



Spending An Hour With God

Intimacy With God

How to Find A Deeper Dimension in Your Prayer Life

A White Paper by:

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Doug often says that he “backed into” the prayer movement. After almost two decades of offering teaching-training ministry to local churches, prayer, he discovered was the missing element in both the life of the church and the personal daily life of the typical believer. For that reason, Alive Ministries refocused much of its attention to prayer training, offering Schools of Prayer and coaching in the area of prayer ministries.

Spending An Hour With God *Intimacy With God* *P. Douglas Small*

There are five markers for intimacy with God in the *Song of Solomon*:

1. An Intoxicating Passion — 1:1-2.
2. A Place of Prayer — 1:4.
3. A Daily Appointment/Rendezvous With God – 1:7.
4. Time at the Table — 1:12.
5. Unhurried Seasons in the House of Wine — 2:4.

Our time with God is to be marked by **passion!** Micah, Saul’s daughter and David’s first wife despised David for His passion for God. When the Ark was returned to Jerusalem and she saw David wildly dancing in the street before the Ark—she despised him, and bore no children. Hannah, on the other hand was barren. Before the Ark at the Tabernacle, she poured out her soul until the God of the world on top of this world became real to her. Lost in the presence of God until Eli considered her intoxicated – her barrenness was broken. Acts 2 and Ephesians 5 contain reminders of worship with passion! The worship scenes in the Revelation are passionate!

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A Place of Prayer

Every one needs a **place of prayer**—at home. Buddhists have prayer rooms in their homes. And Muslims carry around their prayer mat. American Christians pray less than four minutes a day, typically on the run. A place of prayer, whether it is a room, a closet or a corner—ought to be a special meeting place between the believer and God. Such places mark our homes as sacred sites! Prayer at home fills the house with a fragrance that draws the presence of God. A prayer room should include an altar, a chair, carpet or rugs which allow for prostration before God. A Bible should be handy with a note pad to record impressions and messages from God. Dim lights are helpful as is soft music. The room should be without distraction. The walls can be used to hold prayer reminders or models—pictures of family, lost loved ones, mission prayer focuses, etc.

A Daily Appointment of God

Everyone should have “prayer goals.” The **daily appointment** with God should be non-negotiable. In addition to a morning or evening prayer appointment with God, look for spontaneous moments when “God comes” and invites you into his presence.

Pray Scripture

No prayer life is complete without a dialectic between prayer and the Word—read and pray; and pray and read! Learn to “**pray scripture.**” Let scripture reading inform your praying. Pray with your eyes open and out of the Word. Hide the Word in your heart in these prayer times.

A Personal Prayer Retreat

Consider a **personal prayer retreat** – one day a month when you pack your Bible and “run away” with God! Do it as a couple, if married, or with a child! Or do it alone with God. These unhurried seasons in His presence deepen the relationship. During these times, your soul is renewed. You are filled with the Holy Spirit. God whispers insights which are often life-changing and mark you forever. His word comes alive. It speaks.

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Disciplined Praying

The ***discipline*** of daily prayer will be fought by the flesh. But if you will persist, discipline will turn to delight! Discipline defines your passion for God. It prioritizes your commitment to seek His face, to be with Him. It demonstrates that you are not merely casual in your commitment. It crunches the flesh. And the flesh screams for relief. Like the runner whose body aches in every joint after he finishes his jogging, he knows that he must persist—or his flesh will rule him forever. Day after day, he jogs with pain. He is weary from the expenditure of time and energy. His flesh complains. Then one day, after a season of discipline is over, he experiences something he has never known before. It is commonly called “the runner’s high.” In this moment, a runner experiences ecstasy. Running is now sheer pleasure. **Discipline has given way to such *delight*.** It has borne fruit.

Intentional Praying

There is no quality prayer-life without being **intentional** in prayer. The **incidental and spontaneous** Acts 3 kind of moments come out of intentional prayer times. Peter and John were on their way to the temple (intentional prayer) when God used them to heal the man at the gate Beautiful (intentional and spontaneous prayer).

Balanced Praying

All prayer fits into one of these categories. We seek to pray with balance:

- ◆ Prayer as **communion** is **relational**. It sees God as Father, Jesus as the lover of our soul. It takes us into heaven as a Tabernacle, the house/home of God.
- ◆ Prayer as **petition** is the **legal** dimension of prayer. We argue our claims based on the covenant law in the courtroom of heaven. Here we interact with God as Judge, with Jesus as our intercessor attorney.
- ◆ Prayer as **intercession** takes us into heaven as a **war room** where interventions are launched into the earth out of prayer. Here we meet God the warrior, and Jesus as the Lord of Lords, the commander in chief of the army of angels in heaven.

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Learning the Power of Silence

A major dimension to intimacy with God is **learning the power of silence!** Someone has said that we live in a noisy and busy world, and most of us live with “*doors open.*” Ideas and distractions parade through our minds. We entertain dozens of sensory perceptions simultaneously. The stage of our mind is cluttered and our brain is filled with a cacophony of clanging sounds. In contrast, the voice of God is heard most clearly and deafeningly in a soul at peace. He is not in the wind and fire and earthquake—*he speaks in a still small voice.*

Resting in God’s Sovereignty

Peace is the indication that we are ***resting in God’s sovereignty***—and that rises out of *faith*. Without faith, fear comes. Joy is God’s “noisy fruit” which manifests in the context of that peace. These go together—*faith* in the *sovereignty of God* brings me to the end of my struggle and issues forth into *rest*. And God’s gift of rest brings peace. And out of such peace comes *joy*. These are transformational dimensions which begin to mark my life, give my witness credibility, and let me walk in fullness and vitality.

Praying into Quiet

To pray effectively, you must “*close the doors*” to all these distractions and focus on Christ. At first, the distractions will bang on the door demanding attention. They will make desperate claims on your attention. Responding to them will reinforce their authority. Ignoring them will be incredibly challenging. Their cries will seem incessant. But after some season—sometimes days—the cries will diminish, and you will come to a place of quiet. It is here, in such sweet and quiet meditation, with your mind completely on Christ, that you will have the richest prayer times. You have not prayed well, until you have prayed yourself into quiet.



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