

# Hearing the Holy Spirit's Whispers



Creative Reflection III

Kathryn Yaxley

## Background

*"The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let the one who hears say, "Come!"  
Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift  
of the water of life." Rev 22:17*

As children of the King we often live life limited to this material world and neglect the bounty of His royal provision for us. Consequently we live thirsty lives that leave us wanting. Yet, the Lord has set aside riches for each of us and calls us to come, drink!

It's not easy to find time to take up His invitation. It's not often that we let go of our routines. Sometimes we also need help to approach the banquet table that is His presence. In these pages you'll find help, stepping stones in the form of defined meditations, creatively set out to provide you with a starting point to step out of the hurried world we normally inhabit to simply meet with the Lord. All are based on Scripture and provide a Biblical framework from which you can engage with God's Spirit and begin to quench your thirst.

It is up to you how you use these creative reflections; as part of your private devotions or shared with a friend. Even use them as part of a guided prayer room experience. Instructions are given on page 3 and 4. Irrespective, my prayer is that you will meet with the Lord in new ways that help you grow in Him.

This is the third volume of this series. If you do not have the first two devotional booklets, you can obtain copies for a donation by emailing me on [kingdompm1@gmail.com](mailto:kingdompm1@gmail.com). My testimony on learning to hear God's voice is also available, "Speak Lord for I'm trying to listen."

Thanks to my supportive family and friends whose encouragement, editing assistance and prayer support ensure I can share my work with you. Above all I thank my King, the Risen Lord Jesus for being the source of all things creative.



*And he who was seated on the throne said,  
"Behold, I am making all things new." Rev 21:5*

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## Using these Reflections in a Prayer Room

The creative reflections in this booklet work well when done on your own. All the instructions you need are provided within each reflection. However, one of the ways these reflections work is as focused meditations within a Prayer Room established as at a church or conference.

They work best when:

- The Prayer Room is large enough to allow for several niches or areas to be set up with a small table and chair, Bible, equipment, pens and paper.
- You have the scope to set up a colour theme for the room. Ask the Lord for His theme for the space and listen. Then use cushions and table cloths in that colour theme. The Lord loves to inspire beauty! The very first Biblical mention of the giving of His creative Spirit to a person was to a man to help decorate the tabernacle. Exodus 31:3 However, if you don't have the time or freedom to decorate the space don't be deterred.
- You select several different creative reflections and designate one per each table or alcove.
- You can decorate the table with the appropriate symbol often mentioned under the Equipment heading. For example, for the meditation **Offering Incense in Worship** a gold bowl is mentioned. By locating and placing a suitable gold coloured bowl on that table you provide a focus point for that meditation. A cloth or mat under it in the colour theme will add to the visual focus.
- Print out the Scripture focus in large print or even photocopy that page from these Creative Reflections and display next to the symbol.
- Decide which elements of the meditation you will present and prepare an instruction sheet from the base of the Creative Reflection. Keep it simple so people can have time to move around the multiple niches within the space.
- Make sure there is a focus provided for each reflection that can lead into prayer, adoration, confession, thanksgiving, petition or intercession.
- Place a notice on the door of the room welcoming people and requesting silence so more than one person can be present in the prayer room at any given time. Music can also be distracting when others are present.

## Guiding Principles for Listening to God

1. Find a quiet undisturbed place. Make this your sacred place with the Lord. Become still.
2. Come in prayer to the Lord, committing your time to Him, asking for His protection on this time and confessing any sin that He might show you that you need to repent about. [Sin separates us from hearing God's voice.] Ask for the Spirit of God to quiet you and speak to you.

**Prayer:** Lord, I commit this time to you asking for your leadership. I pray for your protection over myself and this time. Cover me by your grace and show me if there is any sin that I need to repent about (pause). Lord, please quiet me so I might hear you in new and restoring ways. Help me to recognise your voice. Please fill me afresh with the Holy Spirit, expanding me to contain all you have for me at this time. Protect, seal and use all of my senses including my imagination and I place these under your authority. In Jesus' name, Amen.

3. Sit quietly, expectantly in faith, and enjoy just being with God, working through the exercises.
4. Write down and reflect on any impressions or prompts that you sense. There are many ways God might be whispering to you - inner impressions or witness, a prompt to read a certain Bible verse or passage, through creation, through vision or image, picture, directly as you read and reflect on His Word, through others, through words of a Christian song, through dreams.
5. Always use the Bible as your measure, against which you assess what you sense, knowing the Spirit of the Living God doesn't contradict His own witness in Scripture.
6. Journal your thoughts and share them with a mentor or another if you wish.
7. Practice giving time to listen to the Lord.

# Offering Incense in Worship

*“May my prayer be set before you like incense;  
may the lifting up of my hands  
be like the evening sacrifice.”*

*Psalm 141:2*

*“The smoke of the incense  
went up with the prayers of God’s people  
from the hand of the angel before God.”*

*Rev 8:3,4*



## **Time**

30 minutes

## **Equipment**

Bible, notebook, gold coloured or brass bowl (if you have one), sheet of paper.

## **Call to Prayer**

Leave behind your ‘to-do’ lists for the day. Take a deep breath and invite the filling of the Holy Spirit. Place this time in the Lord’s hands, inviting Him to lead you into His presence in a new way.

## **Background**

In both the Old and New Testaments prayer is pictured as incense wafting before the throne of God, as a pleasing aroma. In the Old Testament lifting up hands to God was the posture for prayer.

The original tabernacle contained a golden altar for incense, which was to be offered by the priest both morning and evening, a beautiful picture of prayer offered before our Lord. This incense was specially made up from five costly ingredients that were ground together to make the incense, a picture of different types of prayer (adoration, confession, thanksgiving, praise, requests) all rising together before God’s throne. In Revelation we get a glimpse of what goes on in heaven when we pray. In Rev 5:8 our prayers are pictured in golden bowls as pieces of incense

Slowly read the verses on the previous page and reflect on YOUR prayers acting as pleasing incense before the Lord.

## **Song:**

Meditate on the following words **Let Our Praise to You be as Incense**

Let our praise to You be as incense.  
Let our praise to You be as pillars of Your throne.  
Let our praise to You be as incense  
as we come before You and worship You alone,  
As we see You in Your splendour  
as we gaze upon Your majesty,  
As we join the hosts of angels,  
and proclaim together Your holiness.  
Holy, holy, holy, holy is the Lord.

### **Praise**

Spend time praising the Lord right now.

You might like to take a sheet of paper and write down your praise to God.

OR make up your own song and put it on paper

OR write a psalm of praise to Him.

Once finished place your sheet in the golden bowl and hold it in your hands before the Lord. Imagine it filled with the incense of your praise, rising before the Lord like pleasing incense.

Sense the Lord's presence and pleasure.

### **Reflect**

Your praises not only please the Lord - they help release His activity on the earth. Read Rev 8:1-5. Did you notice that God's dynamic and history - changing actions on the earth (described here in the form of earthquakes, peels of thunder, voices, flashes of lightning) result from the pleasing aroma of the prayers and incense rising before Him? Prayer and praise release God to move on the earth!

### **Imagine**

Read Psalm 149. Notice again the connection between praise and activity against God's enemies. Imagine your praises being used by the Lord to tip His hand to release His actions on the earth. What a great and mighty privilege we hold through the ministry of prayer and praise!

The Lord may have something to share with you to give you some insight into what your prayers accomplish, so wait on Him. He may give you a Scripture or impression, a vision or draw your attention to a biblical story, so ask what the Lord wishes to show you.

### **Praise**

Take some time to praise the Lord, sending up a waft of incense.

# **Drying every Tear from your Eyes**

*"He will wipe every tear from their eyes.*

*There will be no more death  
or mourning or crying or pain,  
for the old order of things  
has passed away.*

*He who was seated on the throne said,  
"I am making everything new!"*

*Rev 21:4,5*



**Time**

30 minutes

**Equipment**

Bible, small decorative bottle (if you have one), tissues, quiet reflective music.

**Call to Prayer**

Settle down in a comfortable chair, leaving all your activities behind. Invite the Lord to release His presence and ministry in this time, entrusting yourself into His hands. Pray that He would cover and protect you.

**Read**

Reflect slowly on the verse from Rev 21:4. You might like to open your Bible and read the context of these verses. Rev 21:1-7

These verses contain the beautiful image of the loving hand of the Lord tenderly and personally wiping away every tear from your eye, as a mother might dry the tears of a young child.

Here is a safe embrace and a safe place to reflect.

**Imagine**

Put on music if you wish. Pick up the bottle and hold it in your hands.

Imagine it full of your tears.

Each has been counted and seen by the LORD, tenderly wiped from your eyes and collected.

Some are tears of the past that you have forgotten you cried.

But there are also tears for a present sorrow.

Your Father has seen them and gathered them all.

The LORD waits here with you, arms opened wide to enfold and comfort you in your current pain.

Nestle into His embrace and let Him enfold you and tuck you close to Him.

Give your sorrow to Him anew and ask Him to comfort you in this moment. Allow yourself to cry if you wish.

He waits to comfort you and reassure that there will come a time when this sorrow will pass away. Let His promise in Revelation soak into your being, strengthening you.

Set the bottle down placing it as it were into the hands of the Lord. This is a picture of entrusting our pain to him, allowing Him to share it and comfort you.

**Reflect**

Think on the image of the glass bottle lying shattered in fragments in front of you, a picture of broken dreams and inner fragility and sorrow. Now imagine each piece painstakingly being reset and recreated into a stunningly beautiful mosaic bowl. What was broken has been made into something beautifully and wonderfully new.

It takes great skill to turn brokenness and sorrow into something breathtakingly new and life giving. This speaks of a great capacity for creativity. But it also speaks of Someone who is sovereign and powerful, yet One who has a personal affinity with the depths of our suffering and sorrow.

That is the picture created by these words. *"He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Rev 21:5*

There are no exceptions. This comes from the One whose own sorrow and death turned into something so life-giving for each of us. He knows sorrow from the inside.

**Imagine**

Imagine that you are sitting on the Lord's knee, tucked against Him. Sense His healing power and strength flow into you through His loving embrace as He holds you. Invite Him to strengthen your hope that He can make something new in you through this sorrow, in His time.

**Pray**

Turn the words of this song into your prayer and confession.

*Something beautiful, something good.*

*All my confusion He understood.*

*All I have to offer Him is brokenness and strife.*

*But He makes something beautiful of my life.*

# Becoming an Instrument for Noble Purposes

*“In a large house there are articles  
not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay;  
some are for special purposes  
and some for common use.*

*Those who cleanse themselves from the latter,  
will be instruments for noble purposes,  
made holy, useful to the Master  
and prepared to do any good work.”*

*2 Tim 2:20,21*



## **Time**

30 minutes

## **Equipment**

Bible, your sketchpad, coloured pencils, reflective music and CD player.

## **Pray**

Commit your time to the Lord in prayer. Invite the Lord to reveal Himself to you in new and living ways as you spend time in reflection and prayer.

## **Read and Reflect**

Read 2 Timothy 2:20,21. Have you ever watched a master craftsman making a musical instrument, at work on one of their own creations? Imagine a violin maker, carving the wood, polishing it until it shines and tenderly and painstakingly tuning it into pitch? This is no heavy handed engagement but a labour of love displaying infinite patient work on a special project.

In the same way 2 Timothy 2:20,21 speaks of the believer as a special project of the Lord but unlike the violin maker our Master Craftsman does not force His design on us. The process of letting go of our hold on our own ideas leaves increasing room for God's purposes to work out through our life.

He does this through the character developing knocks of daily living. The process is often painful and involves chipping away at our interior heart motives like a carpenter might carve excess wood away to form a masterpiece. Letting the Lord cleanse us for noble purposes requires a choice. We have a role to play in determining how far we let the Lord's knife carve our hearts into the image of Jesus. We dull the blade when we resist. We enhance His work as we surrender.

This process of being cleansed and set apart, prepared for God's use, is called holiness. Holiness literally means 'set apart'. The degree to which we surrender to God's shaping will determine how much He can set us apart to use us, for noble purposes or for common. Holiness is conferred on us through Jesus' sacrificial death (as a gift) – we are covered with Jesus' holiness but it is also worked in us daily, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, as we submit to the hand of the Master Craftsman to reflect Jesus more and more.

## Imagine

Reflect on the words of this song.

*Lord, make me an instrument, an instrument of worship.*

*I lift up my hands in Your name.*

*Lord, make me an instrument, an instrument of worship,*

*I lift up my hands in Your name.*

*Lord, play me, Your instrument, Your instrument of worship...*

*Lord, make us a symphony, a symphony of worship....*

*Lord, play now a love song, a love song of worship....*

Take 10 minutes to imagine the Lord playing you as a musical instrument.

What kind of instrument are you?

Are you easy for the Lord to tune and play? Or are you resistant?

Are you in harmony with His heart?

What song resounds in your heart? What melody do others hear?

The Lord God delights to work on you, tenderly, gently and relentlessly loving you into His perfect shape.

What aspect of your life is He currently carving?

How are you responding? What tune are you emitting in this area?

Spend time worshipping and praising the Lord as an act of worship.

## Draw or Journal

When you are ready you might like to try drawing something of what you experienced. Otherwise, journal something of your time with the Lord.

## Pray

Wait on the Lord for a few minutes in stillness. If a picture, Scripture or encouraging thought comes to you, jot it down. If nothing comes to mind spend some time in prayer.

# Holding the World in His Hands

*“Come let us sing for joy to the Lord....*

*For the LORD is the great God,  
the great King above all gods.*

*In his hand are the depths of the earth,  
and the mountain peaks belong to him.*

*The sea is his, for he made it,  
and his hands formed the dry land.*

*Come, let us bow down in worship,  
let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.”*

Psalm 95:1-6





**Time**

30 minutes

**Equipment**

Bible, world globe if you have one, atlas, your sketchpad, coloured pencils, reflective music and CD player.

**Pray**

Commit your time to the Lord in prayer. Invite the Lord to reveal Himself to you in new and living ways.

**Read and Reflect**

Sit for a while and reflect on the words of Psalm 95:1-6.

Now pick up the globe of the world or open the atlas to a map of the world. Ponder the truth that God's hands are big enough to hold, love and care for the whole earth.

Sometimes it doesn't feel like God is in control of this world as the presence of evil and inhumane deeds pepper our news. However, we read in this Scripture that God holds in His hands the depths of the seas and the mountain peaks and all in between.

The hands that hold the world are nail scarred hands that prove that God is not removed from His creation but intimately involved and deeply in love with His creatures.

**Imagine**

Imagine those nail scarred hands holding the globe or world map. The compassion of the suffering servant, our resurrected Lord, extends to each nation on the earth.

Each moment of suffering on the earth has already been experienced by our suffering Sovereign and the penalty paid. Victory is not yet seen in full on the world stage but the globe is in Great Hands.

Rest in these truths and the Lord's presence and marvel at the truths of Psalm 95:1-6 once again.

**Reflect**

While the Lord is Sovereign the New Testament teaches that our Lord's power and love are released in the world through the hands, feet and prayers of His Body. The Lord's presence on earth now resides in and through the Holy Spirit dwelling in His people. That includes you.

You become a container and a conduit of God's Sovereign power and life being released into the world, both in prayer and in action.

**Prayer**

Hold the globe or map with your own hands and imagine the Lord's hands enfolding yours and embracing the world with His compassion and authority. Let Him breathe a prayer into your heart for the earth.

What nation or issue on the earth does He bring to mind that needs prayer today?

Settle down with the Lord and picture bringing this nation and placing it into the hands of the Lord.

Spend time being with the Lord and listening to His heart for that nation. Does a Scripture or an image or arena for prayer come to mind? Then pray that back to the Lord.

**Write or Draw**

Once you have spent time listening to the Lord you might like to: Write down your prayers and offer them to the Lord.

OR

Draw what you sensed from the Lord for the issue or nation as an act of prayer. You may like to turn on some instrumental music while you do so.

**Ask**

Ask the Lord which country He would like you to pray for in an ongoing way. Write down the name of this nation on a piece of paper and stick that somewhere prominently, like your fridge or front page of your journal, so you will remember to pray.

**Pray**

Invite the Lord to pour out His power and give you His heart so you will pray in line with His will for this nation, helping you in your ongoing commitment.


# Training for Reigning with Jesus

*“You made them into a kingdom for God to rule,  
priests to serve him;  
and they will rule over the earth.”*

Rev 5:10

*“I, John, am a brother of yours  
and a fellow-sharer in the suffering,  
kingship and perseverance that come from  
being united with Jesus.”*

Rev 1:9

## *New Identity Papers of Royal Adoption and Kingship For \_\_\_\_\_*

*This certifies for all time and eternity that you are:*

**Status:** *Royal by Adoption into the Triune Family Gal 4:4,5*

**Inheritance:** *A true heir, with Jesus, to the family estate  
Rom 8:17*

**Throne Room:** *Guaranteed unlimited access Heb 4:16*

**Co-regent:** *A full participant in Kingdom activity Matt  
28:18-20*

*Graced to extend this rule in prayer John 15:7*

**Clothing:** *Dressed in Royal White Robes of Righteousness  
Rom 3:22*

*This certifies for all time and eternity that you can:*

**Relationship:** *Enjoy a personal relationship with the King  
John 1:12*

**Authority:** *Use the family name of Jesus Christ John 16:24*

**Partner:** *Enjoy the indwelling royal Holy Spirit Gal 4:6 John  
14:16,17*

**Power Gifts of Royal Bounty:** *Use Special Abilities 1 Cor 12:1-11  
Access Gifts of royal character Gal 5:22-26*

**Signed:** *Father, Son and Holy Spirit*

**Legalised:** *In Jesus' blood shed at Calvary*

**Sealed:** *By the Holy Spirit Eph 4:30*

**Time**

30 minutes

**Equipment**

Bible, note pad, reflective music.

**Pray**

Commit your time to your Father, King of heaven and earth. Ask His Spirit to make this truth come alive to you through this meditation. Turn on the music.

**Read and reflect**

Have you ever considered that you are royal by adoption? Read the following:  
*Gal 4:4,5 "But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship."*

In this case sonship is a special term of favour and legal position, which applies to both males and females of the new kingdom. We are all legal 'sons', adopted into a position of royal favour and inheritance.

Pick up the New Royal Adoption papers and write your own name in the space provided. Then read through each phrase and Scripture reference mentioned applying it to yourself. You have been personally saved and sealed with this new identity, NOW as well as for all eternity.

**Imagine**

You have a rich position, a royal one that brings great privilege. Do you think of yourself as royal? Imagine yourself sitting in the heavens with your Lord and Saviour, covered in His royal robes, every bit as royal as He is. Enjoy that place.

Reflect that you not only occupy a royal position but you do so to learn how to reign. *"You made them into a kingdom for God to rule, priests to serve him; and they will rule over the earth."* Rev 5:10 Your trials and tests are simply building authority in you and as you learn to overcome, you are practicing to act as a king. You are a king in preparation. What does this mean to you?

**Write**

Write up your thoughts and your response in prayer in your journal.

# Acting as Ambassadors for Christ

*"We are therefore Christ's Ambassadors  
as though God were making his appeal  
through us."*

1 Cor 5:20





## Heaven's Diplomatic Passport

**Issued to:** Ambassador \_\_\_\_\_

**Certifying you:** to act as the King's representative on earth

**Authorising you:** to carry out business on behalf of the Triune God

**Engaging in:** prayer and kingdom building activities

**This document affirms:** your legal power to pray in Jesus' name and enforce Jesus' victory over His enemies in His name.

**Full rights** of a heavenly ambassador are yours including:

- representing home government's interests (Kingdom of heaven) in host country (earth)
  - you remain a citizen of home country Eph 2:19
- influencing host country (earth) by bringing in culture and values of home country (Kingdom of heaven) Matt 6

**You have direct access to:** God's Spirit John 14:16,17

Heaven's armour Eph 6:10-20, Divine weapons 2 Cor 10:4

Royal message that Jesus saves lives Matt 28:19,20

Live in God's Embassy, His royal family (Body of Christ) 1 Cor 12:13

Are covered in the most powerful name of Jesus Christ Phil 2:9

**Commissioned and Sent by:** Jesus Christ Matt 28:19,20

### Time

30 minutes

### Equipment

Bible, journal, reflective music, your passport (if you have one).

### Pray

Commit your time to the Lord in prayer inviting the Lord to meet you in new and living ways, releasing His Spirit to refresh, renew and strengthen you now.

### Background

An ambassador is a diplomat of the highest level whose task is to represent their home government's interests on foreign soil. In 1 Cor 5:20 Paul describes himself (and by implication, us) as ambassadors, diplomats, sent ones for the Lord Jesus. All of us, whether living locally or literally in a foreign land, are to act as 'sent ones', God's representatives for His Kingdom. Demonstrating His values, His way of love and life is something each of us is called to do no matter where we live.

While an ambassador acts for their home government in another land they remain fully subject to the laws of their own country. For us that includes obeying God's Word even when local laws contravene that.

### Read and Reflect

Sit for a while and reflect on what you have just read. Pick up your passport, and think of the power it gives you. Each ambassador is issued with a Diplomatic Passport which holds even greater authority. Now write your name at the top of Heaven's Diplomatic Passport and take a few minutes to read and reflect on what it authorises for you. What strikes you? Note that down in your journal.

### Imagine

Sit with the Lord and imagine that He hands Heaven's Diplomatic Passport to you as His ambassador to pray, to act and to speak on His behalf. Receive anew His ability, the Holy Spirit's power to help you, asking for an increase in God's presence to empower at each point. Just enjoy being with Him and resting in this image.

### Pray

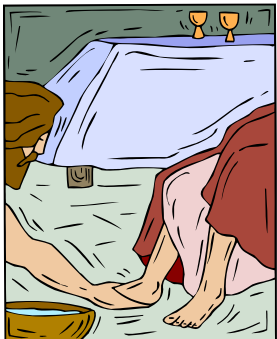
Spend some time praying for God's power to help you represent His interests in your current arena of life.

# Being Washed Clean from the Dirt of Life

*"The evening meal was being served,...  
Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his  
power,.. so he got up from the meal, took off his outer  
clothing, and wrapped a towel round his waist.*

*After that, he poured water into a basin  
and began to wash his disciples' feet,  
drying them with the towel that was  
wrapped around him."*

*From John 13:1-17*



## **Time**

30 minutes

## **Equipment**

Bible, bowl of water and a towel, journal.

## **Pray**

Commit your time to the Lord in prayer inviting the Lord to come with His cleansing power and meet you in this reflection.

## **Read**

Read the verses over the page and recall the context. In fact open your Bible to John 13 and read 1-17. It shows the Lord of all power tackling one of the most menial tasks of the day.

## **Reflect**

Dirt is, well dirty. Dusty feet are dirty feet showcasing the activity of the day, detailing the owner's movements through street grime and mud splatters from puddles crossed. Remnants of manure clinging to hairy legs, telling tales of sheep pens traversed looking for the sacrifice for the evening meal, now underway. It had been a long day for these friends of Jesus who had been going from early dawn to find, purchase, sacrifice, then skin and cook their Passover lamb. Not just a long day but a dirty day. And by the end of the day their feet smelt. In fact washing dirty smelly feet was women's work and a woman servant, the most junior servant, at that.

## **Imagine**

Take time to ponder this image and imagine the disciples' complete and utter surprise. Watch with them as you see Jesus partially disrobe and take up the implements of this menial servant act.

As He wraps the towel around His waist and fills the bowl with water you watch Him approach these friends.

One by one He pauses, bends down on His knees and unties those dirty, smelly sandals.

With loving care He dips each foot, immersing it into the water in His bowl.

Washing away the dirt of the day each foot emerges pristine. Then gently drying it with His towel.

Patiently He works His way around his group of trusted disciples, until He bends down directly in front of you.

He pauses and looks at you with infinite loving care. His look is tender, full of mercy.  
"Will you let me wash you?" is His question. Jesus has filled His basin of cleansing water to come to you, to wash you and cleanse you today. Will you let Him?

It is wonderful to be clean. Clean from life's dirt. Clean from religion. Clean from guilt. Clean from shame. Clean from sin. You can add you own word "clean from \_\_\_\_\_"

Rest and allow the Lord's Spirit to wash away dirt, weariness, jadedness, independence and isolation, resistance and pride from your heart and life.

There may be things that come to mind to be confessed as dirt and left for the Lord to clean away. Or a sorrow which has left its mark on you may need sponging with His love. Let Jesus minister to you through this time.

#### **Activity**

Take up the bowl and towel, wash your feet and dry them as a seal to your time with the Lord. Receive this cleansing act as from Him.

#### **Ponder**

Through this servant action Jesus also models an attitude which does not shun others because of their life stains and sins but rather comes to them in grace to heal, wash, forgive and cover. When we are facing another's life mess, another's smelly past, or splash marks from a trip in a puddle of doubt, disillusionment or despondency - are we willing to sit with them, pray for them, forgive them, rather than exposing them or gossiping about them?

#### **Pray**

Spend time thanking the Lord for His cleansing and forgiving power and His willingness to perform the most menial tasks to serve you.  
Then ask the Lord which person in your circle needs someone to sit with them, as you kneel with a bowl of water so to speak and a towel wrapped around your waist? It may be you can serve someone by offering to pray with or for them for help in a certain situation, or provide a listening ear or a heart to forgive? Act on how the Lord leads you.

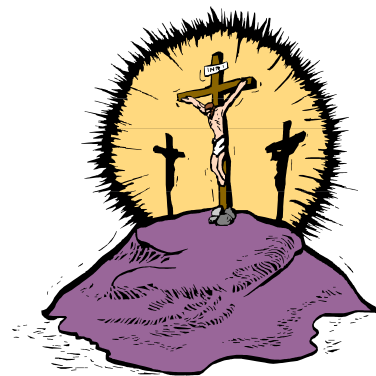
# Running Free in the Power of Surrender

*"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great  
cloud of witnesses,  
let us throw off everything that hinders  
and the sin that so easily entangles,  
and let us run with perseverance  
the race marked out for us."*

*Hebrews 12:1*

*"When they came to the place called the Skull,  
there they crucified him...."*

*Luke 23:33*



**Time**

30 minutes

**Equipment**

Bible, red (or white) paper cut into the shape of a nail, large enough to write on, journal.

**Pray**

Commit your time to the Lord in prayer inviting the Lord to reveal Himself to you and set you free as you meet here with Him.

**Read**

Read the first verse over the page and recall the context. Paul had just described a great stand full of witnesses who have gone before, and successfully crossed the finish line in the race of faith. Now, he calls us forward, each in this great race, exhorting us to run our own course in the Christian journey as a trained athlete. A trained athlete carries nothing! They run free, unencumbered, with no baggage at all. With the same dedicated perseverance and freedom Paul urges us to run to our finish line. His encouragement to 'throw off' sin and all that entangles indicates that we have a part to play in this.

Now read the second reference. Jesus' own finish line took Him through the cross. There He wrestled every power, every possible entanglement, every human weakness and sin to death.

*"And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross." Col 2:15*

There He was nailed to a tree so that we are guaranteed our freedom in the race of life. Our baggage belongs at the foot of the cross, where it lost its hold on us. However, we first need to learn to let go and surrender it to Jesus.

**Imagine**

Close your eyes and imagine yourself running in this race that Paul describes. See the Lord ahead of you on the track, holding out His hands to help you run this race. His hands are nail scarred hands, powerfully able to relieve you of all and any great burden that is chaining you. As you run to Him He is able to gently help you identify baggage that you are carrying, the chains of fear at your feet or guilt over your heart. Or perhaps you are carrying a back pack that has rocks of resentment and rejection in it. Take a few minutes to spend with the Lord. What burden comes to mind that you need to surrender? What is excess baggage?

**Action**

Take up a red paper nail and write down what came to mind. It can be a word or sentence. Then hold it in your hands remembering it doesn't belong in your hands.

The Lord holds out His hands to take it from you. Are you ready to surrender your sin, your entanglement, to Him, placing your nail into His hands? For that is where it belongs. The Lord has already carried this away, cancelling its hold over you, when He let them place those nails through His hands at Calvary. There the price was paid in full to break this chain over you. Your debt He has paid. Your nail didn't hold Jesus to the cross, His great love for you saw Him conquer even this sin and entanglement to set you free. Today. Now. Completely.

Place the nail on the floor in front of you and by faith let the Lord carry this nail away. To continue to carry this yourself is to deny that Jesus can.

**Receive**

His Spirit guarantees His daily help to teach you how to walk in freedom. Cup your hands and invite the Holy Spirit to pour in His presence into your being and release His healing, forgiveness and power to help you live in freedom. Receive the Spirit and these gifts in faith, claiming them and thanking God for them.

Jesus' victory flows through the Holy Spirit into you. He imparts life and freedom to you in exchange for your sin. Today. Now. Freely.

By His stripes you are healed. Today. Now. Freely.

By His blood you are washed clean and released from Satan's grip. Today. Now.

By His resurrection life, you are empowered afresh by His Spirit. Today.

**Draw**

Look once again to the same image of you running the race, seeing Jesus ahead of you. This time He holds out to you new running shoes, shoes of peace and a new athlete's uniform, the armour of God of power and freedom, overcoming the chains of the enemy. He also offers you a drink bottle, of His Water of Life in the Holy Spirit. Spend a few minutes inviting the Lord to dress and equip you afresh. (Read and pray Eph 6:10-20) Enjoy this place of empowering.

**Journal and Pray**

Write down what you would like to record out of this time with the Lord.

Conclude with writing a prayer of thanksgiving.

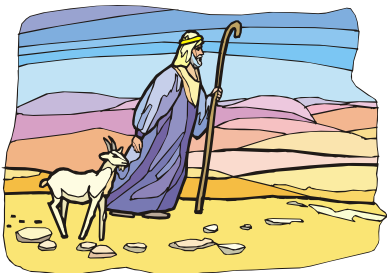
# Listening to the Good Shepherd

*"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me."*

*John 10:27*

*Then a cloud appeared and enveloped them,  
and a voice came from the cloud;  
"This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to Him."*

*Mark 9:7*



## Time

30 minutes

## Equipment

Bible, paper, coloured pencils or crayons, journal.

## Pray

Commit this special time to the Lord inviting Him to still your heart and pour out His Spirit of revelation so you hear His whispers as you meet with Him.

## Read and Reflect

Reflect on the verses over the page. Note that the first is spoken by Jesus to His followers, which includes us. Read it again, this time substituting your name throughout the verse. Are you one who listens to Jesus' voice?

In Jesus' time shepherds lived 24 hours of each day with the sheep, their relationship deeply personal. It was the shepherd who protected the sheep, defended them and led them to pasture and water as the group freely roamed the hills and valleys, which were devoid of fences. The shepherd's intimate and close connection with each sheep, which included calling them by name, was their fence, their safe place. The sheep learnt to listen to their shepherd in order to be safe and find food and water.

Think about Jesus acting as your loving shepherd. Reflect that His voice is available for you to learn to hear. Recall a time when you have sensed His voice. As your Good Shepherd Jesus knows you intimately. What does this mean to you?

The second verse is spoken by the Father to Jesus' core team of disciples at His transfiguration. It is our Heavenly Father's endorsement of our need as followers to LISTEN to Jesus. Listening to Jesus is an active process that pleases our Father. How well do you listen to your Lord? It is interesting that we have one mouth and two ears yet mostly we do more talking in our communication with our Lord than listening. Is this true of you?

## Silence

You have to be really secure with somebody to just sit quietly with them. Silence takes the emphasis off words and builds a level of intimacy where they're no longer necessary. As the Holy Spirit leads you into greater friendship with God, learn to enter into meditation and silence with him.



Solomon knew of his need to listen to God, that God had important things He was willing to say. *"Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools...."* Ecc 5:1

### **Listen**

The sheep of Jesus' time needed to listen to their shepherd's voice daily. This was evident when two flocks met at a common watering hole. As they intermingled to drink it looked impossible to tell whose sheep belonged to which shepherd. At the end of the drinking session the shepherds would move to opposite sides of the field and simply call each of their sheep by name. One by one, as their names were called the sheep separated from the combined group to cluster around their shepherd. That is the picture Jesus creates of His personal relationship with us, His calling us by name and leading us on.

Put yourself in this scene and imagine your Good Shepherd is calling you by name. Move toward Him, leaving behind the noise of the other sheep, the water at the hole and the pasture at the edge. Move into His presence and be with Him. Listen for a time. His heart is full of tenderness and love for you. He cares for you deeply. What does He speak to you? He has things to share with you. Wait and listen. Take five or ten minutes here. You might like to record what you heard.

### **Draw**

Then imagine yourself on the mount of Transfiguration where the Lord allows you to see something of His glory. Bathe in His presence, power, goodness and peace. Ask Him what do you want to show me in this scene? Seeing an impression or watching a scene is simply another way to hear from the Lord. He communicates in many ways and sometimes that includes through our eyes, in picture, as happened to the prophets of old. Draw the scene. This is simply a way to journal using picture.

### **Pray**

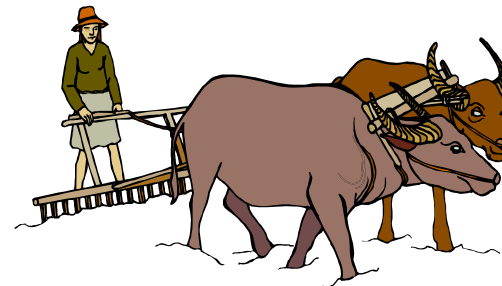
Respond to the Lord out of your time with Him and invite His Spirit to amplify His voice to you so you might hear the Lord more clearly. Ask that He may grant you increasing sensitivity to His sound. Pray for an increasing ability to wait and listen.

# Coming to the One who Rests the Weary

*"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and  
I will give you rest.*

*Take my yoke upon you and learn from me,  
for I am gentle and humble in heart,  
and you will find rest for your souls  
For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."*

*Matt 11:28*



**Time**

30 minutes

**Equipment**

Bible, paper, coloured pencils or crayons, journal.

**Pray**

Invite the Lord to still your heart and mind so you can focus on Him, allowing Him to lead you out of the business of the day into His presence which is rest and peace.

**Read and Reflect**

Read the verses over the page. Jesus uses a common agricultural image of first century life to invite His friends into the absolute beauty of His presence. There, living life partnered with Him, accepting His yoke of leadership, walking side by side as double yoked oxen, is the life of power and soul rest we are designed for.

Soul rest speaks of a fulfillment, satisfaction and deep inner peace. Jesus tells us it comes from being yoked with Him, learning to rest in Him so we can then walk over our fields of life in time with His Spirit.

Any load, carried alone can become heavy and wearying. Jesus' call to us comes as though we are single oxen overburdened and taxed beyond our limits, weary in carrying the loads of life.

What are the loads you are carrying that are wearing you down?

Take a moment to ponder this question.

The Lord invites you into His presence to rest. He welcomes you.

Bring what wearies you to the Lord.

You might like to imagine yourself as an ox bearing a load. Ask the Lord to help you let go of these burdens at His feet.

Then take some time with Jesus.

In that place of His presence Jesus invites us into doing life another way, His way.

**Background**

In Jesus' day fields were often ploughed by two oxen yoked together. As they walked the fields they came to know each other's rhythms and gait, since the yoke ensured they were inevitably positioned side by side.

A junior ox was taught how to plough simply by being yoked to a more experienced ox. Since the more seasoned beast, the master, knew what the different summons from the farmer meant, the junior beast soon learnt how to move, how to obey, how to walk these fields too, simply by being yoked with a more experienced animal.

It is this image of master ox, leading and teaching a junior ox that Jesus picks up. 'Take my yoke' is a beautiful invitation to shared life, to tender instruction, to being able to rest and follow One who knows how to lead us as we walk the fields of our life.

**Read**

Listen to Jesus' call for us to come to Him as recorded in The Message Bible.

*Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion?*

*Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life.*

*I'll show you how to take a real rest.*

*Walk with me and work with me - watch how I do it.*

*Learn the unforced rhythms of grace.*

*I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you.*

*Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly"*

This is not just an invitation to momentary rest but rather a whole new way of partnered life! Learning from Jesus and accepting the daily yoke of His presence and gentle instruction promises soul rest because Jesus is humble. Learning to yield to His expectations and ways for us will lead us wisely over our fields.

Re-read these verses in the Message translation adding your name into each sentence and ponder their meaning anew.

**Draw**

Imagine the yoke that rests over your shoulders is Jesus' own living presence. It rests lightly and holds freedom and joy. It brings companionship and peace. It also brings power to partner with Jesus. Enjoy this picture imagining this precious yoke on you, then draw what you see or feel.

**Pray**

Conclude by inviting the Lord's Spirit to renew and rest you. Pray for courage to listen to Jesus, learning His ways and rhythms so you might do life His way and enjoy soul rest.

# Healing from the River of Life

*"Then the angel showed me  
the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal,  
flowing from the throne of God and of the lamb...  
On each side of the river stood the tree of life,  
Bearing twelve crops of fruit...  
And the leaves of the tree  
are for the healing of the nations."*

*Rev 22:1,2*

*"The Spirit and the Bride say, Come!"  
And let him who hears say, "Come!"  
Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes,  
let him take the free gift of the water of life."*

*Rev 22:17*



## **Time**

30 minutes

## **Equipment**

Bible, your journal, reflective music if you wish.

## **Pray**

Invite the Lord to meet you in this meditation, revealing His love for you in precious new ways.

## **Reflect**

This river flows from the throne of God in heaven. It holds His LIFE and His PEACE. These verses point to a fulfillment yet to come but at the same time they speak of the living call presented to each of us right now to drink and enjoy fellowship through the indwelling Holy Spirit.

## **Imagine**

Turn on the music if you wish. Imagine this River represents God's Spirit here today. The River of His Spirit holds RENEWAL within its water. Soak a while, inviting the Holy Spirit to lead you into these renewing and life giving waters.

Now imagine that as you soak in the River the fruit of the Tree of Life hangs on the branches right over the river, above your head in easy arm's reach. The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. These fruits flourish in abundance here and you are welcome to pluck this fruit.

Which fruit dangles right overhead?

What are you drawn to? Pluck it and enjoy. It's here for you.

The food of the tree of LIFE releases just that - God's very LIFE.

## **Read and reflect**

You might like to read Galatians 5:16-26 and note the contrast between the fruit of the sinful nature and the fruit that comes from God. God's fruit grows in us as we stay connected to Him.

Which fruit is God growing in you during this season?

Pause and ask God for insight if you are unsure.

## **Imagine**

Imagine yourself once again soaking in God's River. See again the tree of life overhead. Notice that this is lavishly covered with green leaves. These leaves are for healing.

Where do you hurt? Physically? Emotionally? Spiritually?

Ask for the Lord's healing touch as gentle as a falling leaf, healing you, strengthening you, relieving your aches and disease, comforting you. Simply let Him minister to you.

## **Journal and Pray**

Rev 21 verse 2 tells us these leaves are for the healing of nations, so this is God's tree for multi-dimensional healing. It covers every kind of healing need including national wounds. We can bring the needs of others to the Lord knowing that He has provisions for their healing in His time.

You might like to pick up your journal and draw a leaf in it. Then write down in this leaf the name of someone you know who is in need of God's healing grace. Let this be a tangible reminder that God has healing big enough for their situation. Maybe they are yet to know the spiritual healing of salvation. Perhaps there is a physical need, or encouragement required.

Bring your friend in prayer to the throne of the Lord, the source of this healing river, and state your desire for your friend. In a way cast your friend into the healing river of the Lord's Spirit which comes to heal, renew, release, cleanse and forgive.

## **Concluding Blessing**

The River of Life, God's Holy Spirit, refreshes and nurtures us now but at the end of time the River will be part of the landscape of the new creation. We enjoy God's life as a present reality but this only foreshadows the vibrant new day just over the horizon. Can you hear the Spirit calling you? Read the concluding blessing, (the whole of Rev 22 if you like), reflect on God's personal invitation and praise Him!

*"The Spirit and the Bride say, Come!"  
And let the one who hears say, "Come!"  
Let the one who is thirsty come;  
and let the one who wishes  
take the free gift of the water of life."  
Rev 22:17*

## Resources to Equip

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### Hearing God's Whispers

*Speak Lord for I'm trying to Listen!* Kathryn's testimony

Hearing the Holy Spirit's Whispers - Creative Reflection I, II and III

### Spiritual Protection

Spiritual Protection for Home and Family – Biblical Principles

**Companions:** Spiritual Protection for Home and Family –Daily Prayers

Personal Spiritual Protection - Prayers to Maintain Christ's Victory

Spiritual Protection for Christian Leaders

Spiritual Protection for Intercessors

You Are Awesome in God's Sight - Prayers for Young People

### Prayer

Just a Few Tent Pegs - *Build Your Kingdom Here* Tasmanian Prayer Tour Story

*Roll Out the Scroll* Prayer Tour – Sydney wider region 2016

*As Family We Go* Prayer Tour – Tasmanian Encouragement & Equipping Tour 2018

*Victoria Gateway* Prayer Tour 2018

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**Kingdom Presence Ministries** is the ministry name of Peter and Kathryn Yaxley. As a couple we are called to share the presence and goodness of the Lord with others. Our heart is to encourage, strengthen and empower the Body of Christ according to Eph 4:12, by providing practical, accessible, Scripture based resources. These materials reflect our experience of over two decades in ministry in Australia, providing helpful keys for Christian life and service.

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