



Half Day Prayer Retreat Guide

A Half Day Prayer Retreat Guide

A resource to encourage you in your walk with Christ.

Instructions

The following is only a suggested outline to guide your extended time in prayer. As you work through the heart of this prayer time, it is recommended that you keep a journal of thoughts that God brings to mind, and the commitments that you make to the Lord as He reveals areas that are not pleasing to Him.

The outline starts with a time to praise God for who He is and concludes in thankfulness for what He has shown you. You will be led through a time of repentance and then through prayers for your church family.

PRAISE GOD: (about 15 minutes)

For his creative powers;

For his attributes: He is holy, just, loving, faithful, unchanging.

For his redeeming love; for this time of year when we remember

For the gift of his son, remembering his humbling himself to the point of death on a cross.

Suggested reading (and responsive prayer) as part of your praise: Psalm 19, Psalm 47, Psalm 66, Psalm 100, Psalm 103, Psalm 104, Luke 1:46-55

Sing a praise song or hymn. (optional)

Guide for Repentance *(Copied from **Praying God's Heart** by Greg Frizzell)*

Many modern calls to prayer are somewhat lacking in deep examination and repentance. For this reason, there is often lessened impact toward true revival. Biblically and historically, true revival prayer always involves deep, Bible-based repentance. This brief cleansing journey is designed to produce specific steps of lasting repentance. Genuine biblical confession *must* involve specific, lasting change. (Proverbs 28:13) Prayerfully read the following Scriptures and reflective questions. Ask God to cleanse and renew your heart.

Pure Thoughts and Attitudes (30 minutes)

“Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!” (Psalm 139:23-24)

“for as he calculates in his soul, so is he.” (Proverbs 23:7a)

“And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” (Matthew 22:37)

“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” (Matthew 6:33)

“But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Matthew 5:28)

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.” (Psalm 19:14)

“We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.” (2 Corinthians 10:5)

“God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” (1 Peter 5:5b)

Prayerfully work through the following reflective questions. Fully confess and forsake whatever God brings to mind. Trust God to fill and empower you with His

Spirit. After each of the following questions, pause and allow God to speak.

Questions for Reflection

- (a) Do I tend to think more about worldly things than spiritual?
- (b) Does the focus of my thoughts often indicate a lack of first love passion for Jesus?
- (c) Do I spend more time on hobbies, sports or recreation than God’s word and prayer?
- (d) Do I have any patterns of unclean or lustful thoughts?
- (e) Have I opened the door to impurity by anything I view on-line or in other media?
- (f) Do I frequently have thoughts that are envious or jealous?
- (g) Am I overly competitive and self-exalting?
- (h) Am I interested in serving God only if I can have a preeminent role?
- (i) Am I determined to get my way?
- (j) Am I overly interested in being noticed?
- (k) Do I often have thoughts that are angry or resentful?
- (l) Am I frequently dominated by thoughts of doubt instead of trust?
- (m) Do I consistently harbor thoughts of bitterness and unforgiveness?
- (n) Do I frequently brood about harsh things I would like to say to certain people or groups?

Please confess and forsake whatever God has revealed. Surrender your thoughts and yield them to Jesus. Remember, you are fully accepted and forgiven in Christ! Believe Christ to live through you by the Holy Spirit. (Romans 6:11)

For Prayer and Repentance

Go back and review the issues God revealed for repentance. Resolve now to put off all sinful thoughts and put on Christ by faith. Be very specific in what you confess and forsake. Place strong focus on identifying the specific righteous thoughts that will replace those that are wrong. List some of your key points for change.

Pause in prayer and trust Jesus to empower you with the Holy Spirit. Believe Him to fill you with His thoughts. Trust God for the fullness of the Holy Spirit. (Luke 11:13)

Suggest you take a 15 minute interlude, stretch, enjoy the beauty around you.

Holy Speech and Godly Communications (20 minutes)

“A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinion. A fool gives full vent to his spirit, but a wise man quietly holds it back” (Proverbs 18:2, 29:11)

“I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak.” (Matthew 12:36)

“Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.” (Ephesians 4:29; 5:4)

“Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices.” (Colossians 3:9)

“give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

“Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.” (James 1:19)

As seldom in history, sins of speech (and emails) are epidemic among believers. The current generation has witnessed a virtual explosion in everything from gossip and slander to angry outbursts and ungodly emailing. Little affects fellowship and spiritual power like un-yielded tongues and reckless keypads. Fully confess and forsake all sins of speech or email. Trust God to fill and empower you by His Spirit. After each of the following questions, pause and give God time to speak.

Questions for Reflection

- (a) Have I uttered any inappropriate or slang speech?
- (b) Do I have patterns of cursing or off-color words?
- (c) Am I prone to exaggeration or lying?
- (d) Do I have patterns of complaining and griping?
- (e) Am I guilty of any form of divisive speech?
- (f) Have I in any way spread criticism or lack of support for my spiritual leaders?
- (g) Do I have any patterns of critical, judgmental speech?
- (h) Have I blogged, emailed or forwarded anything that violated Scripture or grieved God's Spirit?
- (i) Have I blogged or forwarded material when I was not entirely sure of its accuracy or appropriateness?
- (j) Do I have a tendency to hurt and offend others?
- (k) Have I said things when alone that would cause great shame if made public?

Remember, *all* will be revealed! (Romans 6:11) Claim God's grace and trust Christ's indwelling Spirit for your victory.

For Prayer and Repentance — Resolve now to put off all ungodly speech and wholly yield your tongue to Christ's Lordship. Be very specific in your confession and repentance. List your key steps for obedience.

Trust Jesus to fill your heart and empower your speech. Believe Him for the fullness and power of the Holy Spirit. (Luke 11:13)

Right Relationships and Biblical Reconciliation (20 minutes)

“So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” (Matthew 5:23-24; 6:14-15)

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34-35)

“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one” (John 17:20-22)

“Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her,

having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” (Ephesians 5:25-26, 6:4)

“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise)” (Ephesians 5:22, 6:1-2)

“We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.” (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)

With God, everything is about relationship! At its heart, spirituality is about loving God and one another. (Matthew 22:37-39, 5:23-24, 6:14-15)

Virtually nothing grieves God’s Spirit or blocks prayers like ignoring broken or damaged relationships. For this reason, it is vital that believers continually confess and forsake all relationship sins. Take your time and be very thorough! After each of the following questions, pause and allow God to speak.

Questions for Reflection

- (a) Is there anyone (past or present) that I have offended but have not asked forgiveness?
- (b) Have I failed to seek full reconciliation and make restitution to anyone I have offended or in some way harmed?
- (c) Do I harbor the slightest unforgiveness and anger toward anyone?
- (d) Do I privately rehearse angry things I would like to say to certain people?
- (e) Have I in any way cooled off spiritually because of disappointments with God or people?
- (f) As a father, am I leading and training my family spiritually?
- (g) As a mother, am I sacrificially and joyfully serving my family and guiding them spiritually?
- (h) Have I in any way failed to honor, respect or give adequate attention and time to my parents?
- (i) Have I spoken or emailed negatively about anyone?
- (j) Have I publically criticized or maligned a fellow believer without first talking to them about the issue?
- (k) Have I forwarded items when I was not certain of their source?
- (l) Am I involved in any form of gossip or negative, critical speech?
- (m) Do I tend to hurt and offend people with my words or emails?
- (n) Is there any pattern of failing to respect and support my spiritual leaders?

All sins of relationships are very serious with God. Confession must be specific and repentance complete. Ask God for clear revelation of specific steps you may need to

take. Resolve to be utterly honest with yourself and resist the human tendency to rationalize our sin.

For Prayer and Repentance

Determine now to put off sins of relationship and let Jesus be the Lord of all. Are there indeed certain people from whom I need to ask forgiveness?

Do I need to take specific steps of restitution? (Restitution means repaying something I have taken or publically seeking to restore a reputation I have damaged.)

Is there some offense or bitterness I need to finally release?

Be completely honest with God and yourself. (If people are coming to mind with whom you need to make a contact for reconciliation that is very likely God speaking to your heart.)

Take time to write out specific steps for obeying God in relationships.

Pause for prayer and believe Christ to fill you with His love and power. Claim His full life and victory to operate in you. (Romans 6:6-14) Ask in faith for the fullness and power of the Holy Spirit. (Luke 11:13)

Suggest you take a 15 minute interlude, stretch, enjoy the beauty around you.

Victory Over Sins of Commission (15 minutes)

“For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.” (Psalms 51:3)

“Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.” (2 Corinthians 7:1)

Put simply, sins of commission are doing, saying or thinking anything God has forbidden. These can be anything from actions and words to thoughts or relationships. Fully confess and forsake all sins of commission. After each of the following questions, pause for God to speak.

Questions for Reflection

- (a) Am I engaged in any form of physical, mental, on-line or phone immorality?
- (b) Have I compromised by viewing anything unclean via movies, TV or Internet?
- (c) Do I have habits that abuse or neglect my body?
- (d) Do I commit idolatry by placing anyone or anything over loving and serving God?
- (e) Have I dabbled in any form of gambling or new ageism?
- (f) Am I doing anything about which I do not have perfect peace?
- (g) Am I in any way harsh or unkind to others?
- (h) Do I often confess the same sins but fail to fully forsake them?
- (i) Have I abused God’s grace by taking sin lightly?

For Prayer and Repentance

Resolve now to put off disobedience and put on full surrender to Christ. Be very specific in your confession and repentance. List your actual steps for making the changes.

Pray now and trust Jesus to fill you with His Spirit and power for full repentance. Claim the glorious victory described in Romans 6:6-14) Ask for the fire and passion of the Holy Spirit. (Luke 11:13) Don't stop asking, believing and repenting until He powerfully touches your heart!

Overcoming Sins of Omission (15 minutes)

“So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.” (James 4:17)

*“Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses **and forsakes** them will obtain mercy.”*
(Proverbs 28:13, emphasis added)

“And that servant who knew his master's will but did not get ready or act according to his will, will receive a severe beating.” (Luke 12:47)

Sins of omission are those areas in which we consistently fail to do things God has commanded. In short, it is not doing or being God what tells us to do and be. Fully confess and forsake any patterns of omission. After each of the following questions, pause and listen for God's impressions.

Questions for Reflection

- (a) Am I failing to abide in Jesus by neglecting regular time in His word and prayer?
- (b) Do I neglect consistent times of deep Scripture-based examination and confession?
- (c) Have I confessed certain sins but failed to fully repent and make restitution?
- (d) Do I neglect to be a daily witness and fail to generously support evangelism and missions?
- (e) Have I neglected to discern and use my spiritual gifts?
- (f) Am I allowing any point of spiritual bondage to remain in my life?
- (g) Have I failed to support and respect my spiritual leaders?
- (h) Am I failing to daily pursue holiness?
- (i) Am I robbing God by failing to tithe and give generous offerings beyond the tithe?
- (j) Have I neglected to work at improving my marriage and family life?
- (k) Do I fail to regularly pray with and disciple my family?

For Prayer and Repentance

Resolve now to put off your specific sins of neglect and put on full obedience. Be very specific in identifying your areas for repentance. List the specific ways you will repent.

Plan your actual steps for making the changes. Pray now and believe Christ to fill you with a spirit of total obedience. (John 14:15) Ask in faith for the fullness of Christ in you by the Holy Spirit. (Luke 11:13)

Suggest you take a 15 minute interlude, stretch, enjoy the beauty around you.

PRAYERS FOR YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

(about 20 minutes)

That God's Word would be taught effectively and powerfully.

That many would come to know the Lord this year through the ministries of our church.

That each individual (name some!) would desire to serve the Lord with all his heart, allowing God to develop his spiritual gifts.

Pray Ephesians 3:16-21 for each individual, that he may **know** the love of Christ and as a result act it out in his life. For our Pastor, that he would preach the Word, reproving, rebuking, and encouraging us with great patience and careful instruction (see 2 Tim 4:2-5) and that he would live a life worthy of his calling, being an example to the flock.

For leaders in our church, that they would first and foremost focus on their personal relationships with Christ and that they would "keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience" (1 Tim 3:9).

For those who suffer physical and emotional problems in our church, name them as you can.

For the hungry, poor, and oppressed: in this country, in persecuted countries, in our back yards.

For God's Kingdom, that His will may be done on earth as it is in heaven. Be sure to consider the implications of this phrase that so easily "rolls off our lips" and elaborate in your prayers specifically how you can make a difference in His kingdom.

GIVE THANKS TO GOD

(about 20 minutes)

For God's forgiveness;
For his great sacrifice for our sins;
For what he has done for you in this last year;
For what he will do for you in the coming year;
For the natural beauty of our world;
For our church;
For its growth in the last year (thank God for individuals by name);

For individuals within the church who have taught you, loved you, reached out to you, disciplined you, or rebuked you;
For the pastor, elders, and other leaders;
For the Sunday School;
For the various ministries of the church;
For your family;
For health;
For the trials you have faced this last year, and will face next year;
For those in authority over you: your parents, your husband, your employer, government officials;
For the abundance of material blessings you have received;
For other items.¹

¹ This majority of this outline was obtained from <http://www.bgco.org/5683> where additional prayer resources can be obtained.