

Praying the Bible (part 2)

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[0 : 00] Well, last week we looked at the simple practice of praying the Bible. It's Donald Whitney's little book, and it really is a simple practice.

The redundant repetitions of our prayers, of just saying the same old things about the same old things, tend to make the mind wonder and grow dissatisfied with prayer.

And so we were encouraged just to open the Bible, to read a verse or a line of a verse, and then turn it into prayer.

God speaks to us in his word, and so we would respond to him in prayer. Some verses in the Bible come ready-made for this because they are themselves prayers.

Others are not prayers. They may be commands. They may be narratives. They may be questions, even. But they can be turned into prayer, and we gave some examples of that.

[1 : 07] Whitney says that though the whole Bible is there for us to pray through, yet the best place to start is with the Book of Psalms. Now, the Book of Psalms was the songbook that the Lord gave to his people.

They were inspired by God, meant to be spoken back, sung back to the Lord. So it's like God said, I want you to praise me, but you don't know really how to do that.

So I'm going to tell you how to praise me. And so he gave us 150 psalms with topics and words and phrases and ideas for which to praise the Lord.

And so as we see 150 psalms, we realize this provides plenty of variety to our prayer life. If we would take the Book of Psalms, we never need ever again to pray the same old things about the same old things in the same old way.

Now, J. Graham Miller says, For freshness then of utterance, for breadth of comprehension, for elevation of thought, intimacy of heart.

[2 : 22] There's no prayer like that which forms itself in the words and thoughts of Scripture itself. And so why pray the psalms? Well, to begin with, no other book in the Bible was inspired for this express purpose of being used to praise the Lord, which is a form of address to him.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, The psalms are given us for this end, that we may learn to pray them in the name of Jesus. You remember those words of Paul in Ephesians 5 and in Colossians 3, where he tells us that a healthy New Testament church is marked by singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.

There may be some discussion about what hymns and spiritual songs are, but we know what psalms are, don't we? So we can be sure of that, that as we're singing the psalms, we are showing what a spirit-filled church looks like.

And this practice of praying through the psalms gives direction and momentum to our prayer life. How many times do you come to pray and you say, Well, now what should I pray about?

Well, that's all over with. You never have that thought again. If you're praying through the psalms, you just take your bookmark and, Oh, here it's Psalm 57. I know what I'm praying this morning.

[3 : 49] And we begin. So it cuts out all of that, what should I pray? And that often is a drag upon our spirit to pray.

And if you get done with Psalm 57, Psalm 58 is waiting and so on through the psalms. So it's a system to help us to get right at prayer. And by making your way through all the psalms, Whitney says you'll find that God has inspired psalms for every sigh of the soul.

You ever sigh? Whether physically or spiritually, your heart sighs? Sorrow and sighing will flee away.

God knows that we sigh. And you'll find in the psalms that he's inspired words to put into expression every sigh of the soul.

The entire range of emotions and situations. You'll never go through anything in life that you cannot find the root emotions reflected in the psalms. Exhilaration, frustration, discouragement, guilt, forgiveness, joy, gratitude, contentment, discontent, fear, grief.

[5 : 08] It's all here. When James is encouraging us to pray, remember what he says about Elijah who prayed and it stopped raining for three and a half years.

And then he prayed again. The Lord gave rain. And he reminds us that Elijah was a man of like passions as we are. He's a man like we are.

He lived in the same flesh that you and I live in. He lived in the same fallen world system. He lived with the same temptations and trials.

He lived with the same God. And therefore, the prayers that are recorded in the psalms are written by men who are like us.

And so that's why we find connection with these prayers because we're going through the same kinds of situations ourselves. Athanasius was a fourth century North African defender of the doctrine of the Trinity.

[6 : 05] And he says, whatever your particular need or trouble from this same book, you can select a form of words to fit it. So God put these psalms in his word to help us unpack the burden of our heart.

You know, there's that psalm, I believe it's 62, that says, pour out your hearts to the Lord. Well, sometimes we don't even know how to pour out our hearts.

And these psalms are written to help us pour and unpack the burdens of our heart. So why pray the psalms? Well, it's been the only book in the Bible that was specifically given for us to give back to the Lord.

But then secondly, because our Lord Jesus prayed the psalms. The four gospels record seven brief statements of Jesus from the cross, the seven sayings of the cross.

By the way, they were probably brief because you know of the torture that they had to push up to get a breath of air. And then as their feet hurt so bad, they would hang down and it would start suffocating them.

[7 : 20] That's why they died a thousand deaths. It's like suffocating a thousand times on the cross until the pain in their hands and their breath could no longer be gotten. They'd have to push up again and get a gasp of air, a good deep breath of air.

And then it would be back down and down and then up and down. So the speeches from our Savior on the cross are short, aren't they? And as the three hours of darkness engulfed his soul, we hear him cry, My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

Where'd he get that? It's Psalm 22, verse 1. Jesus knew the psalms.

He prayed the psalms. And so when he was in an hour of crisis, he knew which psalm he needed. And it expressed his heart perfectly. And if you go through that psalm, you'll see that it also expresses far more than just that abandonment, but all sorts of other things that were happening to him there that day.

And many believe that though that was the only words that were heard as Jesus prayed the psalm that day, that he actually went through the rest of it in his mind.

[8 : 40] Very well could have been. It's speculation. But it surely expressed what he was experiencing that day. Everything from them gambling for his clothing to the enemies howling around him like savage beasts and the bones of his body being exposed and so on and so forth.

Well, he prayed the psalms. And then shortly after Psalm 22, we hear his last words from the cross as Jesus called out in a loud voice, Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.

Last Sunday, Pastor Paul preached from Psalm 31. In verse 5, we have those words. Father, into your hands.

Into your hands I commit my spirit. Jesus was praying Psalm 31 as he dismissed his spirit and by faith committed his spirit into the hands of the Lord.

So the picture we get of our Savior, we're often told that he got up early and went out to pray. And we don't have those prayers. But here on the cross, we get to hear these short prayers.

[9 : 58] John 17, we have one of his longest prayers recorded. But what do we learn from the cross? We learn that Jesus prayed the psalms and that it was natural to him in his greatest hour of need to lean on those words that God had given him as the perfect man, to take them as man and to pray them back to God.

Do you know what I find encouraging about that? That the same psalms that sustain Jesus on the cross are the psalms that he's given to me.

That as a man, he relied on the Father and on his word just like we have to. He didn't dip over into his deity to somehow come up with strength.

You see that in the temptations. Jesus, the devil, Matthew 4, turned these stones into bread. Jesus could have used his divine power and done so for his own selfish end.

But no, he learns as a man under temptation to lean upon the word of God. And he quotes three times in those temptations from the book of Deuteronomy.

[11 : 10] He used the same Bible that you and I have, showing us how to live as men and women. So why pray the psalms?

Jesus prayed the psalms. And I believe that what we see then on the cross is just a peek into his prayer life. And if he prays them then, you can be sure he prayed them morning by morning.

As he met with his father. And then a second reason, another reason to pray the psalms is the apostles of Christ in the early Christian church prayed the psalms. Acts chapter 4.

This may not be as familiar as Jesus' prayers on the cross. But you remember after Peter and James had been imprisoned and went back to the church.

Well, let's see. What did I say? Ephesians 4, 23. After they threatened them to not preach in Christ's name anymore.

[12 : 16] It says in verse 23, That's scripture if you haven't noticed it in the psalms.

You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David. And here's another psalm. Why do the nations rage and the people plot in vain?

The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against the anointed one. I don't believe that they necessarily pulled out the Bible like I've encouraged you to just open the Bible and pray.

Psalm 2. I believe they had these psalms memorized and drew upon them in their praying. And here was the need. And so, indeed, Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel to conspire against your holy servant, Jesus, whom you anointed.

And the very context and event that he's living reminds him of Psalm 2. And so the apostles prayed Psalms 2 and the whole body joined in and prayed together Psalm 2.

[13 : 39] Just a few examples. But I think what they reveal is a great familiarity with the psalms. They knew them well. God had given them for this purpose that we might pray them, sing them back to God, which are sung prayers, really.

Pray prayers and praises and to call them up in the right occasions. Ken Langley writes, For 30 centuries, God's people have found in the Psalms an answer to the disciples' plea.

Lord, teach us to pray. Now, I'm not saying this is the only method for praying. There are many other methods. Let me just rush over this to start with.

We'll come back if we need to and have time. But if you remember, our assignment last week was to take Psalm 119 and maybe just pray through a segment of eight verses a day.

Or to take the psalms and begin to pray through the psalms or to find a psalm. And I wanted you to come back today for a checkup. How'd it go?

[14 : 43] What'd you learn? What did you find useful? What'd you find not so useful? As I said, this is not a command, as it were, that we only use this technique.

But it could be the thing that helps you break through that same old sameness that tends to discourage our praying. So, I was counting on you to teach this morning.

So, what'd you learn? Just share your experience. What'd you find when you turned to the Bible and prayed it? Yeah. Okay.

I didn't get past the first phrase in 119. It says, Blessed are those whose weight is blameless. When you think of that, it led me to think of Psalm 1, where it talks about the history of the context of the hollow of the wicked and the righteous are to live.

Which, in turn, led me to Psalm 139, 23 and 24. It says, Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me to know my thoughts.

[15 : 53] I see if there'll be any previous weight in me. And leaving it where everlasting. So, I don't know. It can go on forever on those three and four years of scripture.

I'm still working on those because only God can tell us that. We can't do that. Thank you, Max. So, anybody else have that experience that once you began praying the verse in front of you, other verses came to mind?

It's maybe a good test of how well we know the Bible, but that's the sort of thing that happens because the Bible is a unit and it's all tied together. And there are many reinforcements of the same principles in other verses.

And it just enables you to flesh out that principle that you're praying over. Good. What else? Yes, Steve. Words are hard for me.

Especially in the morning. So, prayers. Well, I'm waiting for you to know my heart is still asleep. I, more often than not, I have nothing to say.

[17 : 02] So, having 119, and just holding it, and there's what I need to say. And, so I don't need to struggle.

It's been a huge blessing. My first day, one, my soul longed for your salvation. I hope in your word. And, it is, God, right now, my heart is not long for you.

So, putting that into our request to, please, bring me up, bring me up my heart, and bring me a longing for you, and hope in your word. Amen.

Amen. Anybody else, don't, doesn't wake up, and the first thing in your morning, you're feeling like praying. That's what Steve's saying. It's a little, the heart's sluggish, and, and needs to be drawn along in prayer.

We take the very words of God to us, and it, it sparks a response in our hearts to him. Good. Who was it over here? Roger. It enabled me to go back to Paul Martin's sermon on Psalm 31, and go verse by verse, and just totally personalize it, and make it my own, and just really nail what it was saying.

[18 : 21] Amen. I did the same thing. On Monday morning. And I think that you would profit a whole lot more from my sermons if on Monday you took the passage we sought to preach on, and just prayed through it, or Sunday afternoon.

I came away, Paul did an excellent job, but the Holy Spirit did another job with me on Monday morning, and just expanded that, and precious to have it reinforced over and over, and what a wonderful way to work out the application of the word, as Roger said, to personally apply it to us as we pray it back to God.

Then we, we're more than, hopefully more than just hearers of the word, and we go on and forget it, but now we're praying over it. Good. Good. Anybody else pray through Psalm 31?

Okay. Well, there's the challenge. There's the opportunity to pray the Psalms, pray the pastor's sermons. All right? Somebody else?

Yes, Carol? A lot of you have been praying with us for our race and Joseph, who has been wayward, and there are just so many things, just verses 1 to 8, that the Lord will see that, walking in his way, he will be blessed.

[19 : 42] And even then, if you go right into verse 9, walking beyond him, just giving a lot of platforms to pray. Did you hear that back there? Okay.

So some of you have lists, and that's wonderful, because lists remind us to pray for important things that we might slip up and forget, and so they're praying for, yeah, anyway.

Yeah. So anyway, you can use this method with your list. So rather than just praying the same old words about the people on your list, what Carol found was that Psalm 119 had many things that applied perfectly to this person that she was praying for.

Anybody else find that? Okay. As we do it, I think that's what we'll see more and more, too. Good. Someone else? Yes, Carol, or Jean?

I've been reading through the Psalms, and I came to Psalm 116 this week, and it's that Psalm that every verse ends with his love endures forever. And at first, I tended to skip over that increased phrase that I think we started going back and thinking how, give thanks to the Lord for his good.

[20 : 59] Well, that was true then, and it's enduring forever now. And where he is, you know, where he, the King of Sion, well, that was the King in my life, the King's in my life that he called it.

Just so many, the Red Sea, part of the Red Sea, well, he's part of my Red Sea now. And it just over and over, he then loved this way, and he still was faithful, enduring forever.

So that was precious. Amen. So, that Psalm, the repeated refrain is, his love endures forever, correct? And so what the Psalmist was doing was tagging onto that one expression of God's love to him in the whole history of Israel.

And someone has challenged me to write my own Psalm 131, or 136, of how his love endures forever. And to go way back to the beginning, and to think that, well, I, I mean, I wasn't aborted.

I was placed in a home that loved me. His love endures forever. I, I was born a sinner, but God brought his gospel to me in power. His love endures forever.

[22 : 09] Just work your way right through your whole life like that. Wonderful, wonderful way to use Psalm 136 and personalize it.

Good. Someone else? I have one. Yeah. It helped me to be more aware of, I just, I started, I did it through, I didn't do Psalm reading in Isaiah, so I just decided to do that.

And it helped me to be more aware of when my mind was wandering while I was reading, because I had a specific goal, and I knew that I, I wanted to pray it back, I needed to understand and, you know, know what I'm reading, so, it also helped me to pray and thank God for things that I don't normally, so.

So, yeah, just taking that last one, did any of you find that by praying the word of God, you went down tracks in your prayer life that you usually don't go?

I know it, I know you did, because that's, that's the Psalms, it's taken us all over the realm of, of life, and so, it does that. And the first was, that, that when our mind does wander, that, we're caught more quickly that it's wandering.

[23 : 32] And, that's especially true if you add vocality to your prayer, and speak out loud, because then, you notice when there's silence, in other words, and, and it calls you back, and, and, good.

And, and, I trust that it, it helps our, our mind not to wander off as, as easily, because there it is, it's holding us, God's word is, is holding us on track.

All right? Anyone else? These are good. Charlie? It's the idea of, of praying the word, and it wasn't in Psalms, but, and he came up, and a brother, uh, that he shared, and, and, uh, a verse that we've recently memorized, uh, came to mind, and I could, I could pray that for him, and let him know, that's what we're praying for him, and may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant, uh, who brought back Jesus Christ from the dead, that great shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will.

Mm-hmm. And so I could, I could tell him that I was praying that for him, and, and know that that was God's will. Mm-hmm. Like, it's God's word, it's not mine, and that was, that was reassuring to me, and I hope to him too.

Amen. Amen. Amen. I don't want to cut anyone off. Anyone else? My reading's been in Acts, and so in Acts 21, um, the people trying to encourage Paul, don't go to Jerusalem, only trouble waiting for you there.

[25 : 09] Uh, his answer was, uh, what are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart, where I'm ready not only to be in prison, but even to die in Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus.

So it just heard me on, as I was going through the day, certainly praying that I would be ready, whatever obstacle there could be in my path, but praying for other men as well, that are out in the workforce, and, uh, facing obstacles to their witness and testimony, that they would be willing, uh, less of that, but even if it included them, to be, uh, faithful women still.

Amen. And we can remember that there are those, in other countries, that are actually doing that, and pray for them, as they're facing, uh, renounce Christ or die, and, uh, taking you down paths that you, you maybe didn't go before.

Anyone else? Well, I, if, if the cat ate your homework last week, uh, I trust your, you, you've heard enough to have your appetite wet, uh, and to be encouraged to do so.

Let me just run through some of, I told you that, uh, Whitney travels and, and speaks on spiritual disciplines of the Christian life, and, and especially on prayer and praying the word.

[26 : 29] And these are some of the most common responses that he had heard back. And, uh, let me just run by them. We've heard many of them already. Uh, number one, my mind didn't wander as much.

And, uh, the Bible holds us to, uh, our minds on track. Uh, secondly, uh, I didn't hear this one, but, uh, see if any of you can, can kind of, uh, say, yeah, that was true.

That my prayer was more about God and less about me. I didn't just come to God and say, you know, God, I need you to do this, this, and this, and this for me today, or, uh, running down the list about, about me.

And I'm not saying we don't pray about me. That's what David was doing in Psalm 139 or 119 often, but it's more about God. Um, why is that so?

Well, well, the Bible is a book about God primarily. And so if we're praying the Bible, we're going to be praying more about God than about anything else.

[27 : 29] And so the Bible, the word of God leads us to fellowship with this God that's revealed there. It's, it's a God centered book. And so it will make your prayers more God centered and it will bring, yes, your personal requests, but into light with who God is.

And that's what we need. Um, what he's done for us, he is doing and will do. Um, third, uh, response.

Time flew by, uh, never ran out of things to say, uh, which is usually when we put on the amen, uh, and just quit praying. Um, John Piper says, some people wonder how you can pray any longer than five minutes because they would run out of things to pray for.

But I say that if you open your Bible, start reading it and pause at every verse and turn it into prayer, then you can pray all day that way. All right. Uh, time flew by.

Uh, I think I shared with you last week that one lady came to, uh, Whitney after the, they did what we did last week. And she said, uh, I, I, I didn't get past Psalm one, one or Psalm 23 in verse one, that the Lord is my shepherd.

[28 : 46] I shall not want. I spent 25 minutes and just that one verse and time flies by. Uh, fourth, it was more of a conversation with a real person than just a monologue.

Uh, when we're talking to God, uh, yes, we are speaking to God, but prayer is talking with a living person, the living God. And if we've, if we're not remembering that, then it's just saying our prayers.

It's not really praying. Prayer is conversation with God. And, um, to pray the Bible is more like a running conversation.

God says something to us and then we say something back to him. And by the way, isn't that how most of your conversations go with people? I mean, when you came today, did you speak for 15 minutes and then the other guy spoke for 15 or, or did he say something and you respond?

She said something and you responded and back and forth. It went, that's conversation, that's fellowship, that's communion. And, and so this is, uh, what many were finding that interacting back and forth about what God has just said to me and, and, and making a response.

[29 : 59] And, um, it, it, one person said the pressure was off. I didn't have to think about what to say next because, uh, it just kind of flowed because there was something that God was saying to us next and we just respond back to him.

Um, so let's not lose the personal aspect of, of prayer and even of Bible reading that, that we, we connect these exercises, these means of grace to, to the real person, to, to the living God.

One old Puritan prayer is, God, don't let me lay my pipe short of the fountain. He's talking about the conduits, the means of grace, whether it's the word of God or prayer.

Don't here's the fountain. Who's the fountain? It's God himself, father, son, and Holy spirit. And how many times do I come to his word or come to prayer? And I lay my pipe short of the fountain and I get the words and I get the, but, but I don't get Christ and I don't get the Holy spirit and the father because I've laid my pipe short of the fountain.

And so with the means of grace, be sure that you get to Christ, be sure you get to God. And this is one way that helps us as we're conversing with God. We can easily get bored when we forget who we're talking to and then it ceases to be prayer.

[31 : 30] So that was another response. It helped maintain a sense of communion with God. A fifth, the Psalm spoke directly to the life situation I'm in right now.

Carol spoke of the burden that she has for this person and it spoke to that. Others have, have spoken to that. I thought more deeply about what the Bible says.

So Whitney is saying that praying the word back to God is one way that helps us understand the word of God better because we're actually meditating upon it and its application to us.

We're, we're thinking about it. We're not just reading the Bible. We're not just reading the Bible. But by praying it back and personalizing it, we're, we're asking questions of it. We're in our minds.

We're, how does that apply to me? What can I add to that? And, and we're, we're gaining a better understanding of the word of God itself. So it deepens our understanding of the word and helps us to remember what we've read because we've prayed it back.

[32 : 38] Seven. Seven. I found more confidence in prayer and the expectation of answers to them. More confidence in prayer and expecting my prayers to be answered.

Why so? What is the key to being confident that your prayers will be answered? First John five, 14 and 15.

See if you can pick it out. This is the confidence we have in approaching God. That's prayer language, approaching God in prayer. That if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

And if we know he hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have what we asked of him. What is the key to having confidence that God will answer our prayers?

Praying his will. Somebody said that. That he gives you confidence because you're not asking for something that's outside of his will. You're praying the word of God.

[33 : 40] Now I'm, you can twist the word of God and pray something that's outside of his will. You can, but, but when we're tied to the word of God, it does give us confidence that we're asking the things that God says.

It's important. That's why it's in here. And so we can have this confidence. John 15, seven. Jesus said to his disciples, if you abide in me and my words abide in you, then ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you.

Why such confidence that whatever you wish it'll be done? Because what is forming your request is the word of God. His word is abiding in you.

So, and so transforming your mind and renewing your mind and transforming your heart such that what you're asking of him is the things that are on his heart.

And he gladly answers. So, we find confidence in prayer. By praying the Psalms back to God, we learn to pray in tune with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

[34 : 47] Ben Patterson's words. So, number eight. I prayed about things I normally don't pray about. Okay? That was the experience of, the most common experience. And so praying the Bible gets us out of the ruts that we can get into in prayer.

Nine. I prayed about the things I normally pray about, but in new and different ways. So, instead of just the statements, please bless so-and-so or be with so-and-so, we prayed, Father, be a shepherd to them and lead them and protect them and guide them and feed them.

All the, if you're praying Psalm 23 or so on. You're praying about the same request, but in new and different ways. And then, tenth, I didn't get bored. So, those were some of the responses that most gave to this praying the Word of God.

I was going to give you the opportunity to do that again. Maybe you'd like to just take time before worship and pray through Luke 24.

As I did this morning, there's something exciting about putting yourself in the shoes of those women that went to the garden tomb to anoint the body of Jesus and finding it empty.

[36 : 10] And walking with those two discouraged disciples on the road to Emmaus. And Jesus draws near. And their hearts burn within them, not knowing who he is.

And in their minds, he goes from an ignorant stranger that doesn't have a clue what happened in Jerusalem in those days to, Wow, this guy knows his Bible. He's opening up the scriptures and showing how the Messiah had to die, had to suffer before he entered into his glory.

And Moses and the prophets, he's opening it up. And only when he's eating with them do they have their eyes open. The whole thing. And pray it back.

So you might want to do that with Luke 24 this morning as we prepare for worship and rejoice in the resurrection. So this is all.

We're just taking two weeks for this praying the Bible. You can go from the Psalms on to others. Some have already shared. They were reading in different parts. The whole Bible is there for us to pray.

[37 : 17] There are New Testament letters that contain the prayers of the Apostle Paul. All precious things. Just to take those prayers and to pray them for the church. For the church. Most of the content is not difficult to turn into prayer if it's not a prayer.

There's therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Romans 8.1 Have any trouble in turning that one into prayer? No. You know you were condemned.

But for Jesus you would be condemned. And it's easy. And so virtually every line in a New Testament letter suggests something to pray for.

And then there are chapters in the Bible that are on topics and segments of the Bible. And if you're going through something. Maybe you've got a shortage on love and you're recognizing it.

You can turn to 1 Corinthians 13. The love chapter. And pray through. Lord give me more patience and kindness. Less selfishness.

[38 : 24] And so on to pray that. Or if it's a matter of faith in your trial. Hebrews 11 and 12. If you need a bigger God than the one that you're living with.

With your trials. Maybe Isaiah 40. There are certain chapters in the Bible and segments that you can go to and pray. If you're going through a frowning providence.

Something that looks like God has forsaken you. You can turn to Job and pray your way through that book. Or the book of Esther. Or the life of Joseph. And little practice at all. We can turn any part of the Bible into fellowship with God in prayer.

That keeps our prayer life fresh. And if you're doing that all you need is a bookmark. And just put it where you end.

And start there the next day. So it's not a pressure to pray through the whole chapter. If you only get through one verse. Just put your bookmark there and pick up there the next day.

[39 : 23] The important thing is fellowship with the living God. It's also an excellent way to do one-on-one discipleship meetings.

To pray together. Just gather together to just read the Bible and pray. So many applications from this. It was George Mueller that cared for 2,000 orphans in London at one time.

And I think it was over 10,000 in his lifetime. That talked about this method of prayer. He said he was known for prayer.

And for the first 10 years of his life in Christ. He often struggled to get into a spirit of prayer. Like Steve was saying. You don't wake up in a spirit of prayer. We're sluggish. And he found his mind wandering off.

But his practice was that he would start the day in prayer. Right away. Wake up. He would pray until breakfast. Several hours before breakfast.

[40 : 33] And he said take a half hour to get my heart in the frame of prayer. Then I made one slight alteration. He says I put my Bible reading first. And I listened to God.

And then I started responding to him in prayer. And he says that was a little thing. But it made huge differences.

Having listened to God in his word. I would then speak to my father and friend about the things that he's brought before me in his precious word. It often now astonishes me that I did not sooner see this point.

Well, I don't know if you've spent 10 years in Christ or 50 years in Christ. But may we take down this practice of praying the word back to our God.

We're dismissed. We're dismissed.