

# Parkway Bible Church - Prayer and Fasting Guide

*\*This guide is designed to be a resource with a variety of options for you to use however much or little you desire and whatever is best for you to intentionally connect with God. We recommend doing your best to carve out some intentional times and create space to read, reflect, pray, and journal. Remember: The goal is not to complete all the options listed below, but to provide ideas of how you can personally connect your heart and mind to God during this time or in the future.*

As we continue to carry out the mission and vision God has given us, we invite you to participate in the spiritual discipline of prayer and fasting as we declare our dependence on God. We recognizing prayer is the fuel to accomplish all God has called us to. Our staff will be setting aside our task lists and calendars to disconnect so we can connect more deeply with God and seek Him through these spiritual practices.

## How To Participate

- Use the following prayer and fasting guide from your home or wherever you choose to seek God and spend time deepening your relationship with Him

## Fasting Overview

Biblical fasting is the practice of voluntarily abstaining from food for a limited time for the purpose of expressing to God one's desires, dependence, and/or dedication. Though Jesus never commanded his followers to fast, he himself fasted and assumed his followers would follow His example (Matthew 6:16, Mark 2:18-22). Two primary reasons for fasting include to petition God intensely and to pursue God intimately. During this time, we encourage you to prayerfully determine what level of fasting you believe God is calling you to and follow that plan. A common practice when fasting is to replace your mealtimes with extended time with God. In moments of feeling hungry, weak, or tired, pause and declare your dependence and need for God and for Him to satisfy you.

## Fasting Precautions

Before fasting, it is good to consult your physician where there may be implications for any existing health conditions. For example, those on prescription medicines or with chronic illnesses like diabetes should seek the advice of their doctor. However, everyone should expect some physical discomfort while fasting. Common sense and wisdom should also be exercised regarding how to break a fast, especially extended fasts. If fasting from food is not wise for you, we encourage you to engage with this practice by sacrificing something during your time. Identify something to go without that will free you from distraction and create more time in your day to pray and seek God.

## Tips

- **Embrace Discomfort** - This experience has a powerful potential for life-change, but it won't always be comfortable.
- **Start Small** - Start where you are, not where you feel like you "should" be. If a full day of fasting is too much for your body or soul, start smaller. Possibly try skipping breakfast and break the fast at lunch or 3 p.m. or skip a different meal. The smaller the start, the better your chance of sticking to it and growing over time.
- **Don't Beat Yourself Up** - If things don't go as planned, don't beat yourself up.
- **For Families with Small Kids** - Yes, your kids will interrupt your time of reading and reflection. Just do what you can, as best you can. The idea is growth, not perfection, in your ability to listen to and hear from God.
- **For Families with Big Kids** - Let your kids know what you're doing and why. Consider inviting them into this process with you. Doing this as a couple or a family will have a powerful impact on the time you have to connect with one another.
- **Limit Distractions** - You might consider using a paper Bible, journal, and pen as well as finding a location where you can spend time with God alone and away from distractions. Print this guide out so you can disconnect from technology which can easily distract and detract us from our time of worship and conversation with God. Consider silencing your phone and electronics.

Scan the QR code below for an additional resource: **7 Basic Steps to Successful Fasting and Prayer by Dr. Bill Bright**



<https://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/spiritual-growth/fasting/7-steps-to-fasting.html>

## **LIST OF OPTIONAL IDEAS BELOW**

### **OPTION 1: PRAYER AND REFLECTION IN ISAIAH 40:9-31 – THE GREATNESS OF GOD**

*Pray for God to speak to you and draw you closer to Him as you reflect on His Word.*

*Begin by slowly reading Isaiah 40:9-31*

#### **Read v. 9**

- We have good news to share. How am I helping people encounter the real living God?
- What prevents me from proclaiming God to the world?

#### **Read v. 10-11**

- God is both King and Shepherd. How does this impact your relationship with God?
- Take a moment to read Psalm 8. What encourages you about this passage of Scripture?

#### **Read v. 12-14**

- What happens when we miss these truths about God?
- Where else do you sometimes look for truth? Why?
- Why do we sometimes question God?

#### **Read v. 15-26**

- What false idols do you find yourself chasing after or looking to at times?
- What is the problem with false idols?
- What is it that eclipses your focus from God? How can you surrender that to God?

#### **Read v. 27**

- Have you ever felt disconnected from God or that He isn't there or listening?
- We all can feel that way at times; however, those are often symptoms of a deeper issue. What do you believe a deeper issue could be when we feel this way?

#### **Read v. 28-31**

- How are these truths encouraging to you?
- In times of stress or need, who/what/where do I turn to instead of God?

**Closing:** Take time to reflect on the greatness of God. Spend time praising Him, thanking Him, and crying out to Him.

### **OPTION 2: A.C.T.S. PRAYER**

*God is transcendent and bigger than anything we can comprehend, yet He is also an intimate father and friend who knows us and loves us more than any one person has and could. At times, we can believe and embrace that God is big and might feel unfit to be with Him. At other times, we make God small and come to Him like a vending machine who produces out solutions to our needs. The prayer method called ACTS helps us prioritize His bigness while allowing us to be deeply and intimately connected to Him in relationship and in bringing Him our requests.*

*Adore – Praise God for all that He is*

*Confess – Confess your sins and ask to be forgiven*

*Thank – Thank Him for everything He has done, is doing and will do in your life*

*Seek – Present your requests to God*

Adore – Praise God for all that He is - your Creator, your Sustainer and your Redeemer. Put things into perspective - remember who you are and who God is.

- Read: Psalm 19
- Pray: Spend several minutes in praise as you thank Him for who He is, reflecting on His character and names

Confess – Confess your sins and ask to be forgiven

- Read: 1 John 2:5-2:2, Psalm 51
- Pray: Spend several minutes confessing your sins to your loving Father

Thank – Thank Him for everything He has done, is doing and will do in your life

- Read: Psalm 95:1-7
- Pray: Stay in a state of prayer as you share with God the gratitude you feel for Him, who He is and what He has done out of love for you. Thank Him for the gifts in your life, answered prayers, and for His unending grace.

Seek – Present your requests to God

- Read: Philippians 4:5-7
- Pray: Spend a few minutes in silence as you allow God to meet you in this state of closeness. Open your hands and mind to what He might say to you and share what you are seeking from Him as you walk with Him.
  - Ask Him to speak to you and that His voice would break through any barriers preventing you from hearing Him.
  - Consider closing this time with Psalm 19:14: "May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer."

### **OPTION 3: SCRIPTURE EXPERIENCE – ROLE OF THE HIGH PRIEST**

*Begin this time by reading Hebrews 9:6-14. Pray for God to speak to you during your time with Him.*

- **Mediator between God & His people**

A mediator means someone who stands between two people and brings them together, a go-between in a dispute or a conflict. He must represent both parties. Even in our world today, sometimes a mediator is used as a part of or to de-escalate legal action. Have you ever mediated for two parties that can't see eye to eye? Have you ever had someone step in and mediate a situation for you?

*<Read James 4:1-4. Consider where in your life have you been in dispute or conflict with God. Meditate and journal on the weight of this disruption of perfectly created unity & intimacy>*

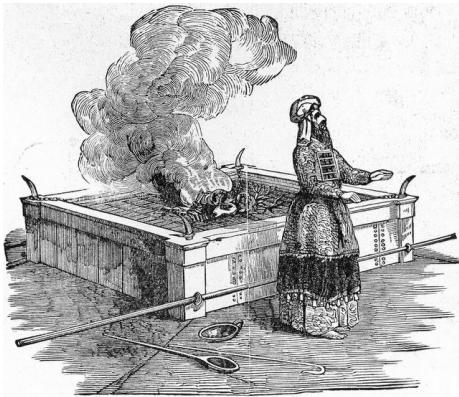
- **Offering sacrifices to honor God and atone for sin**

The High Priest made two basic kinds of offerings: gifts and sacrifices. Gifts included money, jewelry, or other valuables people gave to the Lord through the priests. They most often were grain (meal) offerings, a thanksgiving & dedication offering to God.

Blood sacrifices were for the **expiation** (the atonement, making right) of sins. They could not take away the sin capacity of men, but they were made for the forgiveness of particular sins. Consequently, they had to be continually repeated, day after day, year after year.

Animal sacrifices washed the people clean

Smearing & sprinkling of blood on the altar and on the people represented spiritual covering & protection from the consequences of sin, harkening back to the first Passover, where blood on the doorframes provided security from death. Both priests and those bringing sacrifices were ritually washed clean & sprinkled with blood as a sign of cleansing.



*<Consider the weight of your own sin, the heaviness that is caused by missing the mark of God's best for you and each of our rebellion against His righteousness. Confess your sin to God and contemplate the sacrifice that has been made on your behalf>*

- **The priests acted as bridge builders to God, ushering others into God's presence through sacrifices**

Men and women could not come directly into God's presence (c.f. Exodus 33:14-23), and God therefore appointed certain people as priests to be ushers. They opened the way to God as they offered sacrifices, day in and day out.

- The priest's job was never finished, requiring repetition all day, every day, year after year (c.f. Hebrews 10:11-14)  
The Levitical priests never sat down to rest. Their job was never done because the sacrifices they offered were never permanently effective. Sin would always remain a struggle for people, and so the priests' role was always essential in offering sacrifices. They had to be repeated over and over again.
- Priests had to be without blemish, presentable to God  
The person who approached the sanctuary as God's priest had to be as free from physical imperfection as the sacrificial animal that they offered. Physical normality and ceremonial holiness were closely associated here; the priests could be most effective in God's service only when they were in ordinary health and free from blemish. In all things God must be glorified, and His holiness is profaned by anything that is clearly less than perfect, whether it be sacrificial animal or a sacrificing priest.

*Leviticus 21:6 They must be holy to their God and must not profane the name of their God. Because they present the food offerings to the Lord, the food of their God, they are to be holy. (c.f. all of Ch. 21)*

*<Consider the tall task of mediating between sinful humanity and a righteous God in heaven. What a responsibility and challenge to be that representative! Meditate on the enormous responsibility that it must require to appease God's wrath, to represent your heart and soul to a righteous Judge, to petition for forgiveness for your sins, etc.>*

### **Qualifications for the High Priest**

*Hebrews 5:1 Every high priest is selected from among the people and is appointed to represent the people in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. 2 He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness. 3 This is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people. 4 And no one takes this honor on himself, but he receives it when called by God, just as Aaron was.*

#### **1. Taken from among mankind & appointed by God**

It was important for the high priest to be of the same nature as the people represented. Angels were not chosen to be priests, because they could not truly understand mankind's experience. Only a human could be subject to the temptations of man, could experience suffering like man, and thereby be able to minister to humankind in an understanding and merciful way.

They were appointed by God, so the priesthood was not an office any person could fill simply because of their own plans or ambitions. Being "God's man" or "God's woman" not only means faithful obedience to God...it is even more a calling and an appointment by God.

#### **2. Sympathetic with fellow people**

The high priest had to be completely involved in the human situation. He had to live among people as a human, to feel with them in their highs and lows, to be able to deal gently with them. He had to experience the extremes of human emotions, having sympathy toward those who ignorantly went astray, having the sensitivity to feel a little bit of what others were feeling.

*<Taking care of our own sins has never really been a possibility for men and women. Even in ancient Israel, it required such a very specific role, a narrow process for reconciliation between God and man. Meditate & journal, thanking God for providing the Way that you never could have provided for yourself>*

### **The Day of Atonement (still practiced today as "Yom Kippur")**

*Leviticus 16:29 "This is to be a lasting ordinance for you: On the tenth day of the seventh month you must deny yourselves and not do any work—whether native-born or a foreigner residing among you— 30 because on this day atonement will be made for you, to cleanse you. Then, before the Lord, you will be clean from all your sins. 31 It is a day of sabbath rest, and you must deny yourselves; it is a lasting ordinance. 32 The priest who is anointed and ordained to succeed his father as high priest is to make atonement. He is to put on the sacred linen garments 33 and make atonement for the Most Holy Place, for the tent of meeting and the altar, and for the priests and all the members of the community.*

*34 "This is to be a lasting ordinance for you: Atonement is to be made once a year for all the sins of the Israelites."*  
And it was done, as the Lord commanded Moses.

#### **• The High Priest offered sacrifices for himself first**

He began by sacrificing a bull as a sin offering for himself and the priesthood. Only when he had been cleansed from sin and had made atonement for his house could he begin to secure forgiveness for the congregation.

- Passing through areas of increasing intimacy

The High Priest would bring a censer filled with burning embers and incense from the temple into the holy place, and further into the *most* holy place, filling the space with smoke over the ornate lid of the ark, where God's presence was revealed. Fastidious attention was paid to the observance of these regulations, and the interval during which the High Priest was out of sight was filled with tension and drama, relieved only when the Israelite people saw him emerge at various stages of the ritual. Inside, he would sprinkle the sacrificial blood onto the ark and in the air, bringing the sacrifice into unique contact with God's presence.

- Two goats, representing complete separation of sin from the people

Of the two goats selected for sacrifice, one represented the sin offering for the people. It was sacrificed, and its blood was similarly sprinkled to purify the entire holy area from uncleanness caused by the very presence of the ceremonially defiled people. Their sins and transgressions were covered in the act of atonement.

The other goat, often called the "scapegoat," was brought into an open area of the temple court, and all the manifold transgressions of the Israelites were confessed over it. The High Priest's hands laid on the animal represented the transference of sin symbolically onto the animal. Afterwards, the goat was taken away from the community and sent into the wilderness, representing the complete removal of the nation's sin and guilt. In later portions of Israel's history, the tradition developed of taking the goat to a steep cliff and hurling it to its death.

*<Imagine taking part in this annual, national ritual. What would it mean to you for your sins to be symbolically removed, once a year, by the ritual priests? Meditate on the various symbols and ritual elements, what they represent, and how they connect with your own salvation. C.f. all of Leviticus Ch. 16>*



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#### REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What is a real-life example of a time you've had someone intercede and mediate for you? What did that mediator offer in that situation that you couldn't have provided for yourself?
2. How do you understand Jesus to be a more complete and perfect High Priest than any Old Testament descendant of Aaron could have been? Considering the role and restrictions on the High Priest, how does Jesus perfect this?
3. Go through the various steps and parts of the Day of Atonement described above. How do you see each piece so much more perfectly fulfilled and magnified in the atonement of Christ on the cross?
4. Think back to Hebrews 9:6-14. Spend some time reflecting on this passage and in prayer, thanking God for His goodness, His intercession for us, and His work of atonement.

#### **OPTION 4: SCRIPTURE CONTEMPLATION – PSALM 63**

*Before you begin reading, take a moment to invite God to speak to you through His Word and reveal who He is to you through it. Consider journaling your responses and prayers.*

*Read Psalm 63 two times, slowly. Look back at the passage as you respond to the questions below.*

- What immediately stands out from this passage?
- What does it show you about God?
- What does it show you about yourself?
- How would you describe David's emotion expressed in this psalm?
- What takeaways can you learn from David?
- What role does remembering play in our lives?
- How does David's view of God's power and glory shape his response to suffering?
- What things are you most thirsty for in life or look to for satisfaction?
- What does your physical hunger teach you about your spiritual hunger?
- What parts of this psalm do you identify most with? Least with?

- Take a moment to write your own prayer to God, expressing your desire to earnestly seek, thirst, and cling to Him more.

### **OPTION 5: SOLITUDE AND SILENCE**

*Find a quiet place, where you can be alone and free of distractions (surroundings, technology etc.)*

*Take a moment to take some deep breaths, relax, and pray for God to speak to you, for you to hear His voice, and rest in His presence. Read about the spiritual practice of solitude and silence below. Afterwards, determine the length of time you will practice solitude and silence. Remember, it is ok to start small and build up to longer times. During your time, it is likely your mind will be filled with thoughts, so when it happens, surrender those to God and ask Him for peace and to refocus your heart and mind on Him.*

Thinking solitude and silence is foreign to many of us and can be difficult to practice. However, if intentional, it is a spiritual practice that we can all greatly benefit from.

Solitude and silence don't need to be long, but the disciplines must be purposeful. Even 10-15 minutes to step away from the chaos and to listen more intently to God should have purpose. Taking a short break away from people and noise can be renewing.

You can learn a lot about yourself during this practice so be aware of what you experience. For instance, if you struggle with establishing times of silence and solitude, why is that? It could point to our misaligned priorities, an addiction to technology, a false idol or other things. Our unwillingness to focus entirely on God for at least a few minutes can also be an indication of something being off in our spiritual walk.

Solitude and silence make space, space in our souls and space in our lives, for God to do a deep work inside us and through us in our relationships with God and others. The simplest way to practice solitude and silence is to get alone with God to be quiet in a quiet place without distractions. (*Silence technology*) The point of your time in solitude and silence is to do nothing and don't try to make anything happen. In solitude and silence you are learning to stop doing, stop producing, stop pleasing people, stop entertaining yourself, stop obsessing and stop doing anything except to simply be your genuine self before God and be found by Him.

Jesus modeled withdrawing, fasting, and praying in solitude and silence.

"We can only survive solitude," warns Dallas Willard, "if we cling to Christ there" (*Spirit of the Disciplines*, p. 161). Solitude and silence bring to the surface inner conflicts, distress, and longings. This can be upsetting or painful, but it is much needed purification. Whatever issues come up for us can then be brought to the Lord in prayer or shared with others.

"The purpose of silence and solitude," says Richard Foster, "is to be able to see and hear" (*Celebration of Discipline*, p. 86). The Spirit speaks to us when our heart is still and silent before the Lord, not when we are rushing, and doing our own thing in our own way.

Solitude and silence with God is about more than purifying peace and hearing God's voice, it's about being empowered to maintain our focus on God continually, to live conscious of and interactive with God's presence moment by moment as we go about the activities of our day.

*Determine a set amount of time to practice silence and solitude. Consider setting a timer so you are not checking the time regularly. Once your time is finished, consider reflecting on how your time went. What did you experience? Did God reveal anything to you? What did you learn about yourself? How can you implement this spiritual discipline into your life more frequently?*

### **OPTION 6: HYMN HISTORY AND REFLECTION – GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS**

*Read through the hymn. Afterwards, sing or listening to this hymn before reading about the history of the hymn below. Once you have read the history, consider singing or listening to the hymn again. Next, read and reflect on Lamentations 3:22-24. To wrap up, take a moment to reflect on and remember God's faithfulness. God is always faithful, even when we are not. Close in prayer thanking God for His continued faithfulness and unending steadfast love and mercies.*

#### **Great Is Thy Faithfulness**

Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father.  
There is no shadow of turning with thee.  
Thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not.  
As thou hast been thou forever wilt be.

#### **REFRAIN:**

Great is thy faithfulness!  
Great is thy faithfulness!  
Morning by morning new mercies I see.

All I have needed thy hand hath provided.  
Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

VERSE 2

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,  
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above,  
join with all nature in manifold witness  
to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.

VERSE 3

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,  
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,  
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow;  
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

*Great Is Thy Faithfulness*, a testament to God's unchanging nature, was written by a man who suffered prolonged trials in life, yet chose to see God's faithfulness through it all. This hymn, deeply rooted in Scripture, continues to inspire and bless those who sing it. Thomas Chisholm was born in Kentucky, 1866. From a young age, Thomas was highly intelligent and ambitious. He became a school teacher at the age of sixteen and an associate editor for his hometown newspaper at the age of twenty-one. Though he achieved success in his early years, Thomas found his greatest success at the age of twenty-seven when he became a follower of Christ. From that moment on, he used his intelligence and ambition for God. Thomas Chisholm was also a Methodist minister who had always been a lover of poetry. Now able to use that love to its fullest in glorifying God, he wanted to do even more – dedicate his life fully – so he pursued the life of a minister. Sure enough, Thomas was ordained and given a congregation of his own in Scottsville, Kentucky.

In 1903, Thomas started a family by marrying the love of his life: Catherine Vanderveer. It seemed to Thomas that his path in life was now set, that he would be a minister for the remainder of his days, but the following years showed him otherwise. Thomas experienced a decline in health during his time as a minister, and in 1909, those health issues forced him to leave his congregation. In the years that followed, financial issues arose as well from numerous hospital bills. Many people would have become bitter with God during a time of health and financial crisis, but Thomas became quite the opposite. Yes, he was no longer a minister but now had more time to focus on writing hymns. Yes, he had health problems but also had loving support from his wife and two daughters. Yes, he faced financial struggles but found a job selling life insurance, allowing him to keep up with the bills. No matter the struggle, Thomas always chose to see God's faithfulness. Thomas' positive outlook on life never shifted, and in 1923, he took up pen and paper and wrote his most famous poem: *Great Is Thy Faithfulness*. He sent the poem to Reverend William Runyan, musician of Moody Bible Institute and editor of Hope Publishing Company in Chicago.

Runyan's position brought in many a poem submission, but Thomas' moved Runyan so much that Runyan quickly took to praying that God would reveal a tune worthy of the lyrics. With divine guidance, Runyan composed a beautiful tune to accompany the poem and named it FAITHFULNESS. Reflecting on this creative process, Runyan later wrote, "This particular poem held such an appeal that I prayed most earnestly that my tune might carry over its message in a worthy way, and the subsequent history of its use indicates that God answered prayer." Once Runyan found the tune, *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* as a hymn was born. It was an instant favorite amongst Moody Bible Institute staff and students, quickly becoming the college's unofficial hymn.

Past the college, the hymn took a bit longer to reach great heights, that is until a certain man by the name of Billy Graham heard it and began using it in his crusades during the 1950's. What began as a simple poem from a simple man was suddenly reaching the ears of millions, and has continued to do so each year since.

During the rest of his life, Chisholm spent many years residing in New Jersey, working as a life insurance agent to support himself and his family. Despite having an office job, he continued to express his love for God through poetry and wrote nearly 1,200 poems throughout his life. Many of these poems became published hymns that have further spread the message of God's faithfulness. The phrase "Great is Thy faithfulness" comes from the Bible, specifically Lamentations 3:23. It is a declaration of God's unchanging reliability and constant presence in our lives. The term "faithfulness" here refers to God's steadfastness, His unwavering commitment to His promises, and His consistent character. This means that God is dependable and trustworthy, regardless of our circumstances.

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him." Lamentations 3:22-24 ESV

## **OPTION 7: PRAYER WALK**

Why do a prayer walk?

- We want to learn how to pray in ways that shape us deeply and unleash the power of God's Spirit in our lives
- We want to connect with God's heart for this mission field that is ripe for harvest

#### Where do I do a prayer walk?

- If you don't have an immediate location in mind, pray that God would put a particular location on your heart. Likely, this will be your neighborhood or another place where you live, work, learn, or play.

#### How do I prepare?

- Pray through Psalm 24: *The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; 2 for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters.<sup>3</sup> Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? 4 The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god. 5 They will receive blessing from the Lord and vindication from God their Savior. 6 Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek your face, God of Jacob. 7 Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. 8 Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. 9 Lift up your heads, you gates; lift them up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. 10 Who is he, this King of glory? The Lord Almighty—he is the King of glory.*
- **Verses 1-2:** Spend time worshipping God and thanking Him for who He is
- **Verses 3-6:** Confess ways you relate with the author of the Psalm in these verses
- **Verses 7-10:** Intercede on behalf of the people who are where you are going to prayer walk
- Pray for...
  - Divine appointments with people you may encounter - that God will direct and guide your steps
  - For open eyes to see the spiritual needs of those around you

#### How do I do it?

- First, ask God to reveal Himself on your prayer walk
- Go for a walk (or drive) and as walking/driving pray, look, and listen to and for what God is doing and saying
- Ask God what He's already doing there
  - "Lord, how do You want me to be praying for this area?"
  - "Who are You moving in here right now?"
  - "What are the barriers to Your work here?"
  - Spend time listening and write down anything you hear or feel
- Pray for renewal of your own faith
  - Pray for God to move deeply in your own heart. Ask Him to renew your faith of what He can do and what He wants to do.
- Pray that God would reveal Himself to the people surrounding you
  - Ask that God would use you or other believers to be a witness to them
- Pray and listen
  - Ask God to show you what it would look like if His power and presence were really moving in this place
- Pray for Christians
  - Pray that Christians already here would be bold, have faith, and be courageous

### **OPTION 8: PRAYER STATIONS (Imagine praying through physical spaces at our church building)**

*Below are some of the areas you can join us in praying over. Pray over any other areas as feel led.*

#### Front Lobby

Pray for new guests coming to Parkway, for people that don't know Jesus, for them to feel welcomed and at home. Pray that those walking through these doors would experience peace, love, joy, hospitality, and a sense of belonging. Pray that we could continue to extend our reach further out to invite people in.

#### Worship Center

Pray for the proclamation of the gospel, for the teaching of God's Word, that people would be responsive to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. Pray for an ever-increasing sense of communal worship to glorify the Lord in this space. Pray for the ministry of prayer & intercession that happens here.

### Kids Ministry

Pray for new families coming to Parkway, that they find this to be a safe & supportive place for their kids. Pray for hurting families, to be able to find help & biblical resources. Pray for discipleship that begins at home and continues with partnership with Parkway.

Pray for the KM team and ongoing providence in this area of high personnel needs.

### Student Ministry

Pray for teenagers to continue to find a sense of belonging here, a welcoming family to come alongside them during these sensitive years. Pray that students would continue to respond to the gospel, and that they would allow the Lord to shape & form their identity before the world's influence. Pray for struggling students to look to the Lord first and foremost.

### Room 116

Pray for our elder leadership, for their ongoing commitment and faithfulness to give their time and investment so freely. Pray for unity across the team. Pray against spiritual attack for them, their marriages, and their families. Pray for the ongoing raising up of new elders and future leadership for Parkway.

### Staff Offices

Pray for our staff as they humbly shepherd and serve our church family and community. Pray for their pursuit and dependence on Jesus as they seek Him daily for strength and direction. Pray for unity, health, protection, and perseverance. Pray their identity would be rooted in Christ and God is honored as they point people towards Jesus and biblical truth.

### Counseling Center

Pray for our counseling team as they listen and care for others. Pray for strength, wisdom, and dependence on the Lord. Pray for individuals, couples, and families to be healed. Pray for people to seek and find Jesus during their journey and to humbly surrender to Him and be transformed by His grace, power, mercy, and love.

### Discover Parkway (Room 209)

Pray for those who are making the decision to engage further in the church, for clarity of next steps. For finding community in groups, for finding a place to serve, for sacrificial giving, for engaging in discipleship. Pray for more people to partner with us as we lock arms as a church body.

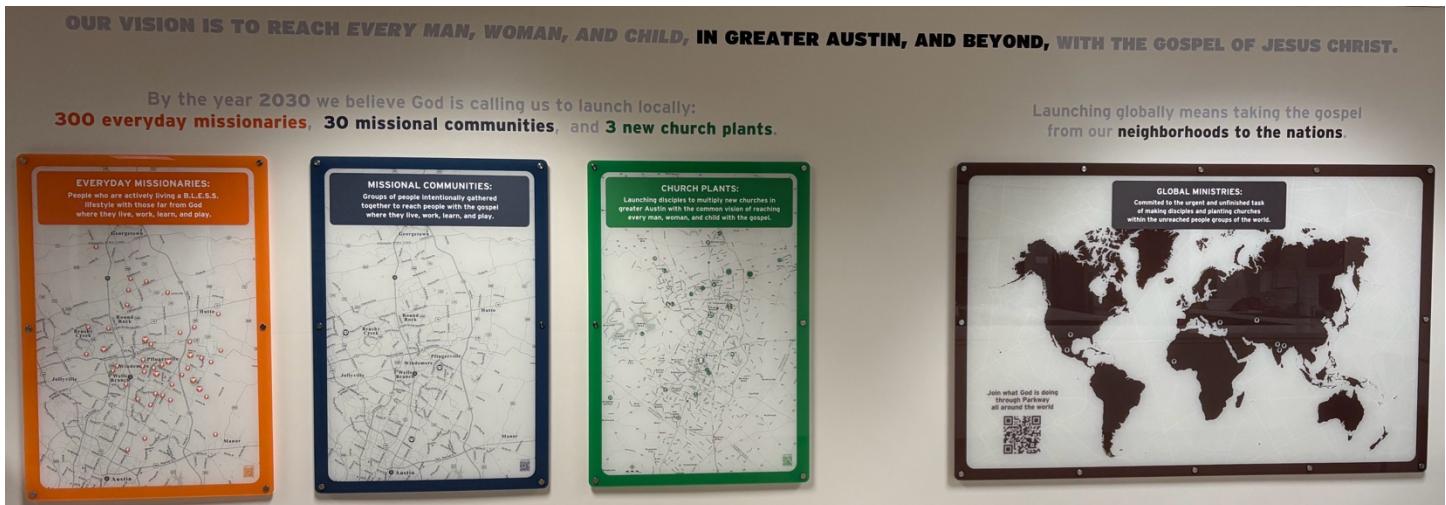
### Studio

Pray for our "phygital" (physical + digital) ministry to continue strong. For innovative methods & embracing technology in ways that continue to enhance the spread of the gospel. Pray that our online & media ministry would create platforms for the Kingdom to advance further beyond our walls, to engage people before they attend in person and encourage them toward it.

### Vision Wall

Pray for our vision to join God in seeing the gospel of Jesus Christ reach every man, woman, and child. Pray for God's provision for everyday missionaries, missional communities, and church plants as well as our intentionality and obedience to Him through those.

Pray for our global partners around the world, for continued provision, protection, and fruitful ministry in their cross-cultural contexts. Pray for a continued pipeline of raising up new global partners, and for the expansion of the team of senders, supporters, and prayer warriors from home that see & understand their place in global ministry.



## **OPTION 9: ABC'S of ADORATION**

*"The ABC's of Adoration", By Ron Parrish, Building Your Spiritual Core, page 56*

Through Him then, let us continually offer up sacrifices of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. Hebrews 12:15 NASB

Most of us need help in expressing adoration to God. If you don't believe that, just try leading a prayer meeting in which the participants are asked, "Right now, let's pray prayers of adoration." See what happens. People will almost immediately jump into petition prayers or other kinds of prayers that express needs or longings. Why? Because few Christians have the vocabulary of adoration. That muscle is under-developed. This exercise is designed to increase our core spiritual strength through expressions of praise to the One who is so worthy.

Start with the letter 'A' and think of as many words as you can to describe God. Here are some that are on my list: awesome, Abba, affirming, always, alive, abundant, accepting, able, active, absolute, abiding, amazing... . Then continue on to letter 'B' and do the same.

When I first developed this list, I used a dictionary and a thesaurus as I worked through the alphabet. This was a profound devotional experience. My list has grown as I have come across new words to describe God and even new impressions (revelations) of what God is like. "Resplendent" is not part of my daily vocabulary but I now use it frequently when praying prayers of adoration.

When ready, you can pray your ABC list out loud. "God you are \_\_\_\_\_." At the end of these prayers of adoration and praise, I often say: "God, you are all these things and *much more!*"

On a Personal Note – From Ron: I use this exercise in worshipping the Father in a myriad of ways. I set my mind on God this way as I swim or perform other mindless tasks throughout the day. Even at night when trying to go back to sleep, I start with letter 'A' and work my way through the alphabet. Rarely do I get to 'E' before I experience a significant sense of God's presence. I've practiced it when washing dishes, mowing the lawn, waiting in line, or stuck in traffic. I sense God's pleasure when I do it. I already have a long list of these traits and characteristics of God/Jesus, but new adjectives are still being added.

## **OPTION 10: PERSONAL APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

1. What's one thing you can do this year to increase your enjoyment of God?
2. What is an impossible prayer you can pray? (Ephesians 2:1-7)
3. What's the most important thing you could do to improve your family life?
4. In which spiritual discipline do you most want to make progress this year? Once you decide, determine the next step to take and when you will take it.
5. What's the single biggest timewaster in your life, and how can you redeem the time?
6. What's the most helpful new way you could use your gifts to strengthen your ministry and the body of Parkway Bible Church?
7. For whose salvation will you intentionally pray most fervently for this year?
8. Ask God to reveal if there are any idols in your life that prevent you from fully worshiping Him above all others and all other things. By God's grace and strength, consider fully surrendering any idols to Him.
9. What one thing could you do to improve your prayer life this year?
10. What single thing can you plan to do this year that will matter most in ten years? In eternity?

## **EXTENSION ACTIVITIES**

- Listen to worship music for an extended period
- Listen to Scripture for an extended period as you let God's Word wash over you
- Read a whole book of the Bible
- Sit in silence, with no distractions, for at least 15 minutes enjoying God's presence
- Gratitude list...Try listing as many things as you can...big and small. Stretch yourself.
- Consider sacrificing from something significant to you (ex. certain foods/drinks, TV, News, Social Media) so that you can fully rely on God and connect to Him

## **WRAP UP REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

*Reflection is a crucial component in our spiritual formation. Here are some reflection questions to ponder:*

- What was God saying to you through your time with Him?
- What was your experience like? Where did you feel resistance? Where did you feel delight?
- What are some potential next steps God may be asking you to consider?