

# RECHARGE

DISCIPLINES FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

## ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF LIFE IN CHRIST





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DISCIPLINES FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

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This book belongs to:



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# Introduction

**“Open my eyes so that I  
may contemplate wondrous things  
from your instruction.”**

Psalm 119:18 (CSB)

Congratulations for choosing to invest in your personal, spiritual development! It is God’s desire for you to grow to be more like His Son each and every day. This booklet will help guide you in that journey—your daily walk with God.

## **“Essential Elements of Life in Christ” Sermon Series**

In this current sermon series, we will focus on many of the daily practices needed for growing in your spiritual walk with God. This is a perfect time to commit to spending more time each day on your Christian walk.

The goal for each sermon in this series is to study a passage from the Old Testament that illustrates the spiritual discipline for that week and then—utilizing passages from the New Testament—apply these truths to your own spiritual walk.

So in his sermon on Easter Sunday, Pastor Wade taught the story about Abraham and Isaac on top of Mount Moriah, and how that Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice Isaac was a picture of God’s gift of love when He “gave His one and only Son.” When Jesus Christ offered Himself as the sacrifice for our sins, He made it possible for mankind to be reconciled to God. Just as Paul said in Romans 5:10:

**“For if while we were enemies we were reconciled  
to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are  
reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.”**

When we trust in Jesus Christ for our salvation, we begin the process of total life transformation—the journey from



salvation to sanctification. The Holy Spirit begins the ongoing work of conforming us to the image of God’s Son (Romans 8:29). This is a life-long process that only happens through the power of the Holy Spirit when we practice personal, spiritual disciplines.

There are a variety of spiritual disciplines that have been practiced over the centuries. In this series, we want to focus on what we deem to be “essential” disciplines for the Christian walk. We will be looking at thirteen different types of disciplines—six of which we believe should be incorporated into your daily time with the Lord. Those that are considered essentials are:

1  
**Pr**  
**PRAYER**  
Hebrews 4:16

2  
**Bi**  
**BIBLE STUDY**  
2 Timothy 3:16-17

3  
**Cm**  
**COMMUNITY**  
1 John 1:7

4  
**Wo**  
**WORSHIP**  
John 4:24

5  
**Sv**  
**SERVICE**  
1 Peter 4:10

6  
**So**  
**SOLITUDE**  
Mark 8:30-31

### Daily Recharge

The book you hold in your hand has been designed to be your companion throughout this study. Each week contains:

- A page to take notes from each Sunday’s sermons,
- A page for notes/prayer needs from your Community Group,
- Follow-up study materials for 3 to 6 days each week.



These study materials are scheduled for Monday, Wednesday and Friday; however, you may find that you need to spread out each study over two days, which would give you studies for Monday through Saturday. Each day will be designed to help you incorporate that week's particular discipline into your spiritual journey.

**WARNING!!** SOME OF THE DAILY RECHARGE DEVOTIONALS WILL LOOK VERY DIFFERENT FROM PREVIOUS STUDIES THAT WE HAVE DONE! THE REASON FOR THIS IS THAT WE WILL BE FOCUSING MORE ON THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE DISCIPLINES RATHER THAN JUST LEARNING MORE ABOUT THEM.

### **Additional Resource Material**

Because of the nature of this study guide, we are including some additional resources as appendices in the back of this book. Several times throughout the Daily Recharge studies we will refer to details that you will be able to find in one of the appendices. These will serve as your reference guides to some of the spiritual discipline exercises that we will be introducing in the studies.

### **Final Thoughts**

This book is part one of two for this sermon series. There are a few reasons for this. First, the length of the series (14 weeks) would make the book too long for saddle stitch binding. Second, with the addition of appendices, the Recharge is longer than normal. And third, we are still working out the details of what the second half of the Recharge studies will look like. Again, we are trying to make this as practical as possible! The second volume will be available by the end of May.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Pastor Wade or Pastor John. Our prayer is that these studies will provide you with a daily recharge for your life!

# SOAP Journal Log

*DATE*

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**Week 1**

**April 4, 2021**

**Sermon Text:           Genesis 22; Hebrews 11**

**Sermon Notes:**

\* Community Groups will start the week of April 11.

**Questions for Reflection:**

Read 1 Peter 3:15-17. This passage refers to the hope that is in you. What is this hope?

Read 1 John 5:10-13. What do these verses say that assures us of salvation? Does God want us to have assurance in our salvation?

If you are not sure that you have this hope, take a moment to read Appendix 1—"The Good News of Salvation"—before moving on.

The goal for today is to spend some time writing out your personal testimony. If you would like a guide for writing your testimony, you might consider the step-by-step instructions found in Appendix 2.

**What was my life like before I received Jesus Christ?**



**How did I come to receive Christ?**

**What happened after I received Christ? How did my life change?**

## SOAP Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:** 1 John 1-2

**SOAP Text:**

(Choose the text to SOAP from the Bible reading)

**S**

**O**

**A**

**P**

**KNOWING & ABIDING**

**Questions for Reflection:**

Read 2 Timothy 1:8, 12b. Do you have the same confidence as Paul did about knowing God personally? Explain

What should our attitude be concerning our personal testimony?  
How should I feel when talking about my faith?

Is this an accurate description of my attitude when sharing about my faith? Why or why not?

\* Continue working on the step-by step process of writing your personal testimony.



## SOAP Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:** 1 John 3

**SOAP Text:**

(Choose the text to SOAP from the Bible reading)

**S**

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**P**

**ABIDING & OBEYING**

**Questions for Reflection:**

The Bible teaches that a true believer obeys God in his life.

Read 1 John 2:3-6. What do you think about what these verses say?

Read 1 John 3:24. What does it mean to abide in God?

What evidence exists to prove that I am abiding in God?

What are some practical steps you can take today to abide in God?

## SOAP Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:**      **1 John 4-5**

**SOAP Text:**

(Choose the text to SOAP from the Bible reading)

**S**

**O**

**A**

**P**

**Week 2**

**April 11, 2021**

**Sermon Text:            Leviticus 16; Matthew 27; Hebrews 11**

**Sermon Notes:**

## **Community Group:**

**Location:**

**Date:**

**Prayer Requests:**

**Lesson Topic:**

**Scripture References:**

**Lesson Notes:**

**What will I do as a result of our study?**

## ACTS/PRAY Method of Praying

### Questions for Reflection:

According to John 10, what analogy does Jesus use to describe his relationship with his followers?

What effect does your intimacy with God have on your prayer life?

Read **“Appendix 4: ACTS/PRAY Method.”**

Which of these two methods do you think you would prefer and why?

Practice your preferred method by writing out your prayer in the space below.

## SOAP Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:**      **John 10**

**SOAP Text:**

(Choose the text to SOAP from the Bible reading)

**S**

**O**

**A**

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## **Praying Scripture**

### **Questions for Reflection:**

Did you know that when Jesus was on the cross, he prayed Scripture to God? Read Matthew 27:46 and Psalm 22:1. Why do you think Jesus cried out to God by quoting this psalm?

Read Philippians 4:6. What attitude should we have when we pray? What does the Bible tell us to pray about?

Spend a few minutes reading “Appendix 5: Praying the Bible.” Once you have a basic grasp on praying the Bible, follow the instructions in the appendix and experience it for yourself.



## SOAP Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:**      **Philippians 4**

**SOAP Text:**

(Choose the text to SOAP from the Bible reading)

**S**

**O**

**A**

**P**

## Praying Worship Songs

### Questions for Reflection:

Read Colossians 3:15-17. How many times in these three verses does the Bible refer to prayer in some way?

What role did worship songs (“psalms and hymns and spiritual song”) play in the process of praying for and encouraging one another?

In “**Appendix 6: Praying Worship Songs,**” there are a few examples of theologically deep songs that could be used as a part of your prayer life. Utilizing the same principles you learned about praying Scripture, use one of these songs to lift up your prayer to God. (You might even consider using a hymnal as a part of your daily quiet time.)

What song did you choose?

## SOAP Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:** Ephesians 6

**SOAP Text:**

(Choose the text to SOAP from the Bible reading)

**S**

**O**

**A**

**P**

**Week 3**

**April 18, 2021**

**Sermon Text:           2 Kings 22; 2 Timothy 2 & 3**

**Sermon Notes:**

## **Community Group:**

**Location:**

**Date:**

**Prayer Requests:**

**Lesson Topic:**

**Scripture References:**

**Lesson Notes:**

**What will I do as a result of our study?**

**Inductive Study Method: Prayer****Questions for Reflection:**

Read 1 Corinthians 2:11-14. Is it possible to understand the teachings of the Bible apart from the work of the Holy Spirit in us? Explain.

In John 16:13, Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth, but it is important to prepare our hearts and ask God to help us correctly understand His Word. This is when praying the Bible back to God can be very useful! Psalm 119 has one-hundred seventy-six verses and each one of them refer to God's Word in some way. Read Psalm 119:18. How can you pray this verse back to God to prepare your heart to study the Bible?

Write out your prayer in the space below.

## SOAP Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:**      **John 14**

**SOAP Text:**

(Choose the text to SOAP from the Bible reading)

**S**

**O**

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**Inductive Study Method: Observation****Questions for Reflection:**

After prayer, the second step of the inductive Bible study process is to answer the question, “What does the text say?” What six investigative questions should you ask in order to make observations?

One of the simplest ways to discover what the text says is by reading the text carefully and making a list of observations about the text. Read today’s Bible reading from John 15. What word, phrase or sentence did God highlight in your mind from John 15?

Write all of your observations about the text in the space below. Don’t forget to use your ‘Six Investigative Questions’—who, what, when, where, why and how.



## SOAP Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:**      **John 15**

**SOAP Text:**

(Choose the text to SOAP from the Bible reading)

**S**

**O**

**A**

**P**

## **Interpretation & Application**

### **Questions for Reflection:**

When seeking to understand and apply the truth of Scripture, it is imperative to abide by a few principles. First, a text must be interpreted within its context—or the text surrounding it. And second, a text cannot mean what it never meant—this means that we must understand a text in light of the cultural background of the original recipients.

This week, you have been studying John 14-16. What do you know about the context and cultural background of this passage?

Look again to the text that God “highlighted in your mind from the Day 2 study. After examining the context and cultural background, what did the author (the Apostle John) intend to communicate to the original recipients?

What does that mean for me today? What will I do in response to that truth?

For more information about the steps for understanding and applying the Bible, check out the Discipleship Path Two study we have developed here at Temple Rogers.

## SOAP Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:**      **John 16**

**SOAP Text:**

(Choose the text to SOAP from the Bible reading)

**S**

**O**

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**Sermon Text:**

**Sermon Notes:**

## **Community Group:**

**Location:**

**Date:**

**Prayer Requests:**

**Lesson Topic:**

**Scripture References:**

**Lesson Notes:**

**What will I do as a result of our study?**

**L o v e O n e A n o t h e r**

**Questions for Reflection:**

In John 13:34-35, Jesus gave his disciples a new commandment. What was it? Why did He say it was important?

Read 1 John 4:7-12. How should the love of God impact our daily lives and relationships with one another?

According to 1 John 4:20-21, is it possible to love God but not love one another? Explain.

## SOAP Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:**      **1 Corinthians 13**

**SOAP Text:**

(Choose the text to SOAP from the Bible reading)

**S**

**O**

**A**

**P**

**Encourage One Another**

**Questions for Reflection:**

Read Hebrews 10:24-25. What does this passage say about our relationships with others? What responsibilities do we have toward one another?

What are some specific ways that we can encourage one another to love and good deeds?

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:11. Is this something that we are doing regularly? If not, why not?

Take a few moments to pray and ask God who it is that you need to encourage this week. Who did God bring to mind? What will you do? When will you do it?



## SOAP Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:**      **2 Corinthians 4**

**SOAP Text:**

(Choose the text to SOAP from the Bible reading)

**S**

**O**

**A**

**P**

**Live Peaceably with One Another**

**Questions for Reflection:**

Read Romans 12:14-18. In this passage, Paul instructs believers that “so far as it depends on you, [we should] live peaceably with all.” What advice does he give in these verses on how to live at peace with others?

Now read 2 Timothy 2:22-26. What instructions did Paul give his young protégé about the struggles he would encounter because of conflict within himself and conflict with others?

What is one thing that you will do today to apply these truths to your life?

## SOAP Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:**

**Romans 12**

**SOAP Text:**

(Choose the text to SOAP from the Bible reading)

**S**

**O**

**A**

**P**

**Sermon Text:           Genesis 4; Hebrews 11**

**Sermon Notes:**

## **Community Group:**

**Location:**

**Date:**

**Prayer Requests:**

**Lesson Topic:**

**Scripture References:**

**Lesson Notes:**

**What will I do as a result of our study?**

## Elements of Worship: Psalms

### Questions for Reflection:

When it comes to worship, it is a biblical principle that we are unable to worship God fully if we are holding something against a fellow believer (Matthew 5:21-26). This is why we studied Community before studying Worship. Read Colossians 3:12-17. What do we learn in this passage about worship? And how does it correlate with our relationships with one another?

As we consider the spiritual discipline of worship this week, we are going to focus primarily on the aspect of singing—thus we will focus on the ancient collection of songs found in the Bible—the Book of Psalms. What kind of songs did Paul tell the believers they were to sing in Colossians 3:16?

One way to look at these different types of songs is this: **psalms** are songs that we sing to God; **hymns** are songs that we sing about God; and **spiritual songs** are songs that we sing about God's work in/for us.

Read Psalms 51 & 61. Notice how these ancient psalms are directly addressing God. What's a song that we sing for worship that is technically a psalm—a song we sing to God?

Spend some time in personal worship singing (or reading) some of your favorite, modern **psalms** of worship.

## SOAP Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:** Psalm 51 or Psalm 61

**SOAP Text:**

(Choose the text to SOAP from the Bible reading)

**S**

**O**

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## Elements of Worship: Hymns

### Questions for Reflection:

In our study today, we will focus on the second type of worship song that Paul encouraged believers to sing—hymns. Many people think that the only place to find a hymn is in a hymnal, but that's not completely accurate by our definition. If you were to read the lyrics of songs in a hymnal, you would discover that some of them are psalms; others are hymns; while others still are spiritual songs.

Read Psalm 19. This is a song that teaches us about who God is. What are some of the things that we learn about God from this psalm?

Read Psalm 19:14 again. What is different about this verse from the rest of the psalm? Would this verse be better classified as a psalm or a hymn? Why?

What's a song that we sing for worship that would be considered a hymn? Spend some time in personal worship singing (or reading) some modern **hymns** of worship.



## SOAP Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:** Psalm 29

**SOAP Text:**

(Choose the text to SOAP from the Bible reading)

**S**

**O**

**A**

**P**

## **Elements of Worship: Spiritual Songs**

### **Questions for Reflection:**

The final type of worship song mentioned in Colossians 3 is a spiritual song—a song that testifies about the work of God in our lives.

Spiritual songs include traditional, “Stamps-Baxter” songs like “He Set Me Free” and “Since Jesus Came Into My Heart,” and modern songs like “Scars” by I Am They.

There are many songs that sing about the way that God worked in the lives of His children in the Book of Psalms. Read Psalm 105. What are some encouraging things that you learn from this psalm about the way that God worked among His people?

Sometimes we forget that before Israel was a nation, it was first a family—and a small family at that. If you were one of Abraham’s descendents, how much more would these stories mean to you? How would knowing God’s work in your family history benefit your life?

**Something to consider... What would it mean to your children’s children’s children to be able to read stories about God’s work in and through you? If you do not write it down, who will?**

## SOAP Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:** Psalm 145

**SOAP Text:**

(Choose the text to SOAP from the Bible reading)

**S**

**O**

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**P**

**Week 6**

**May 9, 2021**

**Sermon Text:           Genesis 3; 1 Samuel 3; Ruth**

**Sermon Notes:**

## **Community Group:**

**Location:**

**Date:**

**Prayer Requests:**

**Lesson Topic:**

**Scripture References:**

**Lesson Notes:**

**What will I do as a result of our study?**

**A Willingness to Serve****Questions for Reflection:**

In his sermon this week, Pastor Wade highlighted different aspects of serving God in the lives of three biblical characters—Samuel, Noah and Ruth. Which of these three people do you most identify with personally? Why?

Hannah, Samuel’s mother who struggled with infertility, “was deeply distressed and prayed to the Lord and wept bitterly” (1 Samuel 1:10). She promised God to give her child back to the Lord if he granted her desire to give birth. What impact did Hannah’s promise to God have on her son’s decision to serve God? What can we learn from this?

Read 1 Samuel 3:1-10. How important was it that Samuel was willing to do anything that was asked of him? Is it important to have a heart that is willing to serve?

Read Mark 10:43-45. What did Jesus say about being willing to be a servant?

## SOAP Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:**      **Philippians 2**

**SOAP Text:**

(Choose the text to SOAP from the Bible reading)

**S**

**O**

**A**

**P**

**A Perseverance to Serve**

**Questions for Reflection:**

The second biblical character highlighted in Sunday's message was Noah. He was highlighted for his perseverance in service. (If you are unfamiliar with his story, please read Genesis 5-9.)

Why is Noah an example of perseverance?

How many years did it take Noah to build the ark that God instructed him to build?

Even considering the length of Noah's life, that one project consumed more than 10% of his lifetime. If God were to ask you to give 7-10 years of your life to complete a single project, would you be willing to serve Him as He asks? Would you be willing to walk away from your current job to serve Him?

Read Matthew 4:18-22. How would you have responded if you were one of the men in this story? Notice their response in verses 20 and 22.



## SOAP Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:**      **Luke 5**

**SOAP Text:**

(Choose the text to SOAP from the Bible reading)

**S**

**O**

**A**

**P**

## A Mind-set to Serve

### Questions for Reflection:

The last biblical character highlighted in Sunday's message was Ruth. We studied Ruth in depth just last summer as a church. If you were not here when we studied that, I would invite you to go back and listen to this series [here](#). Or as a refresher, I would encourage you to spend the next 14-15 minutes and read the story for yourself.



How would you describe Ruth? How would you describe her relationship with her mother-in-law?

Even though she was not obligated to stay with Naomi, Ruth's devotion to serve her and her needs was rewarded by the Lord. How is devotion viewed in our culture and society?

How is an attitude of service viewed in our culture and society? What did Jesus say about a person's devotion in Luke 16:13?

## SOAP Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:**      **Matthew 6**

**SOAP Text:**

(Choose the text to SOAP from the Bible reading)

**S**

**O**

**A**

**P**

**Sermon Text: Exodus 14; Psalm 37; Colossians 2**

**Sermon Notes:**

## **Community Group:**

**Location:**

**Date:**

**Prayer Requests:**

**Lesson Topic:**

**Scripture References:**

**Lesson Notes:**

**What will I do as a result of our study?**

## Solitude—Following Jesus' Example

### Questions for Reflection:

Read Mark 1:35-38. Where was Jesus when the disciples were looking for him? Why had he gone there?

After returning from His time of Solitude, what did Jesus do?

Were there other times when Jesus would get away to be alone with God? (c.f. Mark 3:7, 13; 6:31-32; 6:45-46)

If this was important for Jesus' relationship with God the Father, how important is it for our relationship with Him?

Read "**Appendix 8: Practice of Silence & Solitude**" and "**Appendix 9: Lectio Divina.**" Using the suggested Bible reading, complete the *lectio divina* practice on the next page.

***Lectio Divina:***

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:        John 15:4-11**

**Read (*Lectio*)**

**Reflect (*Meditatio*)**

**Respond (*Oratio*)**

**Rest (*Contemplatio*) & Resolve (*Incarnatio*)**

*Lectio Divina*—Reading for Transformation

Questions for Reflection:

What do the following passages say about the transforming power of God and His Word in our lives?

Romans 8:29—

Romans 12:1-2—

2 Corinthians 4:16—

Colossians 3:1-10—

Glance over “**Appendix 8: Practice of Silence & Solitude**” and “**Appendix 9: Lectio Divina**” again. Using the suggested Bible reading, complete the *lectio divina* practice on the next page.



***Lectio Divina:***

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading: 1 John 2:1-6**

**Read (*Lectio*)**

**Reflect (*Meditatio*)**

**Respond (*Oratio*)**

**Rest (*Contemplatio*) & Resolve (*Incarnatio*)**

*Lectio Divina*—Balancing Silence & the Word

Questions for Reflection:

What do the following passages say about the transforming power of God and His Word in our lives?

2 Timothy 3:10-17—

Hebrews 4:11-13—

2 Peter 1:3-11—

Glance over “**Appendix 8: Practice of Silence & Solitude**” and “**Appendix 9: Lectio Divina**” again. Using the suggested Bible reading, complete the *lectio divina* practice on the next page.

***Lectio Divina:***

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:        John 8:31-38**

**Read (*Lectio*)**

**Reflect (*Meditatio*)**

**Respond (*Oratio*)**

**Rest (*Contemplatio*) & Resolve (*Incarnatio*)**



## Appendix 1:

# THE GOOD NEWS OF SALVATION

Does God exist? What is the purpose of life? Does God really love me? Is there really life after death? Why do I feel so alone?

Life is full of questions! And people have been looking for answers to these and many other questions for many years. Whatever you are struggling with, there is an answer—the answer is Jesus! The Bible says that “we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 5:1)

Jesus himself said, “I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.” (John 10:10b). You see, we are created by God for a purpose—to fellowship with Him. It has always been God’s desire to have a personal relationship with you, but our sinfulness made this impossible. The Bible tells us,

“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned.” (Romans 5:12)

It is our sinfulness that separates us from fellowship with God. Even though we have been alienated from God because of our sin, He wants to reconcile His relationship with us. This is accomplished through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross—the perfect payment for sin!

“For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:6-8)

It is hard to imagine that God loves us so much that He would be willing to sacrifice His Son to pay the penalty for our sin, but that is exactly what He did! When we trust in Jesus, we are reconciled with God forever!

“For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.” (Romans 5:10-11)

We receive eternal life when we are reconciled to God. Does this seem to good to be true? Is it really possible to be made right with God by merely trusting in His Son for salvation?

How can our relationship with God be restored?

“Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.” (Romans 5:18-19)

Is salvation really a free gift?

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23)

Jesus Christ is the One—the only One—through whom we receive this gift of reconciliation and eternal life. If you want to trust in Jesus Christ, you must confess that He is your Lord and believe in your heart that after He was crucified, He rose from the dead and is alive in heaven today. The Bible says,

“...if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.” (Romans 10:9-10)

Once you trust in Jesus you have a new relationship with Him. It is very important to maintain a right relationship with God. This study guide will help you grow in that relationship, but you also need the input of other believers. Be sure to let one of the pastors know about your decision to follow Christ!

## Appendix 2:

# PREPARING YOUR TESTIMONY

As Christians, we do not just tell our story because it's "the right thing to do." We do it because it's biblical and because God moves when we take steps of faith to share with others.

There are many accounts in the Bible of people sharing about how God transformed their lives. One of the most well-known testimonies is told by the apostle Paul. Paul went from persecuting Christians to following Jesus, starting churches, and writing over half of the New Testament. Take a look at his testimony before a crowd in Acts 22:1-21 to understand the essential parts of telling your story.

1. Paul opens with a brief history of his life (vv. 1–3)
2. Paul tells about his life before Christ (vv. 4-5)
3. Paul explains how he came to know Christ (vv. 6-13)
4. Paul tells about his life after coming to know Christ (vv. 14-18)
5. Paul closes with his obedience to Christ (vv. 19-21)

### The 5 Parts of Your Personal Testimony

After looking at Paul's example of a testimony, you can get a better understanding of a good framework for telling your own story. Take a look at these five parts of a personal testimony. As you move through this list, journal your answers to the questions in each section.

#### 1. The Opening

Identify a theme you can use to frame your story. What did your life revolve around (e.g. relationships, your reputation, success) that God used to help bring you to Him? Briefly illustrate how that influenced your life.

## **2. Your Life Before Christ**

Paint a picture of what your life was like before you came to Christ. Do not dwell too much on, or brag about, past sins. Share only the details that relate to your theme — just enough to show your need for Christ. Think through these questions:

- What about my life before Christ will relate most to the non-Christians I know?
- What did my life revolve around? Where did I get my security, identity or happiness from?
- How did those things begin to let me down?

## **3. How You Came to Christ**

Give the details about why and how you became a Christian. Communicate in such a way that the person you are talking with, and anyone who overhears you, can understand how they can become a Christian too. Even if your listeners are not ready for that, God could use your story and explanation of the gospel to draw them to Himself in the future. Think through these questions:

- When was the first time I heard the gospel? What were my initial reactions?
- When and why did my perspective on Christ begin to change?
- What were the final struggles that I went through before I accepted Him? Why did I finally decide to accept Christ (or give Him complete control of my life)?

## **4. Your Life After Coming to Christ**

Share some of the changes that Christ has made in your life as they relate to your theme. Emphasize the changes in your character, attitude or perspective, not just changes in behavior. Be realistic. We still struggle as Christians. Life is far from perfect, but what's different about your life now? Think through these questions:

- How is my life different now? List some specific changes in your character, attitude and perspective on life.
- What motivates me now? What do I live for?



- Even though my life still is not perfect, how does knowing Christ help me deal with that fact?

## 5. The Closing

End with a statement that summarizes your story and connects everything back to your theme. If you want, close with a Bible verse that relates to your experience.

---

Congratulations! Once you've gone through the five steps above, you've outlined your personal testimony. Now, take a few minutes to write out your story as if you were telling it to someone. Here are some helpful hints to keep in mind as you do that:

- Pray before you write out and share your story. Ask God for wisdom and the words to say.
- Write the way you speak.
- Be honest.
- Aim to keep your story to three to five minutes. At that length, it's something you can share briefly in a conversation without it becoming a monologue.
- Practice your testimony out loud several times until you feel comfortable with it.

The Lord can use you to help others come to know Christ. Ask God for opportunities to share your story and the gospel with others.

\* Taken from: [Cru.org](http://Cru.org)—"What Is a Christian Testimony?"

## Appendix 3:

# SOAP JOURNALING

As we read God's Word, we begin to see how God responds to things. Doing **daily devotions** re-patterns the way we think and transforms the spirit of the mind. Then, when we face similar situations as Jesus did, we begin to respond in the same way.

**Journaling is an excellent way to both record and process what God has spoken to us.** It's also a useful tool to use at a later time to reflect on and review some of the "gems" that you have received. Without writing these down, you may forget those blessings and some very important lessons!

# S

### for Scripture

Open your Bible to today's reading on your Bible Reading Plan. Take time reading and allow God to speak to you. When you are done, look for a verse that spoke to you that day, and write it in your journal.

# O

### for Observation

What is God saying in this scripture? Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you and reveal the truth of this verse to you. Now write a one or two sentence observation about that verse. What does the verse say? What does it mean?

# A

### for Application

Personalize what you have read, by asking yourself how it applies to your life right now. Perhaps it is instruction, encouragement, revelation of a new promise, or correction for a particular area of your life. Now write how this Scripture can apply to you today.

# P

### for Prayer

This can be as simple as asking God to help you apply this Scripture, or it may be a greater insight on what He may be revealing to you. Remember, prayer is a two-way conversation, so be sure to listen to what God has to say!

Don't forget to give your journal entry a title and put it in the Table of Contents. This will help you find it when you want to read it again.

## Appendix 4:

# ACTS/PRAY METHOD

**ACTS** and **PRAY** are both acronyms to help guide you through your prayer time while still giving you a lot of space to pray as you feel led.

The **ACTS** Acronym looks like this:

**Adoration** – Praising God for who he is

**Confession** – Humbly acknowledging your sin before God

**Thanksgiving** – Praising God for what he has done and expressing gratitude for it

**Supplication** – Asking God to provide for your needs or the needs of others.

The **PRAY** acronym looks like this:

**Praise** – Praising God for who he is

**Repent** – Humbly acknowledging your sin before God

**Ask** – Asking God to provide for your needs or the needs of others.

**Yield** – An act of submission to his will in your life.

The only real difference between them is where one prioritizes thanksgiving, the other prioritizes yielding, both of which are important and could be added to each other.

An important thing to note in this method is the order of areas you pray for. Prayer always begins with praise to God and humility for our own sin.

All too often we jump into prayer with a to-do list of things we want from God and don't take the time to praise, confess, or thank him at all, or only as an afterthought. (From: [JustDisciple.com](http://JustDisciple.com))

## Appendix 5:

# PRAYING THE BIBLE\*

*Open the Bible, start reading it, and pause at every verse and turn it into a prayer.*

John Piper

To pray the Bible, you simply go through the passage line by line, talking to God about whatever comes to mind as you read the text. See how easy that is? Anyone can do that.

If you don't understand the meaning of a verse, go on to the next verse. If the meaning of that one is perfectly clear but nothing comes to mind to pray about, go on to the next verse. Just speak to the Lord about everything that occurs to you as you slowly read his word.

Let the words of Scripture become the words of your prayers. For example, if you pray through Psalm 23, read "The Lord is my shepherd," and thank Him for being your shepherd. Ask Him to shepherd your family that day, to guide, protect, and provide for them. Pray that He will make your family members His sheep; that they will look to Him as their shepherd. Ask Him to shepherd you through the decision you must make about your future. Pray for Him to bless the under-shepherd, or pastor, at your church, shepherding him as he shepherds the church, etc. When nothing else comes to mind, go to the next line—"I shall not want"—and continue to pray.

Simply go through the passage, line-by-line, praying what you find in the text or what it brings to mind. If nothing comes to mind, or if you don't understand the verse, go to the next. You might choose to linger long on one verse. Conversely, there may be only a handful of matters that prompt prayer as you go through many verses. Nothing says you have to pray over every verse. Continue in this way until (1) you run out of time, or (2) you run out of Psalm.

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\* The material in this section is primarily taken from the teaching and writings of Donald S. Whitney. Recommended sources are included at the end of Appendix 5.

The Psalms are the best place in Scripture from which to pray Scripture. This is because of the original purpose and usage of the Psalms. The Psalms were songs inspired by God for the purpose of being reflected in song back to God. Moreover, there's a Psalm for every sigh of the heart. The entire range of human emotion is recorded in the 150 Psalms.

Perhaps the second-best place in Scripture from which to pray Scripture is the New Testament letters. These are so densely packed with truth that virtually every verse suggests something to pray about.

It is also edifying to pray through the narrative passages of Scripture. Unlike praying through the Psalms or New Testament letters, however, a different approach must often be used with the narrative passages. Instead of looking at each verse almost microscopically, in a narrative passage it's usually easier to consider it paragraph-by-paragraph, looking for the "big ideas" of the story.

Once you actually experience praying through a passage of Scripture, you'll likely be able to turn to any part of the Bible and pray through it. You won't need these notes to remember how to do it the second time. Like riding a bicycle, you never forget.

By praying through a passage of Scripture, you'll find yourself praying about most of "the same old things," but in brand new ways. You'll also find yourself praying about things you would never think to pray about. But it gets even better than that, because the words you use when you pray the Bible are not just fresh, new phrases you haven't used in prayer before. Praying from the Word of God means your prayers include inspired words. As Joni Eareckson Tada explains:

*I have learned to . . . Season my prayers with the word of God. It's a way of talking to God in his language—speaking his dialect, using his vernacular, employing his idioms . . . This is not a matter simply of divine vocabulary. It's a matter of power. When we bring God's word directly into our praying, we are bringing God's power into our praying. Hebrews 4:12 declares, "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword." God's word is living, and so it infuses our prayers with life and vitality.*

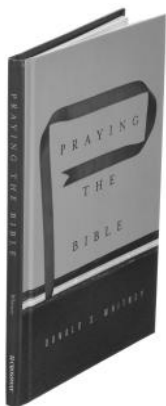
There is a supernatural quality to the words of Scripture that you pray. Jesus said, “the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life” (John 6:63). When you pray the Bible, you aren’t just praying ordinary words, you are praying words of spirit and life.

## Practice

Choose one psalm from the Book of Psalms. it could be one of your favorite psalms or a well-known psalm (such as Psalm 23; 27; 31; 37; 42; 66; 103; or 139). After choosing a psalm, I’d like you to try praying through the psalm for at least seven minutes. It doesn’t matter whether you sit, kneel, or walk as you pray.

Check the time—use a time if possible so you won’t be distracted by looking at the time—and begin.

## Additional Resources



### ***Praying the Bible*** by Donald S. Whitney

This book outlines easy-to-grasp method that has the power to transform our prayer life: praying the words of Scripture. Simple, yet profound.

*Praying the Bible* will prove invaluable as you seek to commune with your heavenly Father in prayer each and every day.

Available at [ChristianBook.com](http://ChristianBook.com) for only \$5.00  
(64% off retail price of \$13.99)  
(less than half the price of [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com))

### **Online Resources:**

[Five-Part Video Teaching of \*Praying the Bible\*](#)

[\*Praying the Bible\* Teaching Notes:](#)

(Follow this digital link or search “Praying the Bible Donald Whitney PDF”)



BibleGateway.com has a [List of Resources](#) for Praying Scripture.

## Appendix 6:

# PRAYING WORSHIP SONGS

### **“Take My Life and Let It Be”** - Frances R. Havergal

Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee.  
Take my moments and my days; let them flow in ceaseless praise.  
Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of thy love.  
Take my feet and let them be swift and beautiful for thee.  
Take my voice and let me sing always, only, for my King.  
Take my lips and let them be filled with messages from thee.  
Take my silver and my gold; not a mite would I withhold.  
Take my moments and my days, let them flow in ceaseless praise.  
Take my will and make it thine; it shall be no longer mine.  
Take my heart it is thine own; it shall be thy royal throne.  
Take my love; my Lord, I pour at thy feet its treasure store.  
Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for thee.

### **“Lord from Sorrows Deep I Call”** - Matt Boswell & Matt Papa

Lord, from sorrows deep I call when my hope is shaken;  
Torn and ruined from the fall, hear my desperation.  
For so long I've pled and prayed, "God come to my rescue!"  
Even so, the thorn remains; still my heart will praise You.  
Storms within my troubled soul; questions without answers;  
On my faith these billows roll; God, be now my shelter.  
Why are you cast down my soul? Hope in Him who saves you.  
When the fires have all grown cold, cause this heart to praise You.  
And, oh, my soul, put your hope in God  
My help, my Rock, I will praise Him  
Sing, oh, sing through the raging storm  
You're still my God my salvation.

**“What a Friend We Have in Jesus”** - Joseph M. Scriven

What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear;  
What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer.

Oh, what peace we often forfeit; oh, what needless pain we bear;  
All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.

**“Build My Life”** - Pat Barrett

Worthy of every song we could ever sing;  
Worthy of all the praise we could ever bring;  
Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe, we live for you;

Jesus, the name above every other name;  
Jesus, the only one who could save;  
Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe, we live for you;

Holy, there is no one like you; there is none besides you;  
Open up my eyes in wonder, and show me who you are and fill me  
With your heart, and lead me in your love to those around me.

**“I Need Thee Every Hour”** - Annie S. Hawks

I need Thee every hour most gracious Lord;  
No tender voice like Thine can peace afford.

I need Thee, O I need Thee, every hour I need Thee;  
O bless me now, my Savior, I come to Thee.

I need Thee every hour, stay Thou nearby;  
Temptations lose their power when Thou art nigh.

I need Thee, O I need Thee, every hour I need Thee  
O bless me now, my Savior, I come to Thee.

I need Thee every hour in joy or pain  
Come quickly and abide or life is vain.



**“Speak, O Lord”** - Stuart Townend

Speak O Lord, as we come to You to receive the food of  
Your Holy Word.  
Take Your truth, plant it deep in us; shape and fashion us  
in Your likeness,  
That the Light of Christ might be seen today in our acts of  
love and our deeds of faith.  
Speak O Lord, and fulfill in us all Your purposes for Your glory.  
Teach us Lord full obedience, holy reverence, true humility;  
Test our thoughts and our attitudes in the radiance of Your purity.  
Cause our faith to rise; cause our eyes to see Your majestic love  
and authority.  
Words of pow'r that can never fail—Let their truth prevail  
over unbelief.  
Speak, O Lord, and renew our minds; help us grasp the heights  
of Your plans for us—  
Truths unchanged from the dawn of time that will echo down  
through eternity.  
And by grace we'll stand on Your promises, and by faith we'll  
walk as You walk with us.  
Speak, O Lord, till Your church is built and the earth is filled  
with Your glory.

**“Have Thine Own Way Lord”** - Adelaide A. Pollard

Have thine own way, Lord! Have thine own way!  
Thou art the potter, I am the clay.  
Mold me and make me after thy will,  
While I am waiting, yielded and still.  
Have thine own way, Lord! Have thine own way!  
Search me and try me, Master today!  
Whiter than snow, Lord, wash me just now,  
As in thy presence humbly I bow.

## Appendix 7:

# TEMPLE'S DISCIPLESHIP PATHWAY

Here is a brief outline of the discipleship studies that are available here at Temple. Each Discipleship Path is a nine week study—with three weeks focused on each of the topics. These studies are available online or on paper—whatever you prefer. Contact Pastor Wade for more information about getting started on the discipleship journey today!



### **DISCIPLESHIP PATH ONE**

- Assurance of Life in Christ
- Prayer and the Christian Life
- Faith and the Christian Life

### **DISCIPLESHIP PATH TWO**

- The Bible and the Christian Life
- Bible Study and the Christian Life
- God's Will and the Christian Life

### **DISCIPLESHIP PATH THREE**

- Lordship and the Christian Life
- Integrity and the Christian Life
- Holiness and the Christian Life

### **DISCIPLESHIP PATH FOUR**

- Relationships and the Christian Life
- Forgiveness and the Christian Life
- Family and the Christian Life

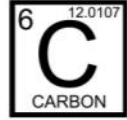
### **DISCIPLESHIP PATH FIVE**

- Personal Worship and the Christian Life
- Public Worship and the Christian Life
- Stewardship and the Christian Life

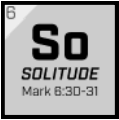
## Appendix 8:

# PRACTICE OF SILENCE & SOLITUDE

If pressed to pinpoint a single element that is the most important element for the existence of life on our planet, scientists would single out the sixth element—Carbon. Carbon is the main element in organic compounds, so carbon is essential to life on Earth. Without carbon, life as we know it could not exist.



Likewise, the sixth essential element of life in Christ is the most important element for our spiritual lives. Without this element compounded with other essential elements, we will not be able to grow and mature in our spiritual walks. What is this element that holds all the others together? That element is **solitude**.



*Solitude is a place. It is a place in time that is set apart for God and God alone, a time when we unplug and withdraw from the noise of interpersonal interactions, from the noise, busyness and constant stimulation associated with life in the company of others. Solitude can also be associated with a physical place that has been set apart for times alone with God, a place that is not cluttered with work, noise, technology, other relationships, or any of those things that call us back into doing mode. Most important, solitude is a place inside myself where God's Spirit and my spirit dwell together in union.*

Ruth Haley Barton, *Sacred Rhythms*

Silence and solitude go hand-in-hand. In the frenetic culture that we live in today, it is impossible to experience silence without solitude. And considering the chaos that is ongoing in our minds, real solitude is impossible without also experiencing silence. At this point in our study, we have examined five essential elements of life in Christ—prayer, Bible study, community, worship and service. The first two disciplines—prayer and Bible study—are inwardly focused. Community and service are outwardly focused. Worship can be both. But as we consider these disciplines that

focus on our inner being, we must acknowledge that they are most effective when practiced in silence and solitude.

“The first 1500 years of church history were characterized by the practice of *Lectio Divina* [or divine reading]. Since many people were illiterate and many that could read didn’t have Bibles, *lectio divina* offered a way of attending to Scripture as it was read in church, with an ear to hearing a word from God... [This type of] reading of Scripture is rooted in the assurance that every part of the biblical story—letters, parables, Gospels, Prophets, history—is inspired and can give voice to God’s particular word to us.”

Adele Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*

By this point in time, you are well-acquainted with SOAP journaling and the inductive Bible study process (observation, interpretation and application). The practice of *lectio divina* builds on these concepts and carries it one step further. As Paul explained to Timothy, it is essential that we learn to rightly handle the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15); but **unless we internalize that truth, we are only studying for information rather than transformation.**

*When we engage the Scriptures for spiritual transformation, we make it our top priority to listen to God relationally rather than seeking only to learn more about God cognitively... Like the little boy Samuel, we approach the Scripture with utter openness and availability to God: “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening” (1 Samuel 3:9).*

Ruth Haley Barton, *Sacred Rhythms*

So beyond asking the inductive questions of: *What does it say? What does it mean? And what does it mean to me?*—the *lectio divina* process encourages you to ask questions like:

- *How do I feel about what I’ve read?*
- *Is there something there that really resonates with me?*
- *Is there something there that I am struggling with or resisting?*
- *Why do I feel this way?*
- *Is this God trying to address an issue in my spiritual walk?*

In a nutshell, *lectio divina* is a process of balancing a steady diet of God’s Word with silent reflection to allow His word to speak to my heart. We cannot forget Hebrews 4:12—*“For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”* Nor can we forget that Scripture has commanded us to love God *“with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind”* (Matthew 22:37). Notice that we are to love Him with our heart and soul first—and then with all of our mind!

## **BEYOND INDUCTIVE STUDY – BALANCING SILENCE AND THE WORD**

People do not know how to deal with silence! This is evidenced by the fact that there are 460 results for “noise machines” on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). These are machines that are supposed to relax you and help you sleep. Since silence is a foreign concept to most of us, I believe it is necessary to explain a method to help block out the world’s noise.

The method is simply a focused breathing technique. There are many different ways of doing this. For simplicity, I will just share the way that works best for me. Just follow these easy steps:

**Step 1:** Close your eyes and sit comfortably.

**Step 2:** Breathe in deeply through your nose for 4 seconds.

**Step 3:** Hold your breath for 4 seconds.

**Step 4:** Breathe out through your mouth for 8-10 seconds.

**Step 5:** Repeat.

In order to get your mind focused on spending time with the Lord, I would encourage you to pray Scripture as you are going through this process. Some excellent options include: Joshua 1:8a; Psalm 119:18; Luke 17:13; Colossians 1:9b; and many more! I utilize the passage from Psalm 119 most often as I am practicing focused breathing as a way to prepare my heart for studying God’s Word.

I want to challenge you to give silence and solitude a try! It has the potential to transform your life through the power of the Holy Spirit. Check out **“Appendix 9: Lectio Divina”** to help you navigate the process.

## Appendix 9:

# LECTIO DIVINA

Here is a brief outline of the *lectio divina* process. As mentioned before, *lectio divina* is an attempt to balance silence and the Word. Before you begin, choose a passage of Scripture that you would like to focus on. The passage should not be more than 6-8 verses in length.

Once you have your Bible ready, begin with a time of silence. There is no specific timeframe here, but it should be long enough to clear your mind of the “world’s noise” so you can focus on your time with God. Each time you read your passage, read it aloud and read it slowly so that the Holy Spirit has time to speak to your heart in the process. You will need a journal to be able to record the things that God reveals to you through this process. God bless you as you seek Him!

### **Silence**

Focused breathing while praying Psalm 119:18.

### **First Reading – Read (*Lectio*)**

Looking for God’s Word for me from His Word.

### **Silence**

Focused breathing while thinking about God’s word for me.

### **Second Reading – Reflect (*Meditatio*)**

Why is this God’s Word for me today?

### **Silence**

### **Third Reading – Respond (*Oratio*)**

How will I respond to God’s Word for me today?

### **Silence**

### **Fourth Reading – Rest (*Contemplatio*) & Resolve (*Incarnatio*)**

Resolving to abide in and obey His Word for me today.



When it comes to personal, spiritual growth, there are many elements that a believer may use to help him in his relationship with God. Each of these elements fall into one (or more) categories—knowing, abiding, and obeying. The growing Christian life requires that we find a balance between all three. An imbalance can cause problems on multiple levels:

**Knowing + Obeying - Abiding = Legalist**  
**Obeying + Abiding - Knowing = Heretic**  
**Abiding + Knowing - Obeying = Hypocrite**

Our goal in this series of studies will be to equip you to live a spiritual life that is growing and balanced. "So let us stop going over the basic teachings about Christ again and again. Let us go on instead and become mature in our understanding." (Heb 6:1 NLT).

