



FUEL sermon series – Week 1 Spiritual Practice

Following.

It's not a word we like. Our Western culture consistently teaches us to be self-sufficient, to go and get our own way, and to be in charge of our own destiny—to make something happen. We like leadership and being our own boss. Submission of our will to another seems counterintuitive for most of us.

Perhaps the greatest obstacle in our life with the Spirit is our inability to simply *follow* him.

We want to take some time this week to engage in a prayer practice each day, making room to reorient our minds, hearts, and honestly, our schedules to the presence of God through the Holy Spirit. These practices aren't about perfection. This practice isn't about the actual prayer or the questions asked. It is meant to be a catalyst to redirect your relationship with the Spirit.

When we take time to pause and pray or to reflect honestly in the presence of Christ, we give the Spirit room to lead us.

Praying the Lord's Prayer Practice:

For centuries, devout God-followers have stopped multiple times each day to pray. From before the time of Daniel to the time when Jesus walked the earth to even now in various contexts, people desiring God have paused three times daily to pray and listen for God.

Determine two to three brief periods of time each day when you will pray over this next week. Set an alarm or a reminder on your phone. Type or ink it into your calendar. You truly only need five minutes or less.



The Archbishop of Canterbury once wrote, "If somebody said, give me a summary of Christian faith on the back of an envelope, the best thing to do would be to write our Lord's Prayer." Jesus didn't give us a prayer to memorize over and over again until our minds go blank. The Lord's Prayer is a launching place for petition, confession, and so much more. Every time we pray this prayer is an opportunity for the Holy Spirit to do something new and fresh.

Each time the alarm prompts you, pause wherever you are. Close your eyes and take a deep breath. Invite the Holy Spirit to speak to you through the words of prayer Jesus modeled for his disciples that have anchored the Church since Jesus first spoke them. You can pray this prayer aloud with someone else, take a walk and pray it, write it out in your journal slowly, pray it one line at a time with pauses for reflection. There are so many ways you can engage with the Lord's Prayer.

As you begin, take your time, allowing Christ to guide you. Ask yourself the simple question, "Am I following the Spirit in this way?" as you pray this prayer.

***Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come.
Thy will be done in earth,
As it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our sins,
As we forgive them that sin against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
The power, and the glory,
For ever and ever.
Amen.***