

## The Bible and Prayer

Bible and Prayer - The *two legs of walking* with God. We need both legs working together!

### Why is this idea of walking important?

“Walking is something nondramatic, rhythmic - it consists of steady, repeated actions you can keep up in a sustained way for a long time... There are many people who think of spiritual growth as something like high diving. They say, “I am doing to give my life to the Lord! I am going to change all these terrible habits, and I am really going to transform!”...That is not what a walk is... A walk is day in and day out praying; day in and day out Bible and Psalms reading...Is is rhythmic, on and on and on. To walk with God is a metaphor that symbolizes slow and steady progress.”

(Tim Keller, *Walking with God through Pain and Suffering*, 236)

New Testament “walk” idea is used almost 90 times. (*peripateo*)

1) literal - walking around, go here and there.

2) figurative - how someone conducts his or her life.

- Idea we are looking at is a lifestyle, how we live our life.
- In NT this word means to literally to conduct one’s life, to behave, how someone acts, to live as a habit of conduct. (BDAG)
- Often pointing to an example/model person.
- To follow someone’s model as a pattern of living. Ultimate example Jesus:

“Whoever claims to live [abide] in him [Christ] must *walk* as Jesus did.” (1 Jn 2:6)

This means follow the pattern of his lifestyle. How did Jesus live his life? Two major themes we see repeatedly are Bible and Prayer!

Jesus truly walked with God using the two legs of Bible and Prayer, we we too should do the same, as the pattern of our life, weaving it in, just as regular as we breathe.

### Habits of Grace to Help us Keep Walking

Areas to help us keep walking, to help us produce those regular rhythms of Word & Prayer.

### Personal Devotions - Quiet Time

- Keep it simple & doable - best Quiet Ttime/Devotions, just like best way to exercise, something you will do!
- Select a time, find a place, have a plan.

- Have a Devotional Sandwich - pray (bun), read (meat), pray (bun)
  - Pray (for illumination, prepare, speak)
  - Read Bible - meditate/pray, reflect on what you read, something to apply or take to heart?
  - Pray - Mix in thanks, confession, praise - and asking (for yourself, others, world - patterns in Jn 17, Lord's Prayer)
- Daily Pattern
  - Evening - read Psalm/Proverbs, do a devotional, prayer over day (thanks & anxieties).
  - Keller examples in his book *Prayer* (252-255)- what will you do. Morning? During day? Evening (later)?

### **Bible Reading**

- Have a plan - what will you read each day, week?
  - Plans I like: Discipleship Journal, Read the Bible for Life, ESV in a year, or go online and search websites to make a personalized one.
- Get encouragement
  - Find someone to help you! An accountability partner, spouse, good friend, family member to check in, discuss what you are learning.
- Do it with others
  - Great power in this! Use Body of Christ. Small group go through together.
- Journaling
  - Tool to let God speaking and work deeper
  - Helps with meditation on Word
  - Helps you apply, process what God is doing
  - Can also be a bridge, combine Bible and Prayer - journal out prayers based on what you are reading in the Bible

### **Prayer**

- God our Father wants us as his children to come to him.
- Pray the Bible. Psalms of the Day, NT passage.
- Organize (individual & others; spontaneous & planned)- ideas for planned times of prayer. Keep a journal, list, binder, index cards, ask - answer list, impossible list, prayer app, month prayer guide, 7 day prayer guide.
- Use a prayer resource.
  - PRAY / ACTS methods, on journal
  - *Valley of Vision*, Puritan prayers
  - *A Way to Pray* by Matthew Henry
  - *Praying the Bible* by Donald Whitney

- *Lord's Prayer Method*
- Extended Prayer
  - Hour of prayer (5 min), half-day, prayer retreat (with someone!)

### **Bible Study**

- Observe - Interpret - Apply method
- Study in community
- Use a guided book
  - My favorites - *Knowing the Bible* ESVSB series, *LifeChange* by Navigators, *Wiersbe Be Series*, Grace Church College Station *Inductive Bible Studies*.

### **Scripture Memory and Meditation**

- Tips for Meditation - slow down and let the Word sink in.
  - SORT - Scripture around, own words, references (cross), think through.
  - Meditation Mapping
    - Write verse in the middle of a blank page
    - Circle key words
    - Write out an observation
    - Connect ideas with arrows and lines
    - Write out a prayer
    - Jot down a cross reference
    - Draw a chart, list, bullet points
    - Summarize
    - Use different colors, make it fun, make it yours
  - Memorize it - then you have it to chew on during day.
- Tips for Scripture Memory
  - Incorporate into devotions, check your motives, enjoy
  - Say the reference before and after the verse.
  - Read the verse aloud many times. Record it!
  - Break the verse into natural phrases.
  - Write down the verse and erase a word at a time.
  - Online—[scripturetyper.com](http://scripturetyper.com) or [memverse.com](http://memverse.com)
  - Write out the verse on a flash card.
  - Carry some cards with you at all times for review.
  - Display your verses in prominent places.
  - Put the verse to music. Write a song!
  - Get a partner or a group so you can check each other.