them my enemies.

²³Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.

²⁴See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Celebrate and Discover

Ask God to show you places where you are growing and changing. Celebrate! Ask God to show you places where you fell short of Christlikeness, and specifically if you need to address any unforgiveness. Jot them below:

DISCUSSION



What are some reasons people don't want to forgive? (means that wrongs are acceptable, might seem to diminish pain etc.)

What is preventing you right now from forgiving?

Do you see a pattern of how you respond when people offend you? Does that response help or hurt you?

MINISTRY

Prayer of Forgiveness

PART 1

Hold up to the Lord all things about the person that trouble you.

Put your hands together and pile up all the things about the person that trouble you. List and name those things that upset you about this person. Verbally state each thing as you are placing them in your hands. When you are finished, turn your hands over and release all of these things to the Lord.

Lord Jesus, I give you each one of these things and ask that you take them and pour your love and healing power through them. I thank you, Lord, that You have the power and the grace to redeem them. I ask you, Lord Jesus, to lift all the pain and hurt that has been involved with each one of these things, that You lift it from my heart, mind, and spirit. I ask that You lift the burden of these things from my shoulders. I give all this to You, Lord, and I trust You to deal with them. Thank you, Lord, for taking each one of these things. Amen.



PART 2

Hold up to the Lord all the things about you that trouble this person.

Put your hands together and pile up all the things about you that trouble the person you seek to forgive. Name these things and pile them up, one by one, in your hands. When you can't think of anything else, turn your hands over and release these things to the Lord.

Lord Jesus, I ask you to pour your love and healing power over these things. I ask You to take them, and I thank You for taking them, dealing with them, and releasing this burden from [name]. I trust You to heal this hurt and pain. Amen.

PART 3

Hold up to the Lord your heart's desire for this person.

Tell the Lord what you would like Him to do in this person's life. (If the person has died, it's still okay to lift up the person and share with the Lord what the desire of your heart is for him.) Name those things and place them in your hands. When you are finished, turn your hands over and give them all to the Lord, just as before.

Lord, I give [name] to you. I thank You that You are able to handle [name] better than anyone else. Bring about your perfect will for [name] and let Your love and healing power flow into him/her. I release [name] into your care. Bless [name]. Amen.

PART 4

Hold up to the Lord your hearts' desire for yourself.

Tell the Lord what you would like Him to do in your life. Give Him the desires of your heart and ask specifically for what you need from Him today. Name a fruit/s of the spirit that you especially need (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, self-control).

Lord, I give myself to You and trust You. I need Your love, mercy and grace. From Your character, I need [fruit/s of the Spirit]. Would You show me Your love for me and what You want to do in my life. Amen.

Help Me to Forgive

A Crafted Prayer for Those Wanting to Forgive

Dear Heavenly Father,

I come to you and ask for your help. I know that I am to forgive others as you have forgiven me, but I find it so hard to do Lord. My mind and heart are full of anger for the things that have been said and done. At times it seems as though the ones that inflict pain and wounds are unrepentant...that they escape judgment. I am angry for what they have taken from me and for the pain they have caused me.

Lord, please help me to see with your eyes. Help me to remember that forgiveness is for me and not for them. Help me to remember that my forgiveness does not depend on them apologizing or repenting...help me to remember that forgiveness is between me and you. Lord, I am releasing my pain and my hurt and my anger to you and I am asking for your help in forgiving them so I can be set free.

I want to forgive and leave this heavy weight at your feet so I can be set free. Lord, their sin and their wrong doing, I leave in your hands for You to deal with it. I no longer want to be held hostage in a prison of anger and bitterness and sadness for what has been done by someone else. I no longer want to serve the sentence for what someone else has done wrong.

Lord, release me from this bondage and free my heart. I want to forgive Lord, as you have forgiven me. You died not only to set me free from my sins, but to set me free from all the things that hold me hostage and keep me from being who

continued on next page



you want me to be. Help me to live in the peace and freedom that you offer.

Lord, from this day forward, I want to be healed from all these negative feelings. Thank you Lord, for helping me...what I can't do....what I don't have the strength to do on my own power, I know I am able to do through Jesus.

Thank you Lord. for helping me to move forward today. Help my mind turn to you when the old feelings and thoughts start to enter my mind. Bind the enemy so he can't bring up the past. Clean the wound out of my heart Lord so it can finally heal and so it can be at peace. Thank you Lord. In the name of Jesus I ask all of these things. Amen.



REACH as a Path to Forgiveness



Recall Hurt

Review the truth of what has happened, not to blame but to acknowledge truth.



Empathize with the Person

Sometimes we glimpse why the person did what they did if we can place ourselves in their shoes.



Altruistic Gift of Forgiveness

Recall the mercy and grace you have from God & give that away.



Commit to Forgive Publicly

Go forward without ruminating on the wrongs. Remember decision.



Hold on to Forgiveness

It is good to have something "concrete" to remember the day you set your offender free. It is not possible to forget—but we can remember with less pain.

—From Biblical Counseling by Tim Clinton

RESOURCES

Books

Forgiving and Reconciling: Bridges to Wholeness and Hope

by Everett L. Worthington

The Art of Forgiving

by Lewis B. Smedes

The Supernatural Power of Forgiveness: Discover How to Escape Your Prison of Pain and Unlock a Life of Freedom

by Kris Vallotton & Jason Vallotton

The Bait of Satan: Living Free from the Deadly Trap of Offense

by John Bevere

Total Forgiveness

by R. T. Kendall

Prayer Toolbox

- Forgiveness/Prayer of Forgiveness

Videos

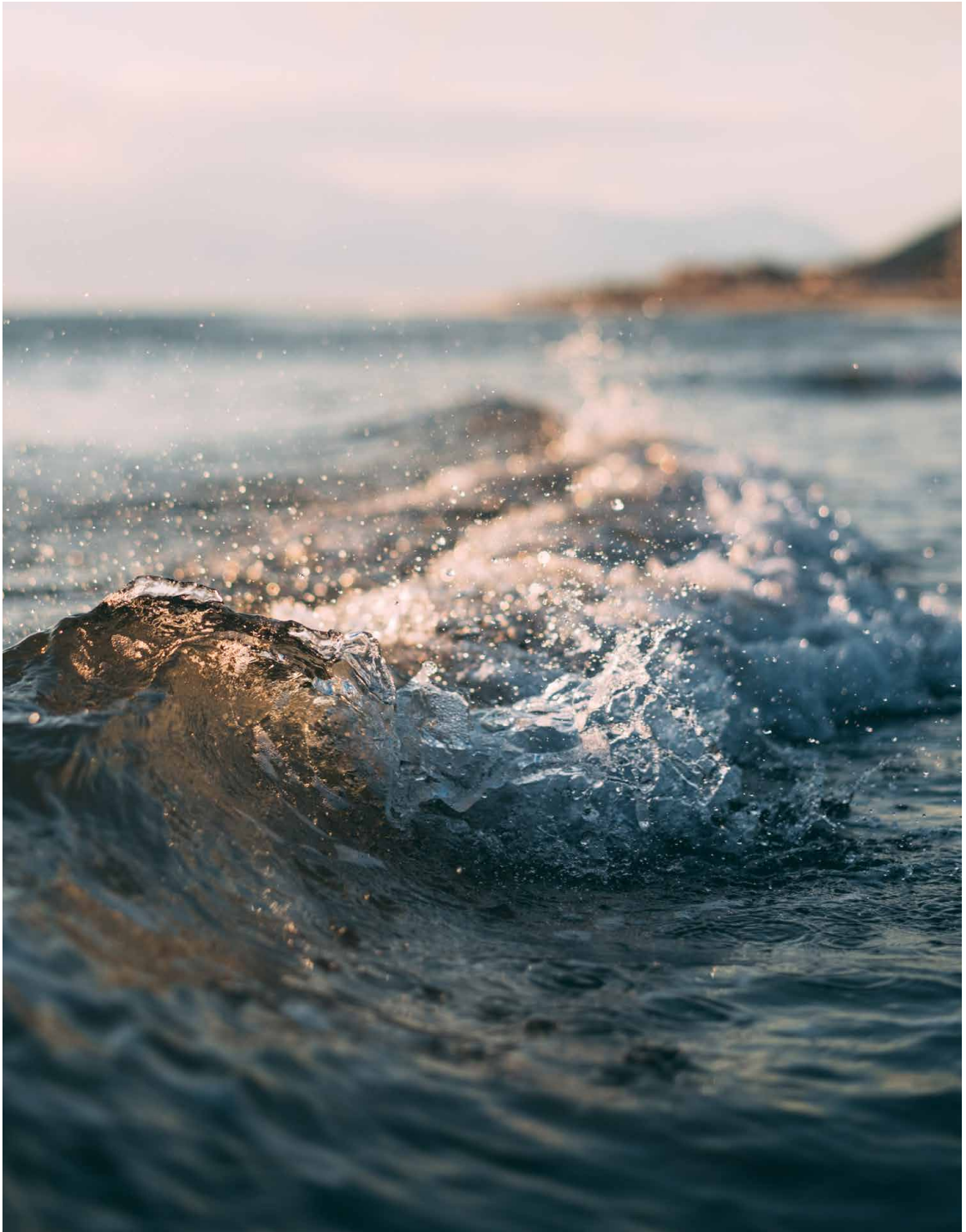
How to Forgive

by Corrie Ten Boom [YouTube]

SESSION SIX

Physical Healing

PRAYING WITH OTHERS | LEVEL ONE



SESSION SIX

Physical Healing

THE DOORWAY



"While there is no formula or magic wand for walking in supernatural power, there is a renewing of the mind that needs to take place."

—Chris Gore, *Walking in Supernatural Healing Power*

When those that we love are sick, there is almost nothing we wouldn't do to see them well and whole. There has been a reawakening in the church to the ministry of healing, but particularly when it comes to the realm of physical healing there can be so many questions and mysteries that we find ourselves wrestling with:

Is it God's will to heal?

Why are some healed and others not?

Can anyone pray for the sick?

Why does a good God allow sickness?

How do I effectively pray for healing?

What are Your Thoughts About Healing?

As you think about your own journey with healing, which of these questions have you wrestled with? Is there a "renewing of the mind" that you are longing for? A place where you want Christ's perspective and mindset? A place of pain or loss that you need Jesus to speak into?

Healing & Authority

Look up the following scriptures. What do we learn about healing and authority from these verses?

MATTHEW 10:1, 7-8

.....

.....

MATTHEW 8:1-3

.....

.....

JOHN 9:1-3

.....

.....

EPHESIANS 1:17-23; 2:6

.....

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ACTS 10:36-38

.....

.....

LUKE 4:14-21

.....

.....



Pray From a Place of Victory

Based on these scriptures, do you think it is God's will to heal?

Based on these scriptures, where does the authority to heal come from?

Based on these scriptures, who should pray for healing?

Based on these scriptures why do we pray for healing?

Are there any other questions about healing that you are still wondering about?



Foundations for Healing Prayer

- We pray believing it's God's will to heal—*Isaiah 61:1*
- We pray believe healing glorifies God—*John 9:3*
- We believe healing demonstrates the Kingdom coming near—*Matthew 10:7-8*
- We pray from our position in Christ—*Ephesians 2:6*
- We pray from the finished work of the cross —*Colossians 2:15*
- We pray with compassion, marked by the fruits of the Spirit —*Galatians 5:22*
- We pray with eyes fixed on Jesus, NOT the problem —*Hebrews 12:2*
- We pray from our place of sonship and daughtership —*Mark 1:11*
- We pray believing something always happens when we pray, nothing short of the presence of God Himself—*Matthew 18:20*

Faith in the Healer

Carrying confidence in God that we are His dwelling place is a key part of walking in a supernatural lifestyle. We must carry a confidence that God wants the person we are praying for healed and whole, even more than we want to see them healed and whole. —Chris Gore, *Walking in Supernatural Healing Power*

Christ is the healer. No human being has the power to heal. Christ loves ALL of us, and sends His love through us to His children according to His will. If we quiet ourselves and let Him speak, we will not go wrong. —Agnes Sanford, *The Healing Light*

Our call is to surrender and with childlike faith to see things from His perspective. —Chris Gore

Questions to Consider

Can you identify with placing your faith for healing in someone or something other than Jesus? What are you tempted to put your trust in?

What are ways to keep our focus on Jesus as we pray?



When Healing Doesn't Come...

There will be times when healing doesn't come this side of heaven. When that happens we grieve and weep with others in their loss. For those who are in Christ, we celebrate that death does not have the final word because in Jesus "death is swallowed up in victory." —*1 Corinthians 15:54*.

Even when we don't see victory in the land of the living, we can be grateful that those we have prayed for have had the opportunity to come into the presence of one who loves them more than they could ever comprehend.

In these times we press right back into the heart of the Father and His goodness, and we do not make agreements with the enemy about His character or His love. We fix our eyes right back on Jesus and pray for a greater revelation of who He is so that we might carry that with us into our future times of prayer with others.

MINISTRY



Know your identity and authority.

Before you enter into your prayer session, remind yourself of your identity as God's beloved and your authority in Christ. Ask God to fill you with his love for those for whom you will pray.

Stir up your faith.

Are there testimonies of healing that you can thank God for that are similar to what you are praying for? Consider meditating on one of Jesus's healings!

Listen.

Ask the person to briefly share what they would like prayer for.

Ask permission.

Ask permission to lay hands on the person (have the person lay their own hands over places that would be inappropriate for you to touch). You may also consider anointing with oil as a symbol of the Spirit's presence for healing.

Pray.

Pray a brief prayer for healing. You can also visualize God filling that person with His light and life.

Check In.

Are there any signs of heat, tingling, improvement? If so, thank God! Thankfulness increases the Kingdom. But do NOT put pressure on those you pray for—our faith is not in what they are or are not feeling.

Continue praying.

If you move into striving its time to stop and release the person to the Lord.

Conclude the time of prayer.

Close by blessing the person, asking the Holy Spirit to continue His healing work. Remind them that healing is often progressive.

RESOURCES

Books

Walking in Supernatural Healing Power

by Chris Gore

Healing

by Frances MacNutt

The Healing Light

by Agnes Sanford

Gratitude Journal

Publication of Third Church

Videos

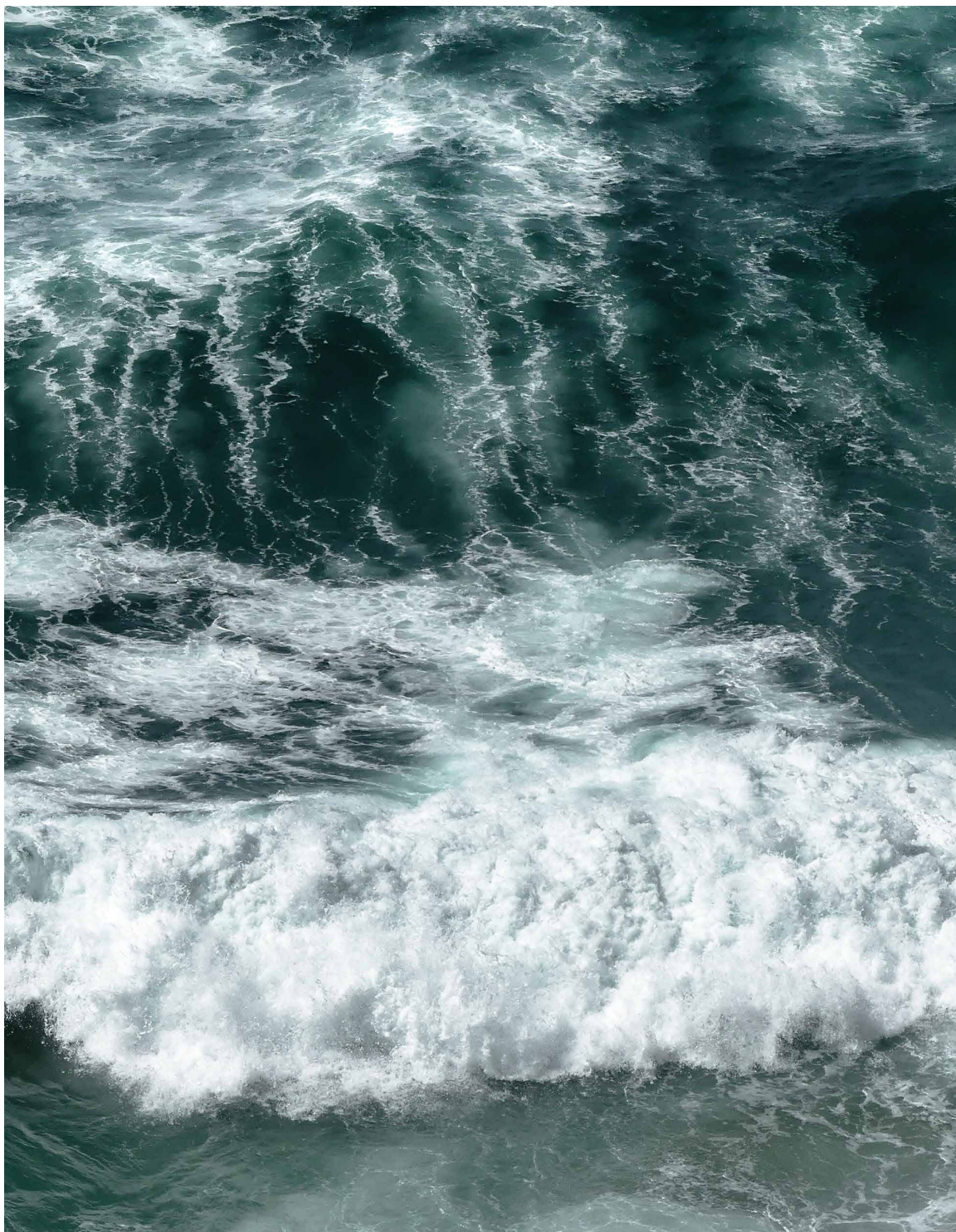
Testimonies on Bethel TV

www.bethel.tv/testimonies

SESSION SEVEN

Fear and Anxiety

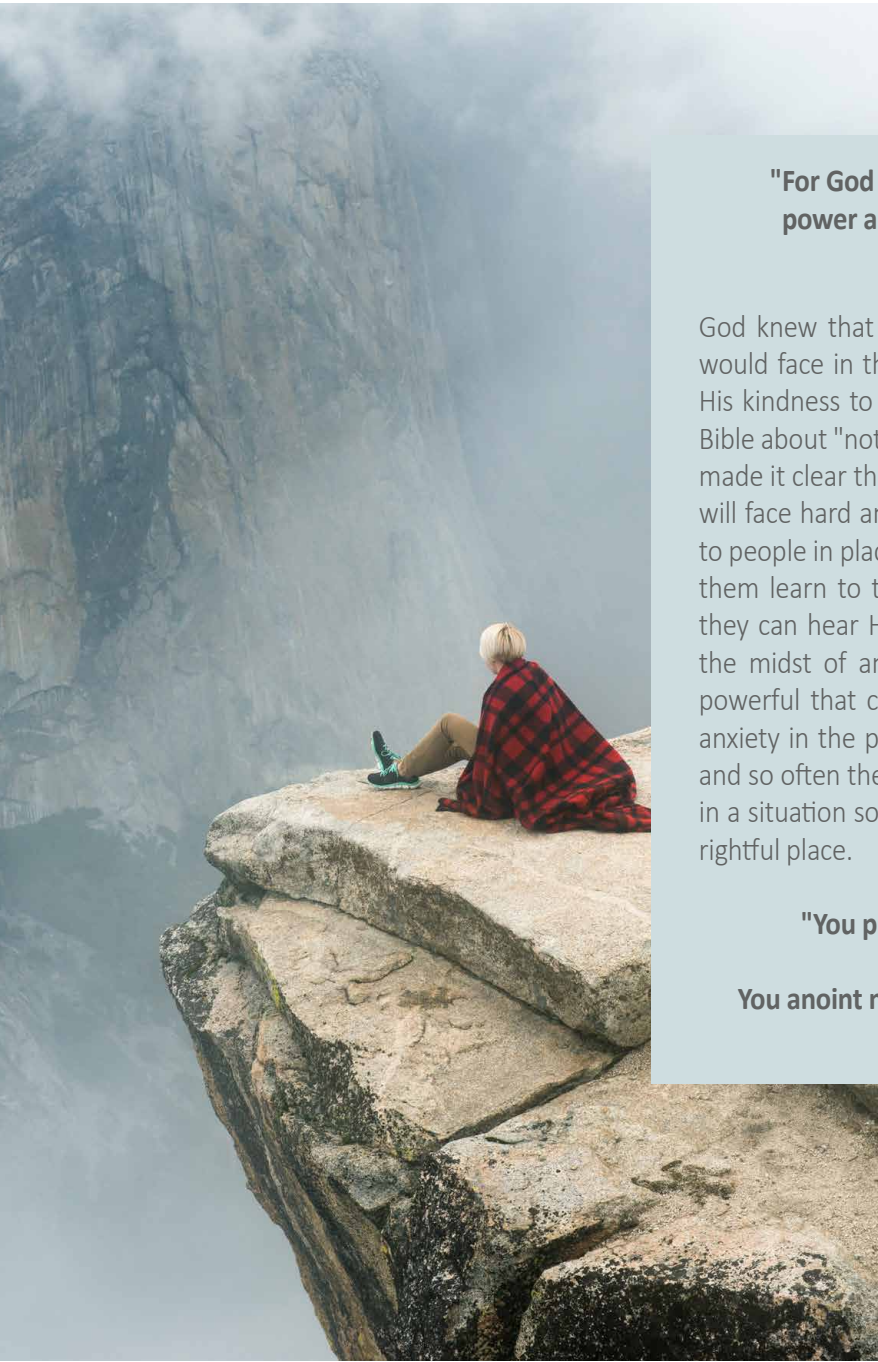
PRAYING WITH OTHERS | LEVEL ONE



SESSION SEVEN

Fear and Anxiety

THE DOORWAY



"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

— 2 Timothy 1:7

God knew that one of the greatest challenges that we would face in the world is a battle for our peace and in His kindness to us he gave us so many scriptures in the Bible about "not fearing" and about trusting in Him. Jesus made it clear that "in this life we will have troubles" – we will face hard and scary things. Our hope as we minister to people in places of fear and anxiety is that we can help them learn to tune in to the "Prince of Peace" so that they can hear His voice and experience His Presence in the midst of any circumstance. There is something so powerful that can happen as we face our fear and our anxiety in the presence of the Lord! The enemy is a liar and so often the battle is for us to gain God's perspective in a situation so that the enemy can be put back into his rightful place.

**"You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows."**

—Psalm 23:5

About Fear

Natural Fear

We are all born with two fears—loud noises and falling.

Holy fear, such as reverence for God and "self-preserving fear," which is our body's way to protect us from danger, are good things. It keeps us from running into a street or picking up a poisonous snake.

Spirit of Fear

God gave us fear as a guardrail to help us avoid or escape danger. Satan twists fear to paralyze us. When fear is not our friend, it can give us "spiritual amnesia" and spiritual myopia (short-sightedness). Fear dulls our miracle memory and makes us forget what Jesus has done, how faithful He is, and who we are in Christ. A "spirit of fear" causes us to feel out of control, robbed of joy, in bondage.



Common Effects of Stress-induced Fear

On your body: headache, muscle tension, chest pain, fatigue, change in sex drive, stomach upset, sleep problems

On your mood: anxiety, restlessness, lack of focus, sadness

On your behavior: overeating or under eating, angry outbursts, alcohol/drug abuse, tobacco use, social withdrawal

Common Roots of Unhealthy Fear

Traumatic experiences— see *Psalm 34:4*

Generational fears—see *Philippians 4:6-7*

Overprotection/lack of protection or neglect during childhood—see *2 Timothy 1:7; Deuteronomy 31:6*

How to Overcome Fear, Worry and Anxiety:

1. Identify your fear and root causes. Ask God to reveal it to you.
2. Surrender and give your fears and worries to God.

—From Neil Anderson

What Do I Fear?

We recognize that there are both healthy and unhealthy fears that exist in our lives. We ask the Lord to speak into the unhealthy fears that can enslave us, bind us, control us and erode our faith. One of the first steps is to recognize these in our lives. This tool has been created to help you do that. Prayerfully look at each fear and honestly ask yourself if this is a fear you need to bring before the Lord for healing.

Fear of things that haven't happened yet

PHOBIAS

- Aging/dementia
- Being sexually/physically abused
- Getting a serious illness
- Being trapped in closed spaces
- Becoming infected with germs
- Being in high places
- Not having enough/hoarding
- The dark
- Being alone
- Spiders, snakes, mice, etc.

POTENTIAL DISASTERS

- Loss of job/income/poverty
- Accidents
- Death of someone close
- War, nuclear holocaust
- Receiving bad news
- The unknown
- Your death/effect on others

Fear of making the wrong choices

GETTING TRAPPED

- Never living up to my full potential
- Wondering, "Is this all there is?"
- Missing God's plan for my life
- Living a "dead end" life
- Marrying the right spouse
- Bitterness/blaming
- Focus on missed opportunities

ACHIEVING SUCCESS/ ADMITTING FAILURE

- Feeling your life was wasted
- Focus on performing
- Analysis paralysis/fear wrong choices
- Second guessing one's decisions
- Unattainable dreams/goals
- Feeling defeated/incompetent
- Critical of others
- Overwhelming need to "do"
- Fear of being a bad parent

Fear of truth

FACING MY PAST

- Feeling like a victim
- Blaming
- Guilt/shame/punishment
- "If only" regrets
- Pretending
- Inability to "let it go"
- Fear of being "known"

LOSING MY FAITH

- Paralyzing doubt
- Skepticism/disillusionment
- Ashamed to admit the struggle
- Questioning/uncertainty about God
- Disappointment with God
- Questioning why evil prevails

Fear of abandonment

DISAPPOINTING PEOPLE

- Being controlled by someone else
- Staying in abusive relationships
- Being an enabler
- Accepting blame for other's actions
- Strong avoidance of conflict

BEING REJECTED

- Feeling unwanted/unworthy of love
- Feeling judged
- Lack of trust/betrayal
- Emotionally lonely
- Focus on trying to be "good enough"
- Not being attractive enough
- Wearing "masks" to be someone else

Fear of being vulnerable

LOSING CONTROL

- Perfectionism
- Manipulative behavior
- Having to be needed
- Intimidation
- Flaunting spirituality
- Controlling others
- Feeling "I am the one to do it!"
- Hates feeling needy/dependent

REVEALING WHO I REALLY AM

- Lacks trust
- Low self-esteem
- Shyness/embarrassment
- Feelings of shame/humiliation
- Focuses on the "if onlys"
- Emotional isolation
- Compulsive behaviors/addictions
- Internal rage

DISCUSSION



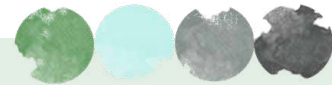
From Max Lucado's book, *Fearless*:

"When fear shapes our life, safety becomes our God. And when safety becomes our God we worship the risk-free life." He then goes on to say, "The fear-filled cannot love deeply because love is risky. They cannot give to the poor because benevolence has no guarantee of return. The fear-filled cannot dream wildly. What if their dreams sputter and fall from the sky? The worship of safety emasculates greatness. No wonder Jesus wages such a war against fear!"

Consider the quote at left. Has safety been a God to you?

What does fear and anxiety keep you from?

MINISTRY



Shalom

The Hebrew word shalom is understood around the world to mean "peace." However, "peace" is only one small part of the meaning.

Hebrew words go beyond their spoken pronunciation. Each Hebrew word conveys feeling, intent and emotion. Shalom is more than just simply peace; it is a complete peace. It is a feeling of contentment, completeness, wholeness, healing, well-being and harmony. The shalom of God is His desire to restore and heal all things. It is a holistic view of the person so that they live the abundant life that Jesus promises (*John 10:10*).

In the Bible, the word shalom refers to a blessing, a manifestation of divine grace.

**I release the Shalom of Heaven
over your body, mind and spirit**

**May you know:
love where there is hate.
hope where there is despair.
light where there is darkness.
joy where there is sadness
faith where there is doubt
forgiveness where there is injury.
well being where there is unrest.
health where there is sickness.
May you know peace and be
an instrument of peace.**

—adapted from the St. Francis Prayer



Ministry Time for Fear, Anxiety and Embracing Faith



Listen.

Allow the person to share. What do you listen for?

Love.

Ask clarifying questions and not stories or advice

- *When do you feel anxious?*
- *To what extent has this occurred for you?*
- *What is reasonable and what is not reasonable?*
- *Who is supporting you? (doctor, counselor, friend)*
- *How have you tried to cope?*
- *Do you have a health problems/medications that contribute?*
- *What would your life be like if you were free of this anxiety?*

Name the fear/anxiety and the root cause if you can. If you don't know what it is, ask God to reveal it to you.

Surrender and give your fears and worries to God.

Pray.

Pray exchanges for fear to trust in His love and care.

Helpful Scriptures

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. — *1 Peter 5:7*

There is no fear in love, perfect love casts out all fear. — *1 John 4:18*

Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life...Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or stow away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can anyone of you by worrying add a single hour to our life? — *Matthew 6: 25-27*

The Lord is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life—whom shall I be afraid?
— *Psalms 27:1*

The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him. — *Nahum 1:7*

Guided Meditation

Finding Yourself in Rembrandt's Painting

The Storm on the Sea of Galilee

An interesting thing about the painting is that in addition to the twelve disciples who accompanied Jesus in the boat there is a thirteenth person sailing in the boat. *Who is that?*

Rembrandt is known to have painted himself somewhere in his paintings. He's setting an example for us to find ourselves in the Gospel, bringing to God our stress and our sin, our hurts and our hopes.

In Rembrandt's painting each of the people with Jesus in the boat has their own reaction to the storm. It's something like the different roles that people play in a family, church, or other group. Sometimes, particularly under stress, people's roles and reactions may seem very dysfunctional! Which person do you most identify with? (In different situations or at different times in your life you might find that you have a different reaction.)


On Top

The man in the bow of the ship is on top, riding the huge wave. He's a leader and a professional fisherman who is focused on his work earnestly trimming the front sail. Perhaps it's an adventure for him. Or maybe he's just working hard at his job.

Fixing the Problem

Three of the men (probably experienced fisherman also) are at the mast working frantically to fix the main sail. The gale winds





have ripped it and snapped the metal wire so that the boom is disconnected from the mast.

Your storm might be a difficulty in your family, work, or ministry. Or something personal that you're struggling with. How are you dealing with your personal storm? Which character in Rembrandt's painting do you identify with? Pray quietly about this.

Barely Hanging On!

The huge wave is pounding the man on the left in the middle and he is hanging on to a guy wire for dear life!

Afraid

Most of the crew seem afraid, but especially the man on the right side of the boat. He is crouched over and looking with dread at the enormous wave that is swamping the boat. We can almost feel him trembling with anxiety.

Sick

On the lower left in back is a distressed man with his hand on his forehead and leaning over the side of the boat. It seems he's about to throw up.

Angry at God

Two disciples appear angry at Jesus for sleeping in their storm. One shakes him awake and the other raises his voice, "Teacher! Don't you care if we drown?"

Quiet and Alone

On the lower left of the boat is a man in white that is easy to miss. His back is faced to us. He's sitting still and alone. He seems to be separated from the frightening storm and the chaos going on around him in the boat. There seems to be a shadowy figure that he's looking at. Is he having a vision? Is it an angel?

Lost

A man in a blue shirt on the left side of the boat near the back is standing and holding onto a guy

wire. His other hand is on his forehead as he stares blankly out at the dark sea. Maybe he's flooded with emotion and shut down. It almost seems he is looking to us. He's close to Jesus but he's not looking at him.

Worshiping the Lord

No one is looking at Jesus, except the two angry disciples and the disciple kneeling at Jesus' feet. Only the kneeling disciple is looking at Jesus with trust and reverence. Rembrandt has painted a halo on this disciple's head to signify his faith in the Lord Jesus in the midst of the terrible storm.

At the Helm

There is one more person in the boat with Jesus. In the stern, at the very back, is the disciple at the helm, holding the tiller. He must be another experienced fisherman because he's in charge of the boat. Perhaps this is Peter. He's certainly a leader, like a lot of the pastors I work with—like me! He is responsible to guide the boat's course and instruct the crew on what they need to do. Maybe his hands are tightly gripping the tiller because he's been straining to keep control of the boat? Maybe now he's just holding the tiller because he sees his friend kneeling and his attention has been drawn to Christ the Lord?

Pray About Your Storm

Now, bring your storm into the Gospel story. Some storms that we experience, like this one on the Sea of Galilee are dangerous. Others are storms of stress or not knowing what to do.

RESOURCES

Books

Letting Go of Worry: God's Plan for Finding Peace and Contentment

by Dr. Linda Mintle

Tame Your Fears: And Transform Them into Faith, Confidence, and Action

by Carol Kent

Freedom From Fear: Overcoming Worry and Anxiety

by Dr. Neil T. Anderson & Rich Miller

Fear No Evil: One Man Deals with Terminal Illness

by David Watson

A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23

by W. Phillip Keller

Be Still: 31 Days to a Deeper Meditative Prayer Life

by Amy and Judge Reinhold

Jesus Loves Me: Celebrating the Profound Truths of a Simple Hymn

by Calvin Miller

God is Really Good

by Bill Johnson

Gratitude Journal

Publication of Third Church

Prayer Toolbox

- Fear/Anxiety Scriptures
- Shalom Prayer
- Armor of God

Videos

Take Courage

by Bethel Music [YouTube]

