



THE
PRACTICE
OF
PRAYER

ROBBY & KANDI
GALLATY



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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Robby Gallaty is the Senior Pastor of Long Hollow Church in Hendersonville, TN. He has a Masters of Divinity Degree in Expository Preaching and a Ph.D. in Preaching from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Robby is the author of numerous books and also provides a wealth of discipleship resources through Replicate Ministries (www.replicate.org). When he's not serving at Long Hollow, you might find Robby spending time with his family, cutting and measuring wood in his wood shop, out on the nearest disc golf course, or drawing with charcoal pencils. Robby is married to Kandi and they have two sons, Rig and Ryder.

Kandi Gallaty has been investing in the lives of women for over two decades, drawing from God's Word, God's work, and God's Spirit. She is passionate about cultivating a biblical worldview from Scripture and teaching women how to steward the life experiences and lessons God has allowed in their lives. Together, Kandi and Robby lead Replicate Ministries. Kandi loves being a pastor's wife and serving alongside her husband at Long Hollow Church. She is the author of *Disciple Her: Using the Word, Work and Wonder of God to Invest in Women*, *The Bible in a Year*, and *Foundations New Testament: A 260-Day Bible Reading Plan for Teen Girls*. She and Robby co-authored *Foundations: A 260-Day Bible Reading Plan for Busy Believers*, *Foundations: A 260-Day Bible Reading Plan for Busy Teens*, and *Foundations for Kids: A 260-Day Bible Reading Plan for Kids*.



WELCOME



Why is praying easy to talk about but hard to do? Every believer knows the value of prayer yet struggles to engage in the practice consistently. For some, prayer is formulaic and structured. I (Robby) was raised reciting rote prayers verbatim, particularly the Lord's Prayer. Kandi, on the other hand, prayed extemporaneously more often than not. Each approach presents a unique challenge.

Regimented prayers can create a stale, stiff prayer life. It can start to feel like you're talking to a boss or authority figure rather than communicating with a friend. Conversely, free form praying can be daunting, leaving one speechless without structure on how to pray or what to pray for.

I studied French for three years in high school, mainly because I liked the teacher. Upon graduation, I was inducted into the French Honors Society—not for intellect but for ingenuity. Recently, Kandi and I went to Paris for our 20th anniversary. I attempted to recall the language I had learned in high school, but to no avail. What happened to the language I once knew so well? It had become foreign to me because I hadn't practiced it.

Prayer works the same way.

It's like learning another language—the way you improve is through practice and regular use. We get better at talking to God by talking to God—meaning, any person's prayer life can become fulfilling and life-giving when we give God the opportunity to lead us to those outcomes.

By picking up this resource, you're expressing a desire to speak to and hear from God. We don't claim to be prayer experts; rather, our goal is to bring you along on our journey—away from repetitive phrases and toward a robust, personalized prayer language. You will find your voice when communicating with God by using Scripture to guide you. You'll examine how men and women prayed in the Bible to help formulate the discipline of prayer we now practice. You'll explore prayer's power, purity, patience, and promise through various exercises and activities each week.

Prayer doesn't have to be complicated. It should be as natural as talking to a loved one. We hope and pray that you'll finish this 30-day journey with a renewed passion to communicate with God personally and confidently.

Robby & Kandi Gallaty



GETTING STARTED

Personal Study

PART 1

The days of personal study in this 30-day guide include Scripture passages on prayer, brief devotional content, questions, and space to respond. The prompts for response include ways to identify need for personal growth, the HEAR method of Bible study, and specific prayer practices to implement. Each step helps create an atmosphere to hear God speak.

How Do I Log a HEAR Journal Entry?

Before reading the text, pause to sincerely ask God to speak to you. Seeking God's guidance is imperative to understand His Word (see 1 Corinthians 2:12-14). Every time we open our Bibles, we should ask God to reveal Himself to us in view of the true condition of our hearts and the concerns that fill our minds (see Psalm 139:23-24).

Next, read the Bible and begin working through the acronym to HEAR a word from the Lord and record your notes in the space provided. This guided exercise will help you to read with a purpose.

HIGHLIGHT each part that speaks to you by copying it under the letter H. Record:

- The name of the book
- The passage of Scripture
- The chapter and verse numbers that stick out to you
- A title to describe the passage

EXPLAIN what the Scripture means. Here are a few questions to get you started: *Why was this passage written? To whom was it originally written? How does this passage fit with the verses before and after it? Why did the Holy Spirit include this passage in the book? What does the Holy Spirit intend to communicate through these verses?*

APPLY the Scripture. Answer questions that bridge the gap between the ancient world and your world today and uncover the significance of the passage to you personally:

What do these verses teach me about God?
What does this passage mean today?
What would the application of this passage look like in my life?
Does the text identify an action or attitude to avoid or embrace?
What is God saying to me through His Word?

RESPOND. Your response to the passage may take on many forms. You may write a call to action. You may describe how you'll be different because of what God has said to you through His Word. You may indicate what you're going to do because of what you've learned.

PART 2

Following the HEAR journal, each day's guide will point toward one of seven additional specific practices to help you continue responding to God in prayer: position yourself, pray the Scripture, list needs, lament, journal, engage in silence and solitude, and remember. These practices are explained more robustly on pages 143-156 of this guide.

Notice the HEAR formula contains action words: highlight, explain, apply, and respond. So do the other seven prayer practices emphasized in this guide: position yourself, pray the scripture, list needs, lament, journal, engage in silence and solitude, and remember. *God wants you to actively pursue Him.*

MATTHEW 7:7-8

“Ask, and it will be given to you.

Seek, and you will find.

Knock, and the door will be opened to you.”

Group Study

Because discipleship happens best in community, gather others at your church to go through it with you. Going through this study with other believers will give you the opportunity to discuss what you're learning, dig deeper into the text, pray together, and develop friendships that lead you closer to God.

A Leader Guide to use for intentional group meetings is provided on pages 165-173.



WEEK 1

THE POWER OF PRAYER



WHY PRAY?

If you picked up a new book your friends all love and recommend, would you skip to the last page, read just that, and be satisfied? What if you sat down to watch the new movie that seems to have captured everyone's attention? Would you fast forward to the end, watch just the final minute, and call it a day? Probably not! Without the context, connections, and buildup gathered along the way, the impact would be lost, right? You can't appreciate the ending unless you've been engaged in the story all along the way.

The beauty of the Christian life is that we get to experience the fullness of God along the way. Then, the end of our earthly life culminates in spending forever with the One we've pursued our whole life. If you choose not to engage with God in prayer all along the way, you miss out on the extraordinary gift of walking in His power here and now. You can know God personally and hear from Him now. You don't have to wait for the future—you can have that today.



WHERE I AM

Everyone carries a unique history that impacts the way he or she understands the purpose and benefits of prayer. While our past experiences matter, experience doesn't define truth; truth defines experience! God has the freedom to address, affirm, and correct our experiences according to His Word. And we should all desire that!

In *The Practice of Prayer: A 30-Day Guide from Foundations*, each week begins with the opportunity to identify the factors that have impacted the way you perceive prayer and engage with God in prayer. Consider and respond to the prompts below regarding this question: "Why pray?"

The view and/or practice I inherited (examples below)

Prayer is for meals and church.
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We should pray about everything.
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We should pray for people who are sick.
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How my view and/or practice has changed over time

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Categories of things I typically pray about

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Reasons I have sometimes been discouraged

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Questions I have

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PSALM 26:2-3

*Test me, LORD, and try me;
examine my heart and mind.
For your faithful love guides
me, and I live by your truth.*



HEARING GOD’S WORD

PSALM 26:2-3

*Test me, LORD, and try me;
examine my heart and mind.
For your faithful love guides me,
and I live by your truth.*

This passage comes from the first of three consecutive psalms where David went to the tabernacle—the dwelling place of God among His people—to know God and hear from Him in prayer. When people were making unjust accusations against him, David invited God to examine every area of his life. He understood that God’s judgment of him was the only judgment that mattered. That understanding prompted him to take spiritual inventory under the all-knowing power of God and in the light of His presence and commands.

How do David’s words here challenge you? How does it make you feel to invite God to test and try you and to examine your heart and mind? What is wonderful about it?

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What are some signs that a person is spiritually teachable?

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Continue examining today’s passage, Psalm 26:2-3, by using the HEAR method. Refer to pages 8-9 for help as needed.

HIGHLIGHT

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EXPLAIN

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APPLY

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RESPOND

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MY RESPONSE

PRAYER PRACTICE

Position Yourself

One way to remind yourself to be teachable before the Lord in prayer is to change your posture. This serves as a way of humbling yourself before God and inviting Him to draw you deeper into the power of relationship with Him.

For more on the prayer practice of positioning yourself, turn to page 144.

For today, choose a posture different than your current state (e.g., if you're sitting, stand or kneel). Next, acknowledge God's sovereignty over your heart and mind and confess the way your will often stands in conflict with His. Invite Him to examine your heart and mind and to reveal to you areas in need of sanctification. Thank Him for His faithful love. Ask Him to guide you into a deeper knowledge and practice of prayer so that you might live your days according to truth. Write your chosen prayer posture in the space provided.

TODAY'S PRAYER POSTURE:

Key takeaway from today's practice of prayer and personal response

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PSALM 26:2-3

Test me, LORD, and try me;
examine my heart and mind.
For your faithful love guides me,
and I live by your truth.



HEARING GOD’S WORD

HEBREWS 4:16

*Therefore, let us approach the throne of grace
with boldness, so that we may receive mercy
and find grace to help us in time of need.*

Prayer is not a tool to get ahead in life or a box good people check daily. Prayer is a privilege for those who turn in faith to Jesus Christ. You have access to God, the Creator of the Universe, through Jesus. What an incredible gift! Because Jesus opened up the way to God, you can enter His presence with freedom, confidence, and even boldness—and there, you will receive God’s mercy and grace for every need.

Describe the heart posture with which you commonly approach God. Is it bold or subdued? Somewhere in between? Why do you approach God this way?

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What need should you take to the Lord in prayer today, having confidence that He wants to pour out His mercy and grace?

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MY RESPONSE

PRAYER PRACTICE

Pray the Scripture

Look back over yesterday's verses and the prayer prompts (p. 16). Do you see the connection? Sometimes, you might wonder whether God will answer your requests in the way you ask Him to. You never have to wonder if He hears you, though. And if you pray in line with God's character and Word, you can know your heart is aligned with His. Praying Scripture, then, is always a great way to experience God's power.

For more on the practice of praying the Scripture, turn to page 146.

After reading the example given below, personalize Hebrews 4:16 back to God in prayer and write it in the space provided. To do this most effectively, turn to that passage in your Bible and examine the context. This will help you know best how to pray in line with God's will, as expressed in Scripture.

Thank you, Jesus, for facing the temptation to sin in difficult circumstances and always walking away still sinless. I'm coming to You now, God, with confidence that You want to give me that same mercy and grace in my current need, which is _____ (name a difficult circumstance in your life). Help me trust You completely.

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[illegible]

HEBREWS 4:16

Therefore, let us approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in time of need.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

EPHESIANS 1:18-20

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what is the wealth of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the mighty working of his strength. He exercised this power in Christ by raising him from the dead and seating him at his right hand in the heavens . . .

God's power is *immeasurable*. That means you can't even imagine the power of prayer. Even though you can't imagine it, you can experience it. If you have received the gift of salvation by grace and through faith in Jesus Christ, God's strength is at work in you right now. God wants to open your eyes to the hope of His calling and the wealth of your inheritance. He wants to show you His great power. And He has. The resurrection of Jesus Christ put the greatness of God's power on display. He wants to continue to show you that power in your daily life. Through prayer, you can and will experience God's power as you grow in your understanding of His hope, calling, and promise and the outworking of those glorious realities in your life.

Why should we think about God's work in your life in terms like "immeasurable greatness" and "mighty"?

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What does the prayerful expectation Paul had for the Ephesians teach you about your prayers?

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MY RESPONSE

PRAYER PRACTICE

List Needs

Sometimes, the best path forward in relating to God more deeply is to expand your understanding of the needs you and others have. It's easy to get stuck in a narrow perception of topics to bring to the Lord in prayer—namely, physical needs centered in more obvious realities. Those needs are actual needs, but they're not the only needs anyone has.

For more on the prayer practice of listing needs, turn to page 148.

Today, practice intercession (praying for the needs of other people). Make a list of three to five needs that doesn't include anything related to physical life (e.g., health, finances). This time, let your list contain only spiritual needs. Use Paul's prayer in Ephesians 1:18-20 and page 148 as helpful guides for identifying these.

TODAY'S PRAYER LIST CATEGORY

Intercession

List three to five spiritual needs:

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2

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3

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4

5

Now that you've made your list, use it to guide your prayer time. Be intentional not to rush, which is a benefit of limiting your list to three to five needs daily. As helpful as listing prayer needs can be, it can also end up more like reading a shopping list than humbly and expectantly entering into the Lord's holy presence. The list isn't the end goal; seeking and confiding in the Father on behalf of other people is. And that takes time.



EPHESIANS 1:18-20

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what is the wealth of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the mighty working of his strength. He exercised this power in Christ by raising him from the dead and seating him at his right hand in the heavens . . .

HEARING GOD'S WORD

MATTHEW 5:43-47

*"You have heard that it was said, **Love your neighbor** and hate your enemy. But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven. For he causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward will you have? Don't even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what are you doing out of the ordinary? Don't even the Gentiles do the same?"*

The power of prayer is often realized in the pursuit of loving people who are difficult to get along with. Jesus said it in today's passage. Life is hard. Relationships are hard. The people in your life will disappoint you and some of them will even act like actual enemies towards you. You'll be tempted to hate them. And if you succumb, your hatred of your offenders will be acceptable to you and other people, because that's what nearly everyone else would do in a similar situation. But hatred of an unlovable person won't demonstrate your connection with God—only love for the unlovable can do that. So what if instead of hating your enemy today, you pray for them? What might happen if you ask God, who is love, to help you love the unlikable?

List the loving attributes of God you find in Matthew 5:43-47. In what relational situation do you need to seek God's power in order to show love?

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MY RESPONSE

PRAYER PRACTICE

Lament

Lament is a type of prayer common in the biblical account but often uncommon in church life today. Lament is the honest expression of grief, sorrow, and pain in view of God's sovereignty and loving-kindness, leading us to greater trust in Him.

For more on the prayer practice of lament, turn to page 150.

Today, take some time to express the difficulty and/or hurt you're experiencing or have experienced in a relationship. Be specific, then express what you know about God's character, command to love, and power in that painful reality.

Circumstance to lament:

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What God's character, command, and power teach me in that circumstance:

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MATTHEW 5:43-47

*“You have heard that it was said, **Love your neighbor** and hate your enemy. But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven. For he causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward will you have? Don’t even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what are you doing out of the ordinary? Don’t even the Gentiles do the same?”*

HEARING GOD'S WORD

EPHESIANS 3:12-21

In him we have boldness and confident access through faith in him. So, then, I ask you not to be discouraged over my afflictions on your behalf, for they are your glory.

For this reason I kneel before the Father from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named. I pray that he may grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power in your inner being through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. I pray that you, being rooted and firmly established in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the length and width, height and depth of God's love, and to know Christ's love that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us—to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

God wants to strengthen you, fill you, and show you His power is at work in ways you can't ask or imagine—especially when life is hard. Affliction in your life doesn't mean God is absent—it means you have access and opportunity to know and experience His power at work in you. God wants to take the ceiling of your faith and make it the floor. To do that, He's inviting you to lean in closer and come to Him confidently in prayer over whatever is going on in your life.

What words and phrases in the passage show Paul's understanding of the greatness of God's power in the lives of His people?

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Name a struggle in your life where you want to see God work (e.g., reconciliation in a relationship, contentment, joy).

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MY RESPONSE

PRAYER PRACTICE

Journal

Whether you're praying in praise or lament, petition or intercession, thanksgiving or confession, words of Scripture or words straight from your raw and unfiltered heart, journaling is a helpful practice. Recording your prayers can help you focus, find clarity of thought and belief, gain consistency, and later reflect and remember.

For more on the prayer practice of journaling, turn to page 152.

Use the space provided to journal a prayer to God. This can take various forms, such as writing out your prayer in sentences, graphically illustrating your needs, or writing one need in large print and naming hopes and fears you're entrusting to God around it. Today, write "God, You are able to do more than I can ask or think." Underneath that, name specific joys or difficulties you are experiencing. Then, consider what you've written, prayerfully inviting God to show you His power at work in you, for His glory for generations to come.

God, You are . . .

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EPHESIANS 3:12-13

In him we have boldness and confident access through faith in him. So, then, I ask you not to be discouraged over my afflictions on your behalf, for they are your glory.

REST & REFLECT

PRAYER PRACTICE

Engage in Silence & Solitude

You've taken some steps forward this week in understanding the power God wants to make reality in your life through prayer. One often overlooked aspect of knowing God's power is the necessity and benefit of silence and solitude. God wants to speak to you. Create space to listen.

For more on the prayer practice of silence and solitude, turn to page 154.

Today, find a quiet place and ask God to meet with you there as you reflect on Jesus's words in John 17:13-15.

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JOHN 17:13-15

*“Now I am coming to you,
and I speak these things in the
world so that they may have
my joy completed in them.
I have given them your word.
The world hated them because
they are not of the world, just as
I am not of the world. I am not
praying that you take them
out of the world but that you
protect them from the evil one.
They are not of the world, just
as I am not of the world.”*



REST & REFLECT

PRAYER PRACTICE

Remember

God is not limited in any way—not by time, place, need, or anything else—and He has made it possible for you to come to Him and receive His forgiveness. Regularly remembering His forgiveness helps us experience God’s power in our weak moments because it reminds us of all the ways His grace extends to us.

For more on the prayer practice of remembering, turn to page 156.

For today, take time to flip back through your first week in this prayer guide to prayerfully reflect on what God has taught you and what it should look like to implement that teaching in your life going forward. Then, record those things here.

What I want to remember going forward:

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2 CHRONICLES 6:19-21

- ¹⁹ *Listen to your servant's prayer and his petition,
LORD my God,
so that you may hear the cry and the prayer
that your servant prays before you,*
- ²⁰ *so that your eyes watch over this temple
day and night,
toward the place where you said
you would put your name;
and so that you may hear the prayer
your servant prays toward this place.*
- ²¹ *Hear the petitions of your servant
and your people Israel,
which they pray toward this place.
May you hear in your dwelling place in heaven.
May you hear and forgive.*



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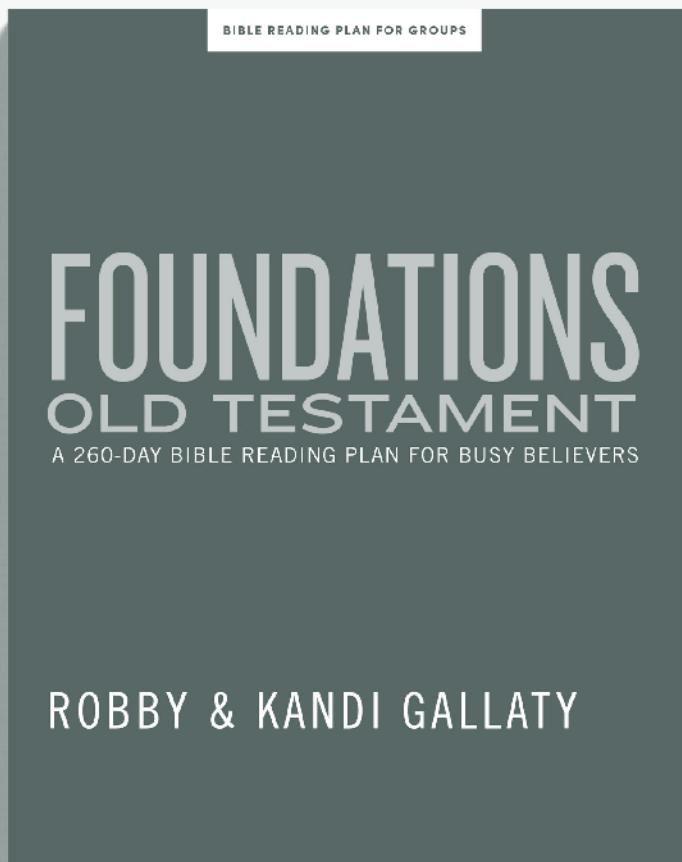




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A BETTER, FASTER WAY TO STUDY THE OLD TESTAMENT.

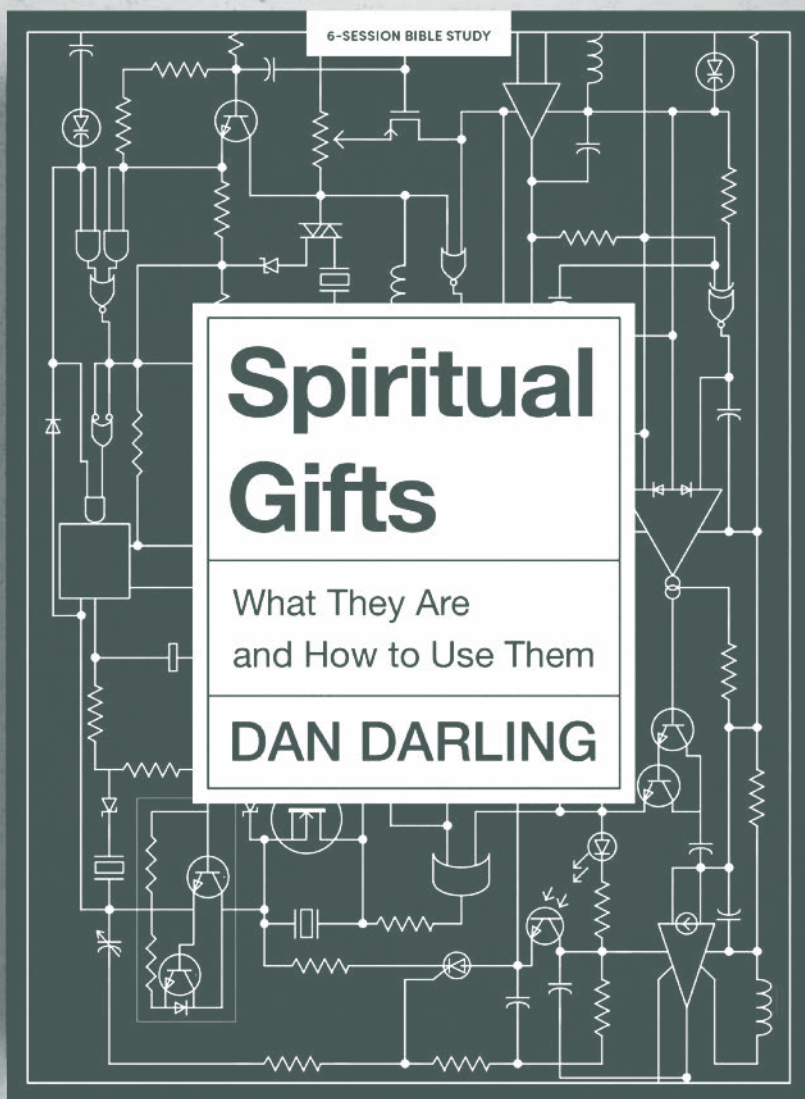


Want to read through the key passages of the Old Testament in just one year? This manageable plan makes it easier, even if you have never read the Bible before. And all that's required is reading one or two chapters a day for just five days each week. The two off-days are built in so you may catch up on days you miss. And the devotional content and HEAR journaling method help you retain more of what you read, understand the meaning, and apply God's wisdom in your life.

**Learn more online or call 800.458.2772.
lifeway.com/foundations**

Lifeway

How has God gifted you?



All Christians have been given spiritual gifts, but many don't know how they are gifted or are not using their gifts. This six-session study examines spiritual gifts biblically and practically. Each session answers a specific question about spiritual gifts so you can easily understand all the gifts, learn how to discover yours, and see how to use them to serve in the body of Christ. Learn more online or call 800.458.2772.

lifeway.com/spiritualgifts

Lifeway

Enter into relationship with God more deeply and hear from Him daily.

Prayer is talking to God. But as we mature in faith, shouldn't our prayer practice deepen?



This 30-day prayer guide introduces seven practices of prayer that can expand and strengthen a person's daily relationship with the Lord:

- Positioning yourself
- Praying the Scripture
- Listing needs
- Lamenting
- Journaling
- Engaging in silence and solitude
- Remembering

After just a few weeks in this guide, you will begin to:

- Better understand what Scripture says about prayer
- Develop prayer habits based on clear teachings from God's Word
- Position yourself to hear from God in prayer



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

eBook

Includes the content of this printed book but offers the convenience and flexibility that come with digital technology.

005852717 **\$16.99**

More resources can be found online at lifeway.com/foundations.

Price and availability subject to change without notice.