



LISTENING THROUGH LENT

(((A STUDY ON PRAYER)))

PRAYER PATTERNS

ACTS

Adoration – Praise!

Confession – I’m sorry

Thanksgiving – Thank you for blessings

Supplication – Please...

BREATH PRAYER

“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner,”

“Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me,”

“Jesus, mercy.”



LISTENING THROUGH LENT

(((A STUDY ON PRAYER)))

The BLESSing Prayer

B Body—pray for health, protection, strength, fitness

“Seek first God’s kingdom and righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” (Matthew 6:33)

Lord, may _____ seek your kingdom first and discover that food, clothing, health, and protection are given to them as well.

L Labor—pray for a good job, income, financial security

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.” (Colossians 3:23-24)

Lord, I pray that _____ will be diligent in work with a sense that they are serving you in everything they do, aware of the inheritance of a full life forever that will come from you.

E Emotional—pray for joy, peace, patience, self-control

“You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you.” (Isaiah 26:3)

Lord, give _____ the ability to keep their focus on you and to always know that you are ready to meet all their needs and to give them your peace.

S Social—pray for marriage, family, friends, love, forgiveness

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” (Ephesians 4:32)

Lord, help _____ to be as kind, compassionate, and forgiving to others as you are to them. Give them a network of supportive friends and many good relationships.

S Spiritual—pray for salvation, spiritual growth, grace, hope

“Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.” (Psalm 34:8)

Lord, I pray that _____ will understand how good you are and will take refuge in you. May they grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.



LISTENING THROUGH LENT

(((A STUDY ON PRAYER)))

The BLESS acronym is an easy way to remember five ways to intercede for others. Use this pattern to pray for family members, friends, neighbors, and coworkers.

Copied from *Love to Pray—A 40-Day Devotional For Deepening Your Prayer Life* by Alvin Vanderriend

Prayer Thoughts

For God alone my soul waits in silence. ... **Psalm 62:5**

There is nothing more important in any day than developing our friendship with God. – **Robert Stackel**

If we believe in prayer, we pray. If we do not believe in it, we do not pray. **Stanley Plunkett**

Listener: I don't hear anything.

A Voice: No. You are in too great a hurry.

Listener: All right. I will listen ...I am listening...

A Voice: No. You are talking. Keep quiet.

Listener: I am keeping quiet now...Speak, Lord...

A Voice: You are talking again ...Listen!

Listener: My soul, be thou silent unto God!

You must at all costs have a quiet time. Give up work if need be. Your influence finally depends upon your own firsthand knowledge of the unseen world, and on your experience of prayer. Love and sympathy and tact and insight are born of prayer. **Forbes Robinson**

The prayer of the morning will determine the day. Wasted time, which we are ashamed of, temptations that beset us, weakness and listlessness in our work, disorder and indiscipline in our thinking and our relations with other people very frequently have their cause in neglect of the morning prayer. **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

For Christians the beginning of the day should not be burdened and oppressed with besetting concerns for the day's work. At the threshold of the new day stands the Lord who made it. All the darkness and distraction of the dreams of night retreat before the clear light of Jesus Christ and his wakening Word. All unrest, all impurity, all care and anxiety flee before him. Therefore, at the beginning of the day let all distraction and empty talk be silenced and let the first thought and the first word belong to him to whom our whole life belongs. "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." (Ephesians 5:14) **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

"The moments of falling asleep and awakening are beautiful if they are filled with prayer."

Frank C. Lauback

The success of the work [of contemplation] much depends upon the frame of your heart....Get your heart as clear from the world as you can. Wholly lay by the thoughts of your business, troubles, enjoyments, and everything that may take up any room in your soul. Get it as empty as you possibly can, that it may be the more capable of being filled with God....There is no trifling with holy things. **Richard Baxter**



LISTENING THROUGH LENT

(((A STUDY ON PRAYER)))

With God one does not arrive at a fixed position; rather, one walks along a way. One moves ahead or one is not with God. God knows the whole way; we only know the know the next step and the final goal.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Prayer continues in the desire of the heart, though the understanding be employed on outward things.

John Wesley

Whether we think of; or speak to, God, whether we act or suffer for God, all is prayer, when we have no other object than God's love and the desire of pleasing God. **John Wesley**

We all pray whether we think of it as praying or not. The odd silence we fall into when something very beautiful is happening, or something very good or very bad. The "Ah-h-h-h!" that sometimes floats up out of us as out of a Fourth of July crowd when the skyrocket bursts over the water. The stammer of pain at somebody else's pain. The stammer of joy at somebody else's joy. Whatever words or sounds we use for sighing with over our own lives. These are all prayers in their way. These are all spoken not just to ourselves, but to something even more familiar than ourselves and even more strange than the world.

According to Jesus, by far the most important thing about praying is to keep at it. The images he uses to explain this are all rather comic, as though he thought it was rather comic to have to explain it at all. He says God is like a friend you go to borrow bread from at midnight. The friend tells you in effect to drop dead, but you go on knocking anyway until finally he gives you what you want so he can go back to bed again (Luke 11:5-8). Or God is like a crooked judge who refuses to hear the case of a certain poor widow, presumably because he knows there's nothing much in it for him. But she keeps on hounding him until finally he hears her case just to get her out of his hair (Luke 18:1-8). Even a stinker, Jesus says, won't give his own child a black eye when the child asks for peanut butter and jelly, so how all the more will God when *his* children... (Matthew 7:9-11)?

Be importunate, Jesus says, not, one assumes, because you have to beat a path to God's door before God will open it, but because until you beat the path maybe there's no way of getting to your door. "Ravish my heart," John Donne wrote. But God will not usually ravish. He will only court. Whatever else it may or may not be, prayer is at least talking to yourself, and that's in itself not always a bad idea.

Talk to yourself about your own life, about what you've done and what you've failed to do, and about who you are and who you wish you were and who the people you love are and the people you don't love too. Talk to yourself about what matters most to you, because if you don't, you may forget what matters most to you.

Even if you don't believe anybody's listening, at least you'll be listening.

Believe Somebody is listening. Believe in miracles. That's what Jesus told the father who asked him to heal his epileptic son. Jesus said, "All things are possible to him who believes." And the father spoke for all of us when he answered, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:14-29).

What about when the boy is not healed? When, listened to or not listened to, the prayer goes unanswered? Who knows? Just keep praying, Jesus says. Remember the sleepy friend, the crooked judge. Even if the boy dies, keep on beating the path to God's door, because the one thing you can be sure of is that, down the path you beat with even your most half-cocked and halting prayer, the God you call upon will finally come.

Frederick Buechner in *Wishful Thinking*



LISTENING THROUGH LENT

(((A STUDY ON PRAYER)))

Christian meditation is an attempt to empty the mind in order to fill it.

Richard Foster

Prayer is the intensification of life. Since life does not come to us in neat categories, neither does prayer. The Psalms teach us to pray by immersing us in the stream of life as it comes to us, wet and wild.

Eugene Peterson

“Prayer is language that is answeringly attentive to God.” Eugene Peterson

Be silent.
Be still.
Alone. Empty
before your God.
Say nothing.
Ask nothing.

Be silent.
Be still.
Let your God
look upon you.
That is all.
God knows.
God understands.
God loves you with
an enormous love.
God only want to
look upon you
with His love.
Quiet.
Still.
Be.

Let your God—
love you.

Edwina Gately

“...More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friends?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.” **Alfred Lord Tennyson**