



NEW CROSSING CHURCH

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Prayer Series: Upward. Inward. Outward.

Study 7: Ways To Pray Upward: Contemplation & Adoration

Note: You can listen to or watch the sermon of the same title, Craig Robertson, Feb 27, 2022

Jesus teaches his disciples to begin their prayers upward with 'Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name"

1. How does this prayer help you move upward?

Contemplation – A silent conversation with God that moves us deeply into our awareness of His presence.

For Christians, meditation seeks a deeper understanding of the scriptures and God, while contemplation seeks a deeper union with God. The distinctions between these two words are not strong and sometimes they are used interchangeably.

The goal of Eastern and New Age meditation is to empty oneself. The goal of Christian meditation is to empty oneself so as to be filled with the presence of God. The former aims at a physical and mental peace by detachment from self while the latter aims at Christ and finds a deeper peace in attachment to him.

Read Psalm 62:1 - Here we see a person whose soul is silently at rest and peace in the presence of God who is their salvation.

Read Psalm 65:1 in your different translations. It has been a difficult verse in the past to translate and many translations have missed the aspect of silence as praise. Some are correcting this like the ESV translation which adds the footnote "Praise waits for you in silence." So a translation of the ESV that would better capture the silence would be:

Praise *in silence* is due to you, O God, in Zion,
and to you shall vows be performed.

The Message Bible reads:

“Silence is praise to you,
Zion-dwelling God,
And also obedience.
You hear the prayer in it all.”

2. What is your greatest challenge to sitting in silence?

The practice of Contemplation: *Remember and share a time when your soul was quiet, and you felt the blessing of being in the presence of Jesus.*
First, Breath Prayer: Try to find stillness in God's presence by repeating one of the following phrases over and over (3 minutes). Choose 'a' or 'b'
a. While you inhale silently say "I love you" which is God speaking his love to you. Then while you exhale you silently say "I love you" back to Him.
b. Or, inhale - "Lord Jesus Christ", exhale - "Son of God", inhale - "Have mercy on me," exhale - "a sinner."

Second, Prayer of Release – This is an exercise of Lifting those things that bring you tension up to the Lord and then Letting them go in faith to Him.

Read Mark 4:38-40 - The disciples brought to Jesus the things that gave them fear and distress. He rebuked those things that threatened God's will for them to reach the other side of the shore. Jesus exercised his divine power over the wind and the waves by speaking "Peace! Be still!"

3. What distresses you right now? What is difficult for you to handle at this time? Take time now to release them to Jesus in the following way:

By **Lifting them up** you acknowledge them and **Letting them go** you release them by faith into the hands of the one who can carry that burden for you. You can Lift them up to Jesus and Let them go in your mind or actually do this with your hands. Hear Jesus speak "**Peace! Be still!**" over each one (5 minutes)

Third, Prayer of Quiet – Be silent in the Lord's presence enjoying him and listening.

Read Psalm 46:10 - Enter the Lord's presence, enjoy him, and listen (3 minutes)

4. What did you experience?

Adoration – A selfless worship of God that intensely seeks to magnify and bless Him.

Adoration encompasses both giving thanks and praise. Thanksgiving is giving God glory for What he has done for us while Praise is giving God glory for Who he is in himself. Sometimes the Bible will use these interchangeably.

Read Psalm 34:1-3

The Practice of Adoration: *Remember and share a time when your soul was especially full of praise, and you magnified the Lord!*

First, During this coming week find one good thing each day that you pause and take pleasure in as an act of adoration.

Second, Magnify God for who He is! - The scriptures are full of His names, pictures, attributes, and character.

One person slowly read out loud Psalm 65:3-8

5. In silence pray, "Lord, what word or phrase of adoration are you highlighting for me or which word or phrase grabs my attention?" and then listen to what he shows you." Share your word or phrase with the group.

Another person slowly read out loud Psalm 65:3-8

6. Ask, "Where is this word/phrase speaking into my life/soul? How is my heart responding to this word/phrase?"

7. Magnify the Lord for this attribute out loud in the group.