

# Weekly Prayer Plan – Relationship over Religion

## How to Use this Template:

Download and save this document to begin using at the beginning (Monday) of every week. Every week will have different bible verses to meditate on based on the Faith Fight Podcast episode topic for that week. Determine the time and place that you will devote to prayer. The below structure is set for one hour and is only used as a guide. You can adjust your timing if necessary.

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

5 min – Drawing Near To God

5 min – Confession

10 min – God-Centered Petitions

10 min – Intercessory Prayer

10 min – Personal Petitions

15 min – Meditation

5 min – Praise, Thanksgiving & Closing

1. **DRAWING NEAR TO GOD** - Matt. 6:9 “This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name”

*God the Father is the focus of all our prayers. We should never forget what a privilege it is to bend our knees on earth and reach almighty God in heaven.*

2. **CONFESSION** - Matt. 6:12 “Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us”

*When we repent and forgive others, we maintain fellowship with God. But if we hold grudges, that fellowship is broken. God loves to answer our prayers when the lines of communication are not disrupted.*

3. **GOD CENTERED PETITIONS** Matt 6:10 “Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.”

*Prayer should reflect a desire to align ourselves with God’s goals and purposes, not to get Him to follow our plans.*

4. **PERSONAL PETITIONS** Matt 6:11 “Give us today our daily bread.”

*We are dependent upon the Lord for our needs and He wants us to come to Him with our requests.*

5. **MEDITATION Joshua 1:8** “Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.”

*Meditation is thinking about the word of God to understand what it means in the context of the scripture and how it can apply to your life today. The Word of God is powerful enough to still be relevant in your life today even though it was written thousands of years ago.*

**Read through the scripture passages for today as listed below:**

Meditational Verses

Monday: Revelation 3:14-22

Tuesday: Luke 10:38-42

Wednesday: James 4:1-8

Thursday: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

Friday: Matthew 7:13-29

Saturday: John 15:1-17

Sunday: Matthew 15:1-19

**Once you have read the scripture for today, write down your answer to the questions below or any other insight/revelation that you receive in your prayer journal.**

1. Is there a promise to claim?
2. Is there a lesson to learn?
3. Is there a blessing to enjoy?
4. Is there a command to obey?
5. Is there a sin to avoid?
6. Is there a new thought to carry with me?

6. **PRAISE & THANKSGIVING 1 John 5:14-15** “This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.”

*We can end our prayer time with confidence that God has heard our prayer and will answer in His perfect timing. Demonstrate your faith in Him by showing thanks before you see the answer to your prayers.*

# Bible Verses & Notes - Relationship over Religion

It doesn't matter how long you've been a Christian for. Your relationship with God is more important than the religious things that you do. Even if those religious activities are directly connected to your church ministry. We don't want to be so caught up in doing things for God that we forget to keep a fresh relationship with God for ourselves. And I have to confess here. I had to consider myself and this podcast. For a moment of time maybe for some weeks, I was reading my Bible regularly but everything I was reading was for the sake of the podcast and not for strengthening my personal relationship with God. I got in a religious habit of doing work without cultivating a relationship with God. The Holy Spirit spoke to me on that and I changed my behaviour and schedule to spend quality time with God again. In this episode I'm going to go over some examples from the Bible that highlight relationship over religion.

*Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me." And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her." - **Luke 10:38-42 NKJV***

Luke says that Martha was distracted by her many task. It's easy for us to be distracted from God when we think we're ministering to him. So remember when your work for the Lord damages your relationship with the Lord. You need to reassess the amount of work and your motivation for your service. God wants you to serve him but not at the expense of having quality time with him. So evaluate how much **quality** time you spend reading the bible and praying daily.

*You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"? But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble. Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. - **James 4:4-8 NKJV***

If you place yourself in opposition to God through attachment to the world, then he will oppose you because such pride imitates satan. The only way not to be opposed by God is to humble yourself before him. You do this by drawing closer to him. To draw near to God is to come into his presence with prayer, praise and obedience. This is not only reserved for Sundays at church but for every day.

*Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. - Revelation 3:20 NKJV*

This was part of the letter to the church of Laodicea. They had lots of works but it was lukewarm. Things may be even going well for you. You may be wealthy, have everything and you may think that Gods blessings is all on you. But if you don't make time daily for Jesus in your heart, you miss out on intimate fellowship with him and eventually run lukewarm in your spiritual life. Jesus will not force himself on anyone. But whoever will open the door to their heart by submitting to his will, Jesus will have intimate fellowship with anyone who responds to this invitation.

*"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" - Matthew 7:21-23 NIV*

Someone can call Jesus LORD and have a ministry that appears to be authentic. Nonetheless, a lack of good fruit will expose them. The King of kings will thus respond, "I never knew you. Away from me you evildoer". You don't want to be the person who thinks that you are walking close with Jesus daily but far from him in your heart.

*But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." - 1 Samuel 16:7 NIV*

Some people were born with charisma or talents that cause them to stand out from everyone else. I've seen this especially in churches. Someone can sing great or because of their personality, they are liked by a leader and are selected to do something important. It's easy to fool a person but you can't fool God. He can see through the outward appearance and see the heart of a person. The best way to make sure your heart is right before God is to make sure you have a solid relationship with Him. This is done not through serving in every church ministry but through personal devotion and fellowship with God daily.

*You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: “These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules.” - Matthew 15:7-9 NIV*

Jesus applied the words of Isaiah to these religious leaders. When we claim to honour God while our hearts are far from him our worship means nothing. It's not enough to act religious but our actions and attitudes must be sincere. If they are not then Isaiah's words describe us too.

*I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. - John 15:5-6 NIV*

Many people try to be good, honest people who do what is right. But Jesus says that the only way to live a truly good life is to stay close to him. The idea of remaining or abiding in Christ has to do with intimacy of relationship. Jesus is our source. He is the only one who can provide the spiritual sustenance and vitality we need to be useful as believers. You can't expect growth as a Christian if you only go to church on Sunday for a couple of hours and you avoid spending time with Jesus for the rest of the week.

*All a person's ways seem pure to them, but motives are weighed by the Lord. - Proverbs 16:2 NIV*

All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight. People can rationalize anything if they have no standards for judging right and wrong. The Lord looks right through to the very centre of who we are and he knows exactly what drives us. He sees if it's our genuine relationship with him or a religious activity that is just done over and over.