



Spiritual Tip for your prayer life.

By Jim Stephens, **10 Best Tips on Prayer** (www.themarriagelibrary.com/Resources/10-Tips-Prayer.pdf)

Make it a priority.

Setting aside time is the most important place to begin developing your prayer life. If you never take some time to pray, your prayer life will never grow. It will never develop. Start with a small amount that you are willing to commit to. If you are not willing to commit some of your time to prayer, give up now.

Make an Appointment with God

Make an appointment to meet with God just like any other appointment. If it's not on your schedule, it will tend to be put off easily. You would certainly remember an appointment that you have today with the President of the United States, wouldn't you? Well, isn't God more important to your life than the President.

Make it a Higher Priority. Something has to go.

If you have available time, great. But for most of you, finding time to pray will mean that you have to sacrifice something else that you are now doing instead. Probably you are enjoying that other thing (TV, sleep, business, friends, kids, reading, etc.) or you wouldn't be doing it. Prayer has to be moved up the list of daily priorities so it is high enough to bump off something else that has heretofore been considered more urgent and important. It has to become a strong enough priority so that you can't go to bed until it is accomplished, like brushing your teeth.

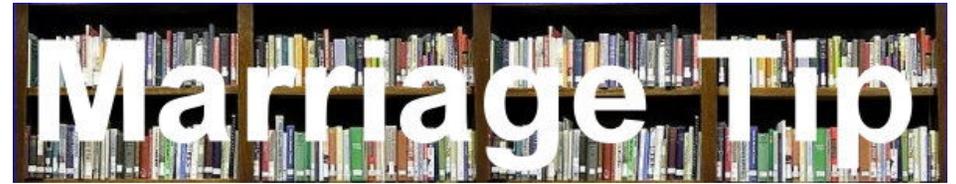
So start right now to find that activity that you can delete from your life in order to be able to get more God in your life. Look at a long range perspective. We know that good eating habits and getting regular exercise are vital for long term good health. Unfortunately, it's easy to bump them aside on a day to day basis in favor of things that seem more urgent. But since they are essential, we must learn to raise them to a priority level that takes precedent over "urgent" matters that are not really "essential". We need to learn to distinguish between "urgent" and "important". In the same way, it's most valuable to raise prayer to a high enough priority so that it becomes a daily habit in spite of everything else that we have to do.

Next decide how much time you are going schedule in your day to begin your new prayer life. Be reasonable with yourself, ten or twelve minutes might be a good start. If you can't squeeze out ten or twelve minutes somewhere, then you're not being serious.

When your best friend calls, you make time to talk to him or her even if something else that is important too has to be sacrificed. You may not know it yet, but God is your best friend and making some time for Him every day is going to be the best long term investment that you have ever made.

You may need some help with resetting your priorities to include a daily prayer time. I believe if you find a deeper understanding of the value of prayer FOR YOU personally, then it can really help. It can give you the necessary motivation to pray. I have found quite a number of explanations of the value of prayer that have really helped me. Try a Google search for "value of prayer", "why pray?", or "importance of prayer" next time you're on the Internet and build your own convincing reasons.

Compliments of the Marriage and Family Ministry, FFWPU, District 1
For more Marriage Tips visit: www.TheMarriageLibrary.com



Men's Brains Can Take 7 Hours Longer To Process Emotions

Here's a big difference in the male brain that lies at the root of many marital confrontations.

Neurological studies show that men may take up to seven hours longer than women to process complex emotional data.

Think of that: seven hours!

Stop a few minutes and ponder the implications of this research.

Why do men's brains have this delay? Many physiological facts help to explain it.

* Men have a smaller hippocampus in the limbic system (which processes emotional experiences).

* Females have more neural pathways to and from the emotive centers of the brain.

* The bundle of nerves that connects the left and right portions of the brain, the corpus callosum, - which allows the processing of thoughts and talk with emotions - is about 40 percent larger for women than for men.

Consider the huge implications! Suppose a woman has an argument or disagreement just after breakfast with her husband. She will take about fifteen minutes to get a grip on why she feels so angry. Her husband may not get to that point until dinnertime.

But women often find it hard to wait that long. They want to discuss their feelings right away, and they want their husband to discuss his feelings (which he's not good at anyway) **while he's still processing**. His brain lags behind, stuck in the earliest stages of processing what just happened.

Many woman might respond, "But he won't discuss it later either." Here's a tip from Leslie Vernick who works on helping wives "learn how to bring up something without attacking their husbands and while working on their own heart and approach."

Most men are willing to discuss something if they're not feeling like they're being pushed into a corner or blamed for something they did wrong.

Here's her suggestion: if you have an emotional issue that needs to be addressed, why not give your husband a heads-up about the topic several hours before you will actually have a chance to talk to him about it?

"Honey, something's really been bugging me (or hurting me, or frustrating me, or worrying me.) Here it is in a nutshell. Would you think it over so that we can talk about it later tonight?" By using this tactic, you'll give him plenty of time to process complex emotional data.

Based on excerpts from **Sacred Influence: How God Uses Wives to Shape the Souls of Their Husbands**, by Gary Thomas, and elsewhere. -Jim Stephens



The Five Love Languages

Made famous by Gary Chapman, author and counselor

This is very helpful in dealing with your children. Research shows that each person likes to receive love in one of 5 ways. Show them that type of expression of love and they will feel loved.

Words of Affirmation

Mark Twain once said "I can live for two months on a good compliment." Verbal appreciation speaks powerfully to persons whose primary Love Language is "Words of Affirmation." Simple statements, such as, "You look great in that suit," or "You must be the best baker in the world! I love your oatmeal cookies," are sometimes all a person needs to hear to feel loved.

Aside from verbal compliments, another way to communicate through "Words of Affirmation" is to offer encouragement. Here are some examples: reinforcing a difficult decision; calling attention to progress made on a current project; acknowledging a person's unique perspective on an important topic. If a loved one listens for "Words of Affirmation," offering encouragement will help him or her to overcome insecurities and develop greater confidence.

Quality Time

Quality time is more than mere proximity. It's about focusing all your energy on your mate. A husband watching sports while talking to his wife is NOT quality time. Unless all of your attention is focused on your mate, even an intimate dinner for two can come and go without a minute of quality time being shared.

Quality conversation is very important in a healthy relationship. It involves sharing experiences, thoughts, feelings and desires in a friendly, uninterrupted context. A good mate will not only listen, but offer advice and respond to assure their mate they are truly listening. Many mates don't expect you to solve their problems. They need a sympathetic listener.

An important aspect of quality conversation is self-revelation. In order for you to communicate with your mate, you must also be in tune with your inner emotions. It is only when you understand your emotions and inner feelings will you then be able to share quality conversation, and quality time with your mate.

Quality activities are a very important part of quality time. Many mates feel most loved when they spend physical time together, doing activities that they love to do. Spending time together will bring a couple closer, and, in the years to come, will fill up a memory bank that you can reminisce about in the future.

Whether it's sitting on the couch and having a brief conversation or playing together in a tennis league, quality time is a love language that is shared by many. Setting aside focused time with your mate will ensure a happy marriage.

Receiving Gifts

Some mates respond well to visual symbols of love. If you speak this love language, you are more likely to treasure any gift as an expression of love and devotion. People who speak this love language often feel that a lack of gifts represents a lack of love from their mate. Luckily, this love language is one of the easiest to learn.

If you want to become an effective gift giver, many mates will have to learn to change their attitude about money. If you are naturally a spender, you will have no trouble buying gifts for your mate. However, a person who is used to investing and saving their money may have a tough time adjusting to the concept of spending money as an expression of love. These people must

understand that you are investing the money not in gifts, but in deepening your relationship with your mate.

The gift of self is an important symbol of love. Sometimes all your mate desires is for someone to be there for them, going through the same trials and experiencing the same things. Your body can become a very powerful physical symbol of love.

These gifts need not to come every day, or even every week. They don't even need to cost a lot of money. Free, frequent, expensive, or rare, if your mate relates to the language of receiving gifts, any visible sign of your love will leave them feeling happy and secure in your relationship.

Acts of Service

Sometimes simple chores around the house can be an undeniable expression of love. Even simple things like laundry and taking out the trash require some form of planning, time, effort, and energy. Just as Jesus demonstrated when he washed the feet of his disciples, doing humble chores can be a very powerful expression of love and devotion to your mate.

Very often, both pairs in a couple will speak to the Acts of Service Language. However, it is very important to understand what acts of service your mate most appreciates. Even though couples are helping each other around the house, couples will still fight because they are unknowingly communicating with each other in two different dialects. For example, a wife may spend her day washing the cars and walking the dog, but if her husband feels that laundry and dishes are a superior necessity, he may feel unloved, despite the fact that his wife did many other chores throughout the day. It is important to learn your mate's dialect and work hard to understand which acts of service will show your love in your mate's dialect.

It is important to do these acts of service out of love and not obligation. A mate who does chores and helps out around the house out of guilt or fear will inevitably not be speaking a language of love, but a language of resentment. It's important to perform these acts out of the kindness of your heart.

Demonstrating an act of service can mean stepping out of the stereotypes. Acts of service require both mates to humble themselves into doing some chores and services that aren't usually expected from their gender. However, these little sacrifices will mean the world to your mate, and will ensure a happy relationship.

Physical Touch

Many mates feel the most loved when they receive physical contact from their partner. For a mate who speaks this love language loudly, physical touch can make or break the relationship.

Sexual intercourse makes many mates feel secure and loved in a marriage. However, it is only one dialect of physical touch. Many parts of the body are extremely sensitive to stimulation. It is important to discover how your partner not only physically responds but also psychologically responds to these touches.

It is important to learn how your mate speaks the physical touch language. Some touches are irritating and uncomfortable for your mate. Take the time to learn the touches your mate likes. They can be big acts, such as back massages or lovemaking, or little acts such as touches on the cheek or a hand on the shoulder. It's important to learn how your mate responds to touch. That is how you will make the most of this love language.

All marriages will experience crisis. In these cases, physical touch is very important. In a crisis situation, a hug can communicate an immense amount of love for that person. A person whose primary love language is physical touch would much rather have you hold them and be silent than offer any advice.

It is important to remember that this love language is different for everyone. What type of touch makes you feel secure is not necessarily what will make your partner happy. It is important to learn each other's dialects. That way you can make the most of your hugging, kissing, and other physical contacts.

Find out your Love Language at: www.themarriagelibrary.com/Resources/5LLPacket.pdf