

One Hour of Personal Prayer

Seek

INTRODUCTION

Before you begin this time of prayer, think about the space that you are sitting in. Is it a comfortable space, free from distraction? Think about switching your phone off or playing some peaceful music. Maybe mark the moment by lighting a candle to signify that in this time and space there is a priority for the presence of God. Do whatever feels helpful for you to make this a sacred space for prayer.



BE STILL (5 MINS)

As you begin your time, take some moments to be still. To set aside the distractions of your mind and to welcome God into the space. Take some deep breaths and pray the verse from Psalm 46:10:

'Be still and know that I am God.'

As you breathe deeply, and repeat this verse for a few moments, you are acknowledging that God is present, and that He is able.



CONFESS (10 MINS)

Confession is important in our relationship with Jesus. Firstly, it helps us to be accountable before God for our own brokenness and sin. Acknowledging our sin helps us to embrace humility and reject pride. Secondly, it is in confession that we are reminded of the grace of God shown to us in Christ.

Scripture tells us that: *'If we confess our sins, He who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.'* (**1 John 1:9**). Such assurance means we can come to confession with a sense of peace knowing that we meet a God who is gracious and loving toward us.

In silent prayer, talk with God about the things in your life that fall short of his ways. Areas that you want Him to bring transformation in. Then pray:

*O God of grace and truth, you are rich in mercy.
You lavish your love upon me.
Forgive me and renew me, that I may be changed further into the likeness of Christ. Amen.*



READ (15 MINS)

Read **Hosea 10**.

At first glance, this may feel like an unusual passage to dwell on. The verses speak about judgement as the people of God are called to address their unfaithfulness towards God. They have worshipped other gods, they have ignored or contributed to injustice, and they have forgotten what it means to be a people belonging to God. The book of Hosea has many chapters like this one, however the overall message that Hosea declares is about a God who repeatedly calls his people back to himself. Despite their rebellion, failings, and unfaithfulness, they are invited to return to a God who loves them. The imagery of such books like Hosea can sometimes be tricky for us to understand, yet the voice of the prophets can still invoke a powerful challenge to us today. We still need to hear a call to holy living, a call to remember what it means to be a people belonging to God. We still need to hear about a God who is rich in mercy and who sacrificially loves us and calls us to himself. As you read the chapter again, stop and dwell on **Hosea 10:12**.

*'Sow for yourselves righteousness;
reap steadfast love;
break up your fallow ground;
for it is time to seek the Lord,
that He may come and rain righteousness upon you.'*

continued...

Amid the verses of judgement, we find this verse. It sets before us a call to hope, an invitation to action. It is time to seek the Lord, so sow righteousness, reap love, break up the fallow ground.

What might this mean for your life? What might this mean for the Church?

Spend some time in prayer, inviting God to speak to you through this passage. Use the time to pray both for your own life, and for the life of the Church. How might we respond to this call to hope, and this invitation to action?



DWELL (10 MINS)

Now turn to **1 Peter 2:1-10** and spend some time reading it slowly.

Dwell particularly on verse 9:

'But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.'

What questions does this verse raise as you think of the Church today? What is God calling the church to be in this time and place? Spend time in prayer as you respond to these questions. Maybe you want to write down what God is saying to you so you can share it with others in your Church.



PRAY (15 MINS)

Begin with thankfulness. Thanking God for how He speaks in his Word, and how He reminds us of his mercy and steadfast love for us.

Then spend some time praying for the Church in Ireland. Ask God to bring renewal as we seek Him in this season. Allow the Spirit to guide your prayers, praying for all that comes into your mind as you reflect on the verses you have read. Maybe it's prayers for people, or for situations. Be bold in inviting God to be at work.

Invite God to stir up within you a passion to intercede for the needs of others, and an excitement at trusting that he will be at work.



BLESSING (5 MINS)

As you come to finish your hour of prayer, spend a few moments being still in the presence of God. Breathe deeply and invite his peace to rest upon you. When you are ready, close in prayer:

*Lord, here I am. I am seeking after you.
Show me your ways.
Consume me with your steadfast love.
Break up my fallow ground and bring your new life.*

*Lord, here we are. We are seeking after you.
Renew your people.
Call us back to you.
Break up our fallow ground that your Kingdom may come.*

*Lord, you are here.
Holy are you.
Come and rain righteousness upon us.
Amen.*