



Sold Out

"I have decided to follow Jesus, no turning back, no turning back."

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**A quarterly journal of tools you can use
for discipleship & spiritual formation**

Growth Markers

Perhaps you've heard the prayer,

Dear Lord,

So far today I've done all right.

I haven't gossiped, cursed, or lost my temper.

I haven't been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish or over indulgent. I'm really glad about these things.

But, in a few minutes Lord,

I am going to get out of bed, and from then on, I'm probably going to need a lot more help.

*Thank You,
In Jesus' Name
AMEN*

How true that seems some mornings! Too often our feet touch the floor before we take a moment to commune with our Saviour.

Psalm 5:3 gives great encouragement for taking up this practice.

"In the morning You hear my voice, O Lord; in the morning I prepare [a prayer, a sacrifice] for You and watch and wait [for You to speak to my heart]."

If we take a moment to unpack this one tiny verse from Scripture, there is evidence that:

- From the moment we're awake, God hears us.



Make Your Morning a Prayerful One

- The initiative to bring something of ourselves to God must come from us.
- We can have complete confidence and expectation that God will speak to our hearts.

So the next time you're about to hit the floor grumbling (I mean, running!), why not pray first? Then eagerly watch and wait to see how God will answer! (try writing your prayers and their answers down to keep a record-this can be powerful!)

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The Mystery in a Nutshell

Colossians 1:26-28 in The Message says,

"God wanted everyone, not just Jews, to know this rich and glorious secret inside and out, regardless of their background, regardless of their religious standing. The mystery in a nutshell is just this: Christ is in you, so therefore you can look

forward to sharing in God's glory. It's that simple. That is the substance of our Message. We preach Christ, warning people not to add to the Message. We teach in a spirit of profound common sense so that we can bring each person to maturity. To be mature is to be basic. Christ! No more, no less."

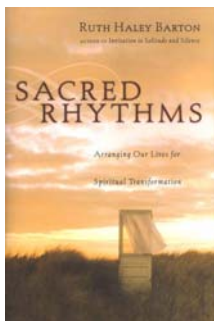
Even if you feel less than mature some days, remember that a work in progress is a very good thing!

Stay tuned to this space to learn more about what it means for your life as a believer in Christ to experience "spiritual formation" and therefore, maturity in Christ.

Special points of interest:

- ♦ A new book about spiritual disciplines
- ♦ A website to help you pray online
- ♦ An opportunity to enlarge your territory by engaging in mission

Book



*Sacred Rhythms:
Arranging Our
Lives for Spiritual
Transformation*

For the most part, people today do very well with staying busy and feeling rushed much of the time.

What we perhaps are less skilled at is the art of staying still. Yet for Christians, without stillness, solitude and

attention to Sabbath, our experience with the Lord is impoverished.

If the idea of learning more about prayer, solitude, Sabbath, self-examination and more appeal to you, then you will find deep refreshment in this book by spiritual director Ruth Haley Barton.

The approach she takes in this book is both informative and practical. After teaching the principles of each spiritual discipline, Barton invites the reader to put it into practice and gives suggestions. Pick up a copy of this book and learn how enriching it can be to put aside busyness and embrace the quiet.

The Fruits of Holiness

Teach me, O God, so to use all the circumstances of my life today that they may bring forth in me the fruits of holiness rather than the fruits of sin...

Let me use disappointment as material for patience.

Let me use success as material for thankfulness.

Let me use trouble as material for perseverance.

Let me use danger as material for courage.

Let me use reproach as material for longsuffering.

Let me use praise as material for humility.

Let me use pleasures as material for temperance.

Let me use pain as material for endurance.

*John Baillie (1886-1960),
A Diary of Private Prayer*

Effective Prayer & Bible Reading

Prayer: A great and interesting way to pray is to follow this website's direction to take 10 minutes out of each day and engage in meditative reflection and prayer. Find it at: www.sacredspace.ie

If you visit www.rejesus.org, you can download articles on prayer topics such as: "How to Pray", "How to Pray for Wholeness", "How to Pray for Direction".

Bible Reading: Major Andrew Bale, a Salvation Army officer serving in England writes in his blog: beyondthebrook.blogspot.com

Not Just a Children's Song

"Read your Bible, pray every day, and you'll grow, grow, grow."

about a Bible reading guide for Salvationists originally issued by General William Booth called "Salvation Soldier Guide" (see April 26, 2008 entry).

A link to this Bible reading guide can be found at: <http://salvationarmoury.blogspot.com>

You'll find readings from both the Old and New Testaments, intended to be read both morning and evening every day of the year.

Audio Bible: If you're a commuter, why not listen to the Bible while you travel to and from work? A couple you could try are:

1. *Inspired by the Bible Experience: The Complete Bible on Audio CD*, Zondervan (ISBN-10: 0310926300)
2. *The Word Becomes Flesh: The Complete NCV New Testament on CD* (www.christianbook.com)

Get Engaged in Mission

We are aware more and more how huge the needs in our world are, on every level. If God is moving your heart to respond and help, here are some links you may find useful.

If you want to be a light to the Buddhist world, find out how at: www.onebillionwait.com

If you would like a 30 day prayer focus for Muslim people that corresponds to their observance of Ramadan, you can order it at: www.30daysprayer.com/muslim

If you can volunteer to help build homes for those who need them, contact Habitat for Humanity at: www.habitat.ca

If you would like to know more about the work of missionaries and unreached tribal people, visit New Tribes Mission at: www.ntm.org

1 out of 3 people haven't yet heard about Jesus. Find out how they are being reached for Christ at: www.calebproject.org. Click on News and then Free Resources.

Donate Food for Free!

www.freerice.com

The UN World Food Program (WFP) has created a website devoted to vocabulary building! For every correct answer, 10 grains of rice are donated. How? Corporate banners show up on the screen for every correct answer, and the money generated from the banners helps pay for the rice.



Build your word-power and donate free food to someone who needs it!

From the website: *"So by playing, you generate the money that pays for the rice donated to hungry people...consider that in its first five months, FreeRice generated enough rice to feed more than one million people."*

It's a win-win game—why not try it today?

Like to know another way to get involved in eradicating world hunger?

Visit: **www.thehungersite.com.**

My first visit and click on the "Click here to give—it's FREE" button told me I'd "given the value of 1.1 cups of food to the hungry." From the website: *"On average, over 220,000 individuals from around the world visit the site each day to click the button. To date, more than 300 million visitors have given more than 500 million cups of staple food."* You can help further by shopping for fair-trade & handmade items at their store.

Have a Heart for the Headlines

What does it do to you to read and see television or newspaper reports of catastrophes and tragedies that rock our world?

If you have even a modicum of concern for global events, your heart cannot help but be moved by things that are affecting people by the millions.

Are there ways to effectively engage in prayer for those whose lives are

impoverished or even destroyed by these kind of events?

Are there even more practical responses that as disciples of Jesus Christ, we should consider?

For example, at www.salvationist.ca, a notice says that The Salvation Army in Canada & Bermuda has committed \$50,000 in aid to the victims of the May 2008 cyclone in Myanmar.

"Let my heart be broken with the things that break the heart of God."

Bob Pierce
founder of World Vision

The Army will accept donations to add to that amount.

Find out what you or your group can do and then act on it!

Because I am a Disciple of Jesus Christ

- I am a person who has trusted Jesus Christ as Saviour and is seeking to obey Him as Lord.
- I am basically a learner, but a learner with this difference; I learn not only by studying God's Word, but also by obeying what I've been taught.
- I am a person who learns by doing.
- I am an apprentice of Jesus Christ. I live with my Master, I listen to my master, and I seek to learn from Him, and then put that learning into practice.
- I am a person who knows that discipleship is a day to day experience, and that no disciple ever arrives at perfection in this life.
- I am a person who understands that the experiences of life become a school of faith in which Christ teaches me new lessons and guides me into new challenges and victories.

Warren Wiersbe, *The Meaning of Discipleship in Steps of Faith: The NIV New Testament for Growing Christians*, 1984.

The Salvation Army THQ
2 Overlea Blvd.
Toronto, ON M4H 1P4

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We would love to hear from
you! If you have ideas for future
newsletters or submission
ideas, please let us know.

The song "*I Have Decided to
Follow Jesus*" inspired the title
for this newsletter. To see a
"sold out" version of this song,
listen to Leeland Moring's
version at: www.youtube.com

Small Group Support

If you lead small groups, or participate in one, first of all, good on you! You're investing in something with secure dividends that offers eternal rewards—there's no better deal out there!

Christianity Today magazine online has a website that offers some great insights for small group enthusiasts. If you visit:
www.buildingsmallgroups.com, you'll find tips, articles, and even free Bible studies you can download (look under "Free", then "Bible Studies". There are lots of studies you can purchase as well, and they keep them quite affordable (look under "Shopping", then "Bible Studies").

Recommended Study:

BibleSense by Group Publishing. This series offers DVD teaching, and Bible interaction through activities, group projects and more for 6 New Testament books: Philippians, 1 Peter, 1 John, Galatians, Ephesians and James.

Go to: www.groupcanada.ca, click on "Adult Small Groups", and type BibleSense into the Search button.

Ideas for Setting Up Prayer Room Stations

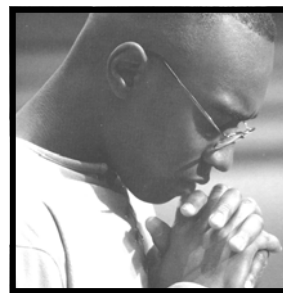
Often prayer rooms are centered around a theme, and it can help your thinking and planning to consider what elements might go well together for participants using a prayer room. For example, if you took the theme of "life" for your prayer stations, you could focus on:

- **The gift of life.** Use Psalm 139:13-16 as your focus. Include a symbol such as a partially knitted garment to help people reflect on how God "knit us together in our mother's womb." Offer opportunity to give thanks for this gift in some tangible way—such as a written prayer attached to a clothesline.
- **The journey of life.** For a visual symbol and take-away reminder, provide cross sections of a tree, about 3" in diameter with a hole drilled in

the top. Instruct participants to take a pen and write on the tree ring words that describe significant points of his or her spiritual journey. In the act of writing and remembering, they can thank God for his presence in those times.

- **Anxieties of Life.** Have Matthew 6:25-34 written out for people to meditate on. Provide a 2' length of string or wool and invite participants to put a loose knot in the string for each anxiety or burden they are experiencing. Then invite them to spend time in prayer, and as they feel each knot in the string, to untie it and understand that the burdens are not theirs to carry, but the Lord's—reference Matthew 11:28-30.

- **Eternal Life.** Invite participants to reflect on Romans 6:15-23 (MSG) where it says in verse 23, "Work hard for sin your whole life and your pension is death. But God's gift is real life, eternal life, delivered by Jesus, our Master." To express thanks for this gift, suggest that participants sign a "spiritual birth certificate" with the promise "...the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."



*You are forgiving and good, O
Lord, abounding in love to all
who call to you. Hear my prayer,
O LORD; listen to my cry for
mercy. In the day of my trouble I
will call to you, for you will
answer me.*

Psalms 86:5-7, NIV