

A GUIDE FOR SPENDING AN HOUR IN PRAYER

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IT'S POSSIBLE AND POWERFUL

Many Christians have never spent more than about one minute in prayer at one time. After five minutes you've prayed for everything you could imagine, so the thought of an hour in prayer seems overwhelming. I encourage you, I challenge you, to try it. Here's the deal — it's not going to hurt you. There is no down-side, and the up-side could be big. You could experience the power of God in a new way. Often at the end of an hour I find I want more time.

PRINCIPLES AND PATTERNS

Do not give up. Stay in a spirit of prayer for at least one hour on the clock. Most people experience that after several minutes you don't know what else to say. Just listen. Be still. Ask God to speak to you in your soul. What helps one person does not help another person. So try various patterns. Some like to walk and pray. Others kneel or stand. Some people journal. Others would never write down private thoughts. Some pray out loud and some silently. Experiment.

GUIDELINES AND INSIGHTS

Over the centuries Christians have used the following approaches. Try them.

- Pray Scripture prayers such as Eph 1:17-23 and 3:14-21
- Pray the Psalms
- Listen to, or sing, worship music
- Be quiet, even silent and listen.
- Pray using the ACTS model in Shelley Frew's *Insights on the Spiritual Practice of Prayer*.
- Pray for people by name and when you pray picture their face.
- Pray for a different prayer theme every few minutes, such as
 - Praise God for who he is.
 - Thank God for what he has done.
 - Pray for yourself.
 - Pray for your parents.
 - Pray for your children.
 - Pray for your extended family.
 - Pray for your church.
 - Pray for your pastor and church leaders.
 - Pray for your neighbors.
 - Pray for people at work.
 - Pray for those in authority, such as the President.
 - Confess sin in your life.
 - Thank God for his forgiveness in Christ.
 - Thank God for the Spirit, and pray for his power and wisdom.

- Thank God for our future hope in the return of Christ.