

## COME, JESUS, COME

### Prayer is One Glorious Relationship Encounter at a Time

Prayer opens our hearts to know Yahweh.

Prayer intimacy transforms our allegiance.

Prayer is the battle.

Prayer matures in stages and is never fully mastered.

Selfish Religious...Multitudes...Disciples...Intercessors...Selfless Worshipers

#### ***Four Marriage bullseyes: Biblical truths that must captivate our marriages.***

☉ **Biblical Marriage is created by God for God.** Marriage is the gospel. It's our ministry in God's plan for evangelism. All the Bible narrative from Genesis' first couple in Eden until the marriage feast of Revelation reveals His love story. When we say, "I do." God says, "Action!" Then the world marvels at our covenant keeping God.

☉ **Marriage reflects the god you serve.** We live in Yahweh worship or in idolatry. If we are imaging the character, actions, and love of Yahweh then our marriage shouts to onlookers, "Look at my God. Isn't He wonderful?" When we serve ourselves, the brokenness within and without, or the evil forces of this world, then we display outwardly a darkness that destroys our gospel witness. Our families never rise above the god we serve.

☉ **Biblical Marriage is Oneness.** Man plus woman plus Yahweh make up the triune intimacy intended from creation. Eden's 'very good' is described as 'naked and unashamed'. This vulnerability creates an unexpected, yet united power. With the Divine surging through surrendered, unhindered spouses, the world sees biblical couples as invincible Warriors. This Oneness creates a satisfied life, a lovers' passionate dance, and an explosive desire for more intimacy.

☉ **Biblical Marriages thrive in a broken world.** To live like Christ defines our call. The forces of evil threw everything they had at Jesus, even using His own people against Him. Yet He never fell into despair, fear, or defeat. He marched to the Cross and shouted in victory, "It is finished." May we walk as He walked. We are created to worship Yahweh until our final breath.

God allows redemptive separation for those in abusive relationships. These are times to separate for protection, healing, counseling, and accountability. God defines divorce as redemptive separation. (Exile to Exodus) God's prime directive desires full restoration.

Free resources:

Patriarchproject.com: Select *Marriage Course*. Handouts available.

Gracecitychurch.com: Select *Sermons*. Then *Stronger Marriage* icon. Sermon notes available.

Search youtube.com: *Gary Smalley Hidden Keys to Loving Relationships*

***"We reflect the god we serve."***

Let's first define what I mean by gods. Paul says our enemies are not flesh and blood; but we battle against the forces of darkness. They are invoked by our heritage through family rituals or artifacts. We invite them in by pagan chants, self-help mantras, Astro-projection, spirit games, and gang activities. Sadly, they afflict victims who have been abused by a possessed person. These forces are often tempting believers and when we yield to that temptation, we open a door to their harassment. (Ephesians 6:10-20)

***What influences my life more than Jesus' love?***

But I also use the term 'gods' to include anyone or anything we worship other than Yahweh. Self-centeredness, narcissism, and any other 'ism' we bow to claims our allegiance. Hidden gods are those from family sins and traumas, cultural norms, catechisms, and traumatic sufferings that created deep neural pathways which guide our motivations and reactions.

***What do I believe and act upon that is contrary to the Bible?***

Idols include career, possessions, people pleasing, self-preservation, comfort, anything that we strive to gain more than Yahweh. The list is often long. And finally, worshiping any religion other than being a born-again, spirit-filled disciple of Jesus. If we aren't daily bowing our knees to King Jesus, then we are serving the wrong god.

***What do I pursue more than Jesus?***

The greek: 'Peitho' translates to the English words believe or obey which are used interchangeably. We cannot say we believe in God and not obey Him. As an image bearer, we are to reflect Him in every aspect of life. We serve as His ambassador to our spouse.

**Jesus never loses control.**

**Jesus showed no fear or despair.**

**Jesus never complained.**

**Jesus forgave those who persecuted Him.**

**Jesus carefully crafted His conversations.**

**Jesus stayed focused on His mission.**

**Jesus loves sacrificially.**

**Jesus forgives sin.**

**Jesus says He is the Way, Truth, Life.**

**Jesus says I am God Most High.**

**Jesus says, "Let go. Trust Me."**

**Jesus uses suffering for good.**

**Jesus picks us up with we're down.**

**Jesus says, "Only I am worthy of praise."**

**Jesus is joy.**

**Jesus says all people are redeemable.**

**Jesus provides strength to His children.**

**Jesus says, "I see you as you are and love you."**

**Jesus redeems our broken past.**

**Jesus knows the future.**

*My god allows emotions to rule actions.*

*My god fears loss, pain, failure.*

*My god blames self or others, then whines.*

*My god wants vengeance.*

*My god blurts out words without thinking.*

*My god is undisciplined in all arenas of life.*

*My god self-preserved or lusts with no love.*

*My god holds tight to faults of others.*

*My god declares, "My way or no way."*

*My god says, "Google knows best."*

*My god says, "I'll trust what I can control."*

*My god despises Jesus in suffering.*

*My god kicks others when they're down.*

*My god teaches mantras of self-help.*

*My god prefers misery.*

*My god declares people unfixable.*

*My god smears guilt on weaknesses.*

*My god loves to shame and hate."*

*My god says, "I am my past."*

*My god assumes an outcome, quits when it starts to go wrong.*

# Prayer Encounter Model



Make time! Allow an hour in quiet place alone with God in His Word. Turn off all distractions, yes, that includes the phone. Anticipate Him in the silence to calm heart and mind. \*Begin by speaking aloud your gratitude for how He has provided and protected. Start with the obvious: health, home, AC, food, then move into the personal. Recite highlights of your history with God. Enjoy every memory. I recommend you journal these praises so that on difficult days, you can read them and be renewed.

\*Read aloud Psalms, Revelation 1, 4-5, 21-22, Exodus 15, Luke 1:46-55, Colossians 1, Hebrews 1.

\*Sing to Him. Praise! Worship until all you can do is worship. Stay in this time until His majestic love overcomes the anxieties and anger. The goal is to sense His peace settle your heart. The longer you stay in this place, the easier it will be to experience intimacy with Him and hear His voice.

\*You are seeking Him just to be with Him. When His peace settles on you, then proceed.

(Remember, this is not the time to tell Him every detail of every battle, He already knows better than you do. He sees, hears, and reads hearts.)



God's goal for us seeks to know Him more intimately each day. Every time you open God's Word: Pray, "Lord, teach me something new about You." We can't reflect the image of our Savior if we don't know His attributes and actions. This is the time to choose allegiance. Are we willing to die to ourselves: habits, family brokenness, cultural norms, catechisms, gods/idols, anything that does not reflect Jesus? Live by The Hymn of Love. No love=no Kingdom value.

## **How well do we imitate the love of Jesus with our spouse?**

*Love is patient, love is kind, it does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a*

### **If we lack any of these attributes of love; ask what causes me to act the way I do?**

Self-awareness fuels spiritual growth. Pray, "Lord, change me! Search me and expose any unclean thought, word, deed. Heal the deep wounds. Transform me into what you created in the womb."



It's not WWJD: What would Jesus do, if He were here? He lives in us. Therefore ask, "What will Jesus do in me when I yield to Him?" Our goal is to be one with Christ as He is one with His Father. The following are sample prayers that change us from wimps to warriors.

Do whatever it takes in me, in my spouse, in my home until all we do brings You glory.

Train me to let go of everything I fear losing.

Lord, what is Your heart in this? I commit my life to fulfilling Your desires. Don't let me fail You.

What do I profess to believe that I am not living out in full obedience?

Convict me of every mood that doesn't reflect Your Presence in our home.

Expose my selfishness and make me a grace-giver.

Who have I not forgiven? Teach me to pray, hear, and do.  
Teach me to 'stop, drop, and pray' when I'm triggered to react in my old flesh.

As the Spirit reveals answers to your honest seeking, record them in your journal. Then record scripture that relate to the issue. (Ex. God shows you that your moods are creating chaos in the home. Use: *Take every thought captive*: I refuse to dwell on the negative. *Christ in me the hope of glory*: I choose to yield to His power within and expect to experience His glory around me.)



Marriage is the most difficult job on earth because it is God's greatest tool of sanctification. He designed it that way. Two sinners coming together in a covenant that calls them to exhibit the sacrificial love of Jesus to the broken world which does everything evil to corrupt marriage. We will spend our entire marriage, growing and maturing in Christlikeness until we stand before the Throne of God and marvel at what He accomplished. Highs and lows, all to His glory.

Prayer has the same difficulty. We must recognize the stages to never get stuck in a rut.

**We often start with selfish religious challenges.** God if you were good; I wouldn't be suffering. Are you able to fix this mess? Show me a miracle and then I'll believe. Why aren't You what I want? Don't You know how good I am? Do You have any idea what is going on here?

**Maybe He can provide, He just needs to be told what to do.** God, here's what's happening, and I don't like it. But if You'll change him then I'll be happy. He hurt me, punish him. Make me comfortable and happy. Do what I want, when I want it, and how I want it, or I will...

**When our commanding God doesn't yield the results we perceived, true disciples begin to seek more of His Ways, Truth, and Life.** I'm clueless how to fix this marriage. Like Job and his friends, I don't know what Your purposes are in this. But open my eyes to see where You are at work so I can join You. Teach me to pray. Empower me to obey. Lord, change me!

**As you begin to hear and see more of Him in your daily life, you notice others that are struggling. You stop caring so much about yourself and intercede.** Abba Daddy, thank you for my husband. All the blessings I've asked for myself, please give them to him, *first*.

**In this intimacy and awe of His power, you can only worship.** O Father, these times are tough. The suffering is terrifying. But oh, I look at You and I'm undone. You deserve unceasing worship. Praising You keeps my heart from turning bitter. Even in the pits of this world, I add my praises to the host of warriors around the Throne. Here I am, I'm Your beloved, and I adore You.

*Mary picked up an alabaster jar filled with nearly a liter of extremely rare and costly perfume—the purest extract of nard and she anointed Jesus' feet.  
Then she wiped them dry with her long hair. And the fragrance of the costly oil filled the house...  
Jesus said, "Leave her alone!"*

**Are you ready to pour out yourself and every precious possession you hold tight?**

