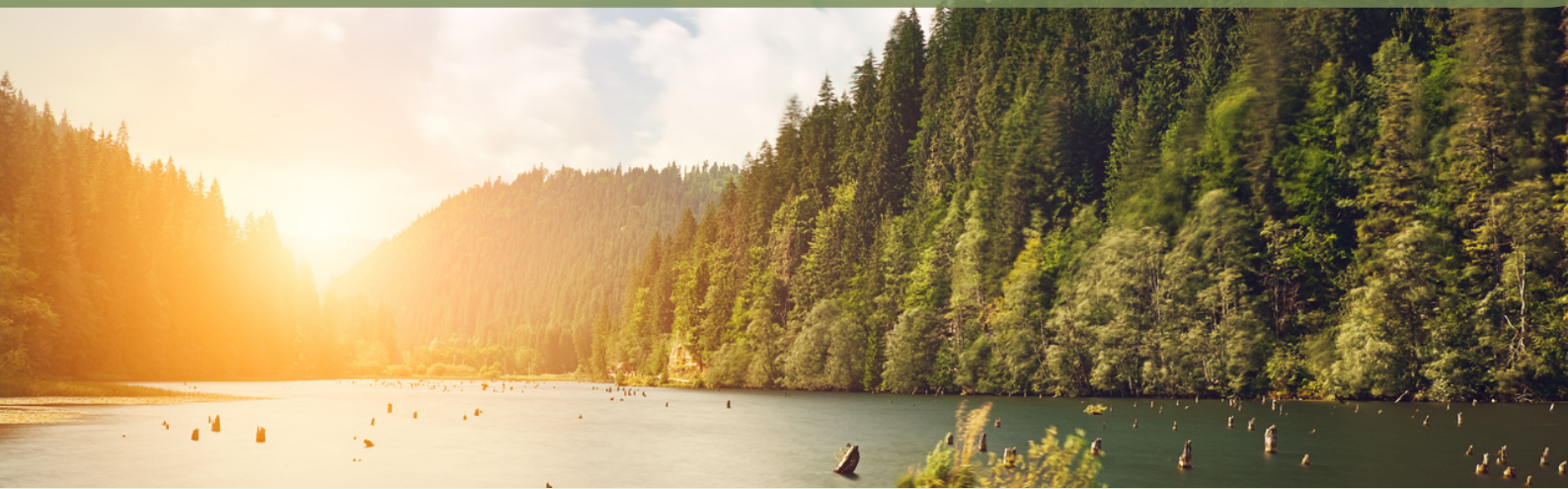




Week 6: Prayer Stations Guide

In many traditional, historical churches, you may be able to find various “Stations of the Cross” on their walls and pillars, i.e. a series of 14 pictures/carvings portraying 14 events leading up to Jesus’ crucifixion. People can visit these stations one by one, going through the route of suffering and sacrifice by Jesus, while meditating and praying at each of them. This exercise stemmed from the practice of early Christian pilgrims who would visit the actual historic locations in Jerusalem and pay tribute to and worship the Lord.

Prayer stations can be powerful if they are structured carefully and biblically. They allow people to be freed from distractions, to fully immerse themselves in Scripture and prayer, and to be drawn closer to God. We have included below 10 ideas for prayer stations (some of them are based on the **Sermon on the Mount**) which are generally easy to set up. You can either set them up in a venue and invite your group members to go through the stations at their own pace, or select 4-5 of them and practice them as prayer exercises during your group gathering. These 10 prayer stations are by no means a “more effective” way of prayer, but **through stretching our perception of prayer and curating a space that focuses on prayer, the goal is to guide everyone to experience the power of prayer and a closer relationship with God.**

Prayer Station #1: The Lord’s Prayer

- Slowly read the Lord's Prayer (Matt 6:9-13) twice. The first time, read silently to yourself, and the second time, read it out. Pause and reflect on the meaning of each line.
- Copy down the prayer by hand onto a notecard. Add drawings to it if any imagery comes to your mind. As you copy the prayer, regard it as your prayer to God. If possible, memorise the Lord’s Prayer.
- As you recall and pray the Lord's Prayer from your heart, be cautious about the dangers of mindless repetition. Don't let it become a "mantra" or "chant" that is devoid of meaning. Remember that the Word of God is living and active (Heb 4:12) and praying Scripture is an ongoing conversation with Him.

(Materials: Notecards, markers/pens, Bible)

Prayer Station #2: Do not worry

- Create origami of birds and flowers. As you fold them, think about how God created them – their sophistication, their beauty, their lives.
- Read and reflect on Matt 6:25-34 – how Jesus described the birds of the air and flowers of the field.
- Pray to God based on these questions:
 - What are you worrying about right now?
 - How has God been revealing Himself to you?
 - Do you trust that God is your Provider? What is hindering you from trusting His provision?
 - Do you view God as the owner of everything you have, and you are the steward of these things?

(Materials: Origami paper, origami instructions - samples available [here](#))

Prayer Station #3: Pray in secret

- Read Matt 6:5-8.
- Enter into a separate room or an enclosed space (e.g. a camping tent) alone, with no one else. If no separate room is available, situate yourself at a corner facing the wall where you cannot see anyone.
- Spend 1 minute in silence, then start praying to God. No one will be able to hear what you are praying; only God knows. Be as genuine and vulnerable as you wish. Approach this time as a one-on-one intimate session with God.
- End with 1 minute of silence before you exit the room or leave the corner.

Prayer Station #4: The prayer labyrinth

The earliest record of a labyrinth (明陣) within a church dated back to 342 C.E. in North Africa. Labyrinths gained popularity in Europe during the Middle Ages. Although not mentioned in the Bible nor uniquely Christian in origin, labyrinths were embraced as spiritual tools to help individuals connect with and draw closer to God. Walking, or even dancing, through a labyrinth symbolises both the journey of faith and the pilgrimage to the holy city of Jerusalem. Unlike a maze which contains dead-ends and trick routes to make you lost, the labyrinth features a single winding yet definite path that always leads to the centre.

- Use the index finger of your non-dominant hand to navigate the following paper labyrinth:
 1. Release and shed your burdens while moving towards the centre.
 2. Rest with God in the centre. Listen to what He has to say.
 3. Reimagine your life in light of what has been experienced as you move away from the centre. Give thanks to God.
- End with a prayer on this verse: *Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me...” - John 14:6*

(Materials: Printed copies of paper labyrinth)



Prayer Station #5: Wash your dirt

- Read John 13:1-17 about Jesus washing His disciples' feet. Imagine Jesus is holding a jar of water in front of you and offering to wash and cleanse you. Pour some water to wash your hands and reflect: What “dirt” are you willing to let Jesus wash off from you?
- End with a prayer to surrender these things to Jesus and to seek His forgiveness and healing.

(Materials: Jar of water, basin, towel)

Prayer Station #6: Time in His hand

- “Silence” is one of the spiritual disciplines. It quiets down our heart, slows down our pace, and humbles us before God. There are times when God wants us to do something, but there are also times when God just wants us to be still and abide in Him.
- Turn an hourglass upside-down, then spend the time in silence (i.e. don’t do anything - don’t speak, don’t look at your phone, don’t read), until all sand goes from the top to bottom (5 minutes).
- End with a time of prayer on this verse: “Be still, and know that I am God” – Psalm 46:10

(Materials: Hourglass)

Prayer Station #7: Exchange the Word

- Pray for the Holy Spirit to inspire you with a Bible verse, and write it down on a post-it note.
- Leave it on the table for sharing. Read others’ verses, choose one to keep for yourself and pray on it.

(Materials: Bible, post-it notes, pens)

Prayer Station #8: Pray for the world

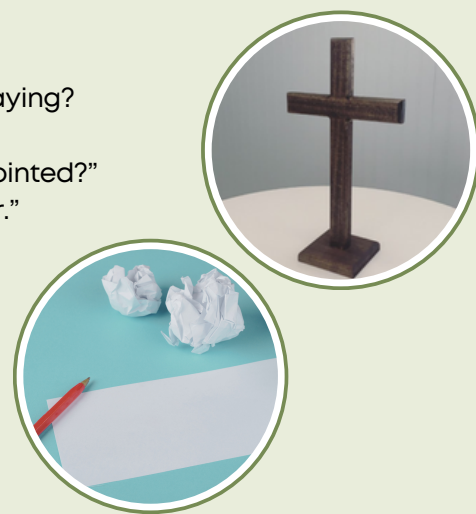
- Look at a world map, and pray that God will place a city in your heart. Then pray for that city.
- (Optional: search for more details about that city, e.g. population, ethnicity, religion, any major conflict or issue, conditions of Christians in that city [joshuaproject.net] and pray accordingly.)
- Pray for that place, write a note, then pin on the map.

(Materials: World map, post-it notes, pens, pins)

Prayer Station #9: Cast your obstacles

- Reflect on this question: What are the things that hinder you from praying?
 - Disbelief: “What difference does my prayer make anyway?”
 - Fear: “What if God never answers my prayer and I will get disappointed?”
 - Wound: “I experienced something hurtful in the past about prayer.”
 - Postponement: “Let me pray later when I have more free time.”
 - Numb: “Fine, I’ll just do it like a routine or ritual.”
- Write down your burdens / struggles, crumple the paper into a “ball”, then cast it at a small standing wooden cross. As you do so, pray that Jesus will heal / redeem / empower / encourage you.

(Materials: Small standing wooden cross, pens and paper)



Prayer Station #10: Time capsule

- In what areas do you want to grow closer to God in the next 12 months? Write down a prayer to God about your goals and needs in the next 12 months, and on how to enhance your relationship with God.
- Put your written prayer into an envelop, seal it, and write your address and name on the envelop.
- Assign a person to keep all people’s envelops, and mail it back to them in a year’s time.
- When you receive and re-read your prayer after a year, reflect on God’s work and presence with you.

(Materials: Letter paper, envelops, pens)

Debrief

After completing these prayer stations activities, spend some time as a group to debrief together:

- How do you feel as you meditate, reflect, and pray at different stations? Is there any particular station that you feel special about? How has God revealed Himself to you?
- How has this experience changed your perception and perspective of “prayer”?
- Is there anything inspired by these prayer stations that you can implement in your daily prayer life?