

Writing Listening Prayers for Others
Church of the Savior sermon—handout
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Definitions and framing

- *LP is a practice that allows a person to grow closer to God and others*
- Definition: intentionally listening for the voice of God, then responding accordingly.

Overview of what we're doing

1. General introduction
2. Broad principles of LP
3. Writing LP for others
4. We'll practice it together

General introduction

- Middle path between extremes of ignoring LP or of being excessive with LP
- LP is like dynamite, but this should encourage us to be *more* attentive to LP, more diligent, more careful—not less
- Some of my students:
 - Through LP, ‘the Lord has reminded me time and time again that I am loved and accepted by him.’
 - ‘I have been shocked about how [the LP that others have prayed for me] have been exactly what I have needed to hear. Knowing someone is praying for you is one thing; hearing the things that you actually need is crazy.’

Broad Principles of LP

Three elements (or steps) of listening prayer

1. Listen; impression
2. Interpret, includes vetting
3. Apply

Listen (SPEW)

- Silence
 - Be silent
 - 2-5 minutes
 - If don't hear anything, that is still a win
- Presence
 - Be present to God
 - Rest in His generosity
 - Attention vs. Intention
- Explore

- If a thought, feeling, picture, song, scripture, or a physical sensation comes to mind, then explore it. Ask God to clarify it. Tunnel in on it.
- Often mundane
- Write
 - Record it: prose, poetry, drawing, song or whatever

EXAMPLE

- A friend who did LP on his daughter's behalf
- He heard: "Flower"
- He asked God, "What kind of flower?"
- He sensed: "Lily"
- This led him to Matthew 6 ('consider the lilies of the field; do not worry, but...')
- His daughter was going through a difficult time; her new friends were focused on status, possessions, and the like
- He realized that this passage from Mt 6 fit his daughter's situation perfectly; he shared it
- Result
 - He understood his daughter's situation better
 - He felt closer to her
 - He was able to adjust his prayer life to pray more intelligently for her
 - He felt a deeper sense of partnership with God in his own parenting
 - She received encouragement and affirmation
 - She felt like God and her dad understood her better

LP is a practice that allows a person to grow closer to God and others

Interpret (SWAT)

- Vetting: very important!
- Scripture
 - Does the impression fit with the Bible's teachings?
 - Do the Scriptures give deeper meaning to it?
- Wise people
 - Is there unity among mature believers? (who know the situation)
 - Independent confirmation
- All of our knowledge
 - Fit with established facts?
 - Fit with the situation?
- Transformation
 - Same goal as the Christian life generally: love God, love others, become Christlike

Apply (PAT)

- Similar to the application of any spiritual insight—from Bible study or wherever

- Pray
- Act
- Track

Writing Listening Prayers for Others

Step 1

- SPEW
- SWAT, as appropriate

Step 2: How to share (BER)

- Build up
 - How can I build this person up?
 - Love. 1 Cor 13
 - Should I share? May be best just to pray.
- Extra vetting
 - No hurry!
- Respect
 - Give the person freedom to respond however they see fit
 - Humility

Practice of Listening Prayer Together

Listening together

- Break into natural groups (or as an individual)
- Pick a topic or person
- Listen for 2 minutes
- Begin the process of vetting and illumination. SWAT.

Final Remarks

Long term progression/development

- Persist
- Keep it simple
- Joy: enjoy God's creativity and generosity
- Testimonials from other students:
 - 'I have realized that people can receive extremely vivid thoughts while listening to God, sitting in silence. Some LPs that others have done for me have been surprisingly spot on and exactly what I needed to hear.'
 - 'I have learned that [LP] makes you really think about others and what they need.... I want to continue to [do listening prayer] for others and learn to pray even better. I want to be given eyes to see others and ears to hear them.'