

ACTS

Do you ever feel as if you are praying the same things over and over again? Or, do you find yourself at a loss for words only minutes into praying? Does your mind wander when you pray? These are extremely common problems which can readily be addressed by simply adopting a prayer model. I have found that praying an A.C.T.S. prayer is a great way to both focus my prayer and expand my prayer vocabulary. It is one of my favorite prayer disciplines.

A.C.T.S. stands for:

Adoration

Confession

Thanksgiving

Supplication

Adoration

What does it mean to adore someone? It means that you love them. You love who they are and what they do. When I adore God I use what I call the “Formula of Praise.” This formula is a recurring pattern I noticed in the Psalms. David adores God in three ways: First, he tells God that he loves Him. Second, he praises God for who God is. Third, he praises God for what God does.

Confession

Adoration humbles us and reminds us of our sin. As such, adoration naturally moves us to confess. Be specific when confessing. Get beyond generic confessions such as, “I haven’t been as loving as I should be.” Be specific, “God I have been avoiding Janet because I am angry with her.

Forgive me for pushing her to the side so that I don’t have

to deal with my anger. It is sinful for me to not give her the grace I have received.”

Thanksgiving

Most of us readily know how to say thank you and what gratitude is. A discipline of gratitude has great value in that it forces you to consider what you are grateful for on the days you feel less than appreciative. Paul told the Colossians, “Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.” (Colossians 3:16) Expressing gratitude can help you feel grateful.

Supplication

To supplicate simply means to ask. At this point in your prayer offer God the concerns of your heart. Pray for friends, family, community, situations and yourself. Pray for whatever concerns you. Take time to intercede for others.

Biblically speaking intercession almost always means praying about someone’s spiritual well-being. You may want to adopt someone specific to pray for daily. I find that to be a very powerful prayer discipline.

Lastly, when trying a new prayer discipline like praying A.C.T.S. prayers, do it for several weeks before judging the merits of the practice. Your entire first week you may be just getting comfortable with the practice. I highly recommend living into a practice a minimum of three weeks. Research suggests that it takes as much as 18 days for something to become a habit or norm for us. Persevere for a season so that you can see the fruit.