

Growing in our communication with God starts with a regular commitment to do so



One day Yeshua told His disciples a story to show that they should always pray and never give up. Luke 18:1

The Initial Discipline of Prayer

Brian Alarid states in his excellent book *When People Pray*: "*Sometimes we don't feel like praying. A soldier doesn't always feel like training or going into combat. But what matters is that you show up for duty.*" pg. 31.

I very much appreciate when the discipline of a prayer time shifts into something enjoyable. I've experienced this to a measure as I've followed through on prayer times over the years. But, I've found that I often don't initially feel like spending that time with God. In those times, as I start out uninspired, and stay with it, He brings greater enjoyment and benefit.

One of the most practical steps to growing in prayer is to schedule our prayer times into our regular calendars and then follow through on this appointment at least 80% of the time. I would encourage anyone who is struggling to follow through with a consistent daily prayer time to earnestly look to invest half

an hour a day in prayer. Take a quiet moment to plan out the next week and schedule a time each day to spend that time with YHWH. It might be something that you split up into two parts during a day. To help with greater follow-through after scheduling these prayer times, tell a friend what you've committed to and then follow through with them and tell them how you did at the end of the week.

Here are also some things to consider to grow in these prayer times.

- Realize you're praying to an invisible God so we pray by faith and have different dynamics than a conversation with another human that we can use our senses to more readily experience. This is obvious but important to consider so we don't become discouraged and quit praying.
- He promises to reward us as we seek Him diligently and persistently in our personal times of prayer (Matthew 6:6; Hebrews 11:6). These rewards are meant to inspire us to pray and not give up (Luke 18:1). We can use these verses as prayer-filled statements to speak back to Him in our times with Him.
- His rewards are different than the world gives. Here are some of the rewards that over time He will give us as we persistently draw near to Him: a softened heart that allows us to feel more of His impulses and desires; small touches of inspiration influencing us to do the right thing, greater resolve to resist sinful impulses, greater revelation to see more of the beauty of Who He is; and greater desire to want to know Him and please Him with our lives. These divine rewards come in small incremental measures but over time make a difference as we continue with Him.
- Sometimes committing to pray with others can provide greater accountability and help for us in growing in prayer. We have a consistent time Sundays through Thursdays from 6-7pm for those who would want to join us with that.

- Do you know it takes roughly 30 seconds to pray the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13). Why not consider starting and ending your day with this prayer in your mouth? That would be a minute well-invested.

In closing, why not spend some time investing in how to improve your prayer life. There are a number of good resources on the internet. Why not commit to a consistent time each week to invest time looking at resources to help you grow your prayer life? Here's an excellent series that I've found to be most helpful called *Growing in Prayer*. <https://mikebickle.org/series/growing-in-prayer-part-1-2014/>

This Sabbath in our groups we will finish discussing the final chapters in Brian Alarid's book *When People Pray*. I look forward to discussing how we can grow in this vital area of communicating with God.