

God Is Near

Today's Focus: God is Near

As we begin, let's start with "aligning" our hearts with God. When we walk through difficulty and especially a crisis, our hearts tend to wander. We get "off track" because our minds, emotions and circumstances begin to direct our steps. We can easily fall into a trap of believing that we need to take control and figure out solutions. We can begin to isolate from God by not taking our hearts to Him. We may still be praying or even praying more, but our hearts are "not aligned" (positioned in a correct way; in agreement) with God. As God's children, we need our hearts to align or agree with what God says in order to walk through difficulty with His hope and His peace.

Prayers of Rejoicing

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4)

Scripture tells us to "rejoice in the Lord always." To rejoice means to be glad, full of joy. We can rejoice in the Lord as we walk through difficulty because the Lord is unchanging.

Prayer: Let's rejoice in the Lord for who He is! Lord, we rejoice in you because you are _____ (fill in the blank with an attribute about God or something that you love about God).

Prayers of Thanksgiving

"Let your graciousness be known to everyone. The Lord is near." (Philippians 4:5)

The Amplified Bible Version says, "Let your gentle spirit (your graciousness, unselfishness, mercy, tolerance, and patience) be known to all people. The Lord is near."

Part of aligning our hearts with God is receiving and walking in the truth that God is near to us. We are never alone. As our hearts agree with the truth of God's nearness, then we can walk through difficulty and His graciousness is evident to us and to others.

Let's ask God to help us believe and trust that He is near us. His Spirit lives in us and we are never alone.

Prayer: Lord, thank you that you are near us in _____ (fill in the blank with something in your life or family where you need to believe and trust that God is near).



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Prayers for Peace

Because God is near and He is our Faithful Father, the Almighty God and loves us, we can trust Him at all times! Scripture tells us in Philippians 4:6-7, ***“Don’t worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”***

In order to “align” our hearts with God and agree with what Scripture says instead of what our emotions, thoughts or circumstances dictate, we need to 1) acknowledge what we are worried about, 2) give our worries to God, 3) receive God’s peace.

Prayer: Let’s begin with acknowledging our worries. God, we are worried about _____ (fill in the blank with whatever you are worried about) and give this to you. We leave this worry in your hands and surrender it to you.

Prayer: God, we need your peace. Jesus, you are the Prince of Peace. Help us receive your peace.

Take a moment to be silent before God and receive His peace. You may want to open your hands as an outward expression of receiving.

Closing Prayer:

Thank God for His peace. Ask each person in your group to simply say aloud, “God, thank you for your peace.”

EXTRA: Time Alone with God

It is essential that we spend time alone with God in prayer when we walk through trials, pain and crisis. Worry is a normal response to trials, pain and crisis. Taking time to write down our worries, fears, disappointments and losses and then telling God how we feel leads to healing and freedom. God loves you and He wants to take your worries and give you His peace – peace that will guard your heart and mind through the power of Christ Jesus. Take extra time with God this week by asking Him to reveal your worries, your pain, your losses. Invite God to heal your heart, comfort you and give you His hope and His peace.



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