

Congratulations! You've made one of the greatest and most life-changing decisions you could ever make – to get equipped to follow Jesus's command to be a disciple-maker. We trust this experience will change the trajectory of your life. There's a unique joy knowing you are doing exactly what Jesus expects His followers to do.

As you navigate through Walk With God, you'll learn several core competencies any disciple (and future disciple-maker) needs to have in their spiritual toolbelt. Two of those core competencies are how to pray and how to read/respond to God's Word. In the book, Craig Etheredge presents his preferred method to accomplish those spiritual disciplines. While there is absolutely nothing wrong with his suggested approaches, we would like to encourage some other methods we prefer at The Heights (see below). We believe there is value in a unified approach and in maintaining a repeatable process as disciple-making continues to future generations of disciples.

Our Suggested Approach to Prayer:

While the Bible certainly never presents any hard template we must use to approach our Father, there is value in having a broad guide – especially as we disciple those who are new to prayer or have struggled with prayer over the years.

Here is a 5-sided method we are suggesting. Because there are 5 pieces to this method, it's easy to use one's fingers as a reminder.

- **Praise** – begin by remembering the greatness of our God. It's important to start our conversation with God by focusing our mind's attention and our heart's affection on who God is.
- **Confession** – once we begin to enter into God's presence, we begin to sense how Holy He is (and how much we are not). We ask God to show us where we have missed the mark of what He has for us and what area of our lives do not line up with Him. The next natural step is to confess (agree with) those to God and ask Him to cleanse us and empower us to repent.
- **Gratitude** – when we consider how great God is (praise) and how merciful He is (confession), our natural response is one of gratitude and thankfulness. Thank Him for His provision – spiritual, relational, physical.
- **Others** – we are now properly positioned to petition God. Before asking for ourselves, take time to pray for others. This is the perfect time to specifically pray for others to come to know God and for God to make us aware of opportunities we can take personal risks to bring the gospel to others.
- **Personal** – we can now bring personal requests to our Father, seeking His power and wisdom so we can glorify Him with our lives.



Our Suggested Approach to Reading & Responding to God's Word:

There are many ways to study and apply God's Word. Maybe even more important than what method we use is understanding the true goal of our time in God's Word. While knowledge is foundational, it is NOT the ultimate purpose. The point of spending time in God's Word is to hear from our Father and to allow Him to mold us into the image of Jesus (see Romans 8:29). This *must* include not just knowing about God, but obeying Him in our day-to-day lives (see James 1:22).

In light of this, we suggest a method that is heavy on applying what we are reading. We believe asking these 6 questions and journaling our answers will move our disciples into active followers of Christ and allow them to pass along a method to those they will disciple in the future.

- 1. What does this passage tell me about God?**
- 2. What does this passage tell me about Man?**
- 3. Is there a Sin I need to avoid?**
- 4. Is there a Promise I need to claim?**
- 5. Is there an Example I need to follow?**
- 6. Is there a Command I need to obey?**

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It is important to note that not every part of Scripture lends itself to answering each of the 6 questions.

A Final Encouragement

As you practice these spiritual disciplines of spending time with God through prayer and His Word, always keep this idea in mind: Could I show someone else how to do this? Could I teach my disciple how to spend time with God? Could I show them how to do this so well they could turn around and show someone else? This is the mindset of a disciple-maker.