

## **The Sermon - In 10 Sentences Or Less**

### Your Home Spiritual Workout 3 - Missing Ingredients From Your Prayer Recipe:



1. 61% of Americans regularly pray for needs and offer thanks to God, about half pray for guidance, and just over 40% confess sin and ask for forgiveness, and ask for personal safety: so what's missing, biblically speaking?
2. One missing ingredient is what you could label "the prayer of dependence": most Christians would affirm that we are dependent beings, able to do nothing without Him (John 15.5; 2nd Cor. 1.9), but do we pray as if that were true?
3. If you remember back to week #1 of this series, you'll recall that there's a part that God plays in our daily lives that we ourselves simply cannot do by ourselves; thus, you can't live well as a Christian without depending on God to do His part.
4. The longer we're Christians, or the better a season we're currently experiencing, there's a subtle temptation toward independence: Richard Rohr describes it this way, "We instinctively want to turn the gospel into "the one with the most willpower wins", at which point Christianity becomes bad, not good, news. In fact, God actually wants us to come to the end of ourselves..."
5. Diane Rivers summarizes it this way: "The shape of your prayer life will be determined by the size of your dependence."
6. Another missing ingredient is the oldest form of Christian spirituality, other than the two sacraments, and finds its roots in the Old Testament: fixed hour prayer (or praying the hour/the divine office).
7. Adele Ahlberg Calhoun characterizes the great benefit of fixed hour prayer this way: "Since all time belongs to God, why not punctuate the entire cycle of day and night with regular prayer?...This is the sanctification (or making holy) of time itself...Scheduled prayer defends us from chaos and whim. It is a net for catching the day."
8. How do you pray the hours?: Have cues or triggers to remind you to pray sometime in the morning, around midday, and then again in the evening. (These don't have to be long and drawn out; it's more about bringing your heart and attention back to God.)

## Try It Out This Week

So try fixed hour prayer this week...

- Figure out three cues/triggers that you can use, one in the morning, one around midday, and one in the evening, to remind you to pause and pray.
- Remember that these pauses don't need to be long in order to be meaningful.
- Perhaps make at least one of these daily prayers a "prayer of dependence" (this works well in the morning).

This is one of the fixed hour prayer resources that I (Pastor Chris) use; it's often my midday prayer, in fact. This is a free website, offering daily prayers from a prayer book compiled by Christian activist Shane Claiborne - [Common Prayer](#)

If you like the Claiborne daily prayer website, you can get the physical book in its entirety, if you like - [Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals \(10/29/10\): Claiborne, Shane, Wilson-Hartgrove, Jonathan, Okoro, Enuma](#)

For the more tech-savvy, our denomination offers a daily prayer app that comes complete with some scripture reading too - [Presbyterian Mission Agency Daily Prayer](#)

## Quote to Remember

Martin Luther, the great Reformer, about prayer:

"The less I pray, the harder it gets; the more I pray, the better it goes.

"To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing.

"Pray, and let God worry."

## Body Prayer Resource

We used body prayer during Communion yesterday, as we've done before in worship, an idea drawn directly from scripture. If you're interested in using your body's position and motion in your own prayer life, this article is a good intro - [Powerful Displays of Prayer in the Bible](#)