



Quickstart Guide: How to Use Strategic Prayer Worksheets

*For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. **You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.** (Jeremiah 29:10-13 NIV)*

WhiteStone Professionals' Strategic Prayer worksheets are based on three underlying principles:

1. God knows the plans He has for us (Jeremiah 29:11-13)
2. God already has good work prepared for us to do (Ephesians 2:10).
3. God speaks to His children through a variety of means (John 10:14 & 27. See also, *Experiencing God* by Henry Blackaby).

Based on these Biblical truths, we ask God what His plans for us are, and what works He has planned for us. We take the time to pay attention to what God is doing in and around us, and seek His wisdom and guidance in every area of our lives—including work.

Strategic Prayer Worksheets are designed to help focus prayers on specific questions, issues, projects and problems. They grew out of Dawn Whitestone's efforts to align her activities and business practices with what she believed God was calling her to do. Dawn was familiar with several listening prayer modalities for trauma recovering, and inner healing prayer, which she used regularly in her counseling practice, as well as in her own life. After learning the practice of Immanuel Journaling, she began experimenting with using it in business consulting, coaching and speaking. She developed the first worksheet after being asked to deliver the keynote address for the Central Florida Christian Chamber of Commerce. She wanted to know what God wanted her to say to this audience. The questions she asked became the Speaking Engagement worksheet, which she still uses when asked to speak.



More Strategic Prayer worksheets followed. Some were developed for her own use; others for clients. All of them are designed to help users seek God for His purposes and plans for their activities.

To use Strategic Prayer Worksheets, it is necessary to have a conversation with God. In some ways, conversation with God is like conversations with human beings. For one, each of us talks some and listens some. There's a back-and-forth in conversation. For another, the relational context matters. Just like with people, the better we get to know God, the better we will understand and relate to what He is communicating to us.

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:10)

However, there are some ways that listening to God differs from listening to people. For one thing, we don't listen to God with our ears; we listen with our spirits, or we could say, with our hearts. Listening with our spirits requires concentration and attention. Listening with our hearts is experienced differently for each of us. For some, God "speaks" to us visually. They "see" what God is saying to them in their mind's eye, like a photograph or movie.

Others "hear" words. Still others "get a sense" or have a "gut feeling" about what God is saying to them. Some "know" it when they read it or hear someone say something. For some, God speaks to them in scripture verses He brings to mind for specific situations. These are some of the ways that we have noticed how God makes Himself known to us and to the people that we have worked with. As Henry Blackaby noted, God speaks uniquely to each one of us. As far as scripture and history has recorded, the only person God spoke to through a burning bush was Moses. And aren't we glad that God hasn't used a whale to get our attention the way He did with Jonah!

So, if you are already comfortable with listening prayer, you will probably have no problem with Strategic Prayer. If you have never experienced listening prayer, try the instructions below. You may also want to seek assistance from someone who has been trained in assisting people. At WhiteStone Professionals, we LOVE helping people learn the unique ways that God wants to connect with them! We provide workshops, trainings and one-on-one coaching to help people connect with God in listening prayer.



"I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me ... My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. (John 10:14, 27 NIV)

Connecting with God for Strategic Prayer:

1. **Start by thanking God or telling Him what you appreciate.** To connect with God, it is necessary to be in relational mode. In other words, the part of your brain that empathizes and actively engages in relationship has to be switched on. The Strategic Prayer worksheets start with a section for thanksgiving in order to switch on those relational circuits in our brain. Another tip: make sure you actually begin to feel thankful as you do this. When you feel thankful, it lets you know that those relational circuits are activated.
2. After several minutes of thanksgiving, **pause and allow God to respond to your thanksgiving.** Take a breath—or two or three. Be quiet, and still. Allow your thoughts to slow and your heart rate to become calmer. Sometimes we are so anxious for answers to our questions that we are not actually listening. This is where journaling can help. Writing our thanksgiving already slows down our thought processes. Pausing to breathe and pay attention internally helps to quiet us even more. As Psalm 46:10 says, "Be still, and know that I am God."
*Stand in awe, and sin not:
commune with your own heart
upon your bed, and be still...
(Psalm 4:4 KJV)*
3. **Write down the thoughts that come to mind.** For now, as you are journaling, just let it flow. If what you perceive in your spirit sounds like the character of God, assume that it is. Try not to interrupt the conversation with a lot of doubts and questions. Remember, you are trying to get acquainted with God. After you have completed the journaling process, then you can take a more critical look at what transpired. If this is difficult for you, see "How Do I Know It's God" below, or work with an experienced prayer facilitator until you are more confident in your spiritual eyes and ears.



4. **Proceed with the rest of the questions** on the worksheet you are using. If at any point you feel stuck, pause and take some time to reconnect with God through thanksgiving. Then resume the questions. If at any point something doesn't make sense, seek Godly counsel. This includes searching the scriptures and the wisdom of mature, Godly believers.
5. **Test the spirits.** Anything that God tells you will be aligned with Biblical truth. It is ALWAYS a good idea to check what you hear in the spirit with mature, Godly people who have a strong walk with God and are Biblically grounded. Don't try to walk with God in isolation. We have an enemy who is a predator, and who will pick off those who don't stay near the rest of the flock.

*Be alert and of sober mind.
Your enemy the devil prowls
around like a roaring lion
looking for someone to devour.
(1 Peter 5:8 NIV)*
6. **Follow through.** Did you receive instructions? Then take action. Do you have more questions? Search the scriptures. Seek Godly counsel from wise, mature Christians. Continue in prayer. The purpose of Strategic Prayer is to align our plans and actions with what God already has purposed for us. Is that always easy? No. Do we sometimes have doubts and questions? Yes. This was true for the heroes and saints in the Bible as well. Hebrews tells us that God rewards those who earnestly seek Him. Do you really want to know God and His will for you? This is different from wanting God's approval for our own will. As you diligently seek to align your life with what God wants for you, He will help you to do so.

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. ... And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. (Hebrews 11:1, 6 NIV)

“How do I know it's God?”

Great question! Important question! There is no short answer. Each of us must learn to recognize the voice of God as He uniquely speaks to us. The good news is that as



we seek to hear His voice in prayer, we will recognize it more and more. Just like we get to know the unique characteristics of our loved ones speech patterns, timbre, favorite expressions, and other quircks we get to know God's voice as well. We do need to be careful. As was mentioned in the "Test the spirits" section above, we have an enemy who wants to lead us astray, and who sometimes "masquerades as an angel of light." (2 Corinthians 11:14 NIV). So how do we learn to discern the voice of God from voices that could lead us astray? Here are some guidelines.

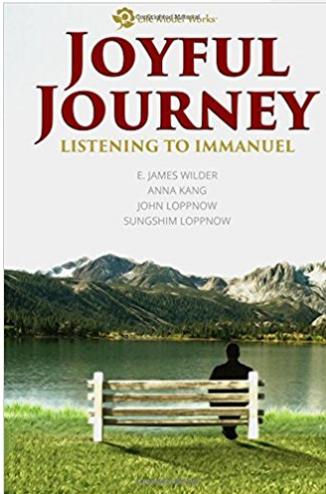
1. **Know the scriptures.** God has revealed Himself to us through His word, the Bible. The books of the Bible were carefully and prayerfully assembled by Godly people. The Bible is the standard, the measuring stick with which all other voices must be aligned.
2. **Know the character of God.** God will not tell you anything that is inconsistent with His character. He cannot do so. Any thought that is not aligned with the character of God was not given by God.
3. **Listen with God's people.** The church is God's family on earth. God is our Father, Jesus is our brother. If you want to get to know God, spend time with His family. Listen with other believers, and especially with those who have been diligent in learning to listen to Him.
4. **Seek Shalom.** In the book *Joyful Journey: Listening to Immanuel*, the authors describe the importance of shalom, or the peace of Christ, in discerning God's voice. They provide what they call the "Shalom Test," which is a list of helpful questions to ask when seeking discernment. At WhiteStone Professionals, when we work with individuals and groups, we check for this sense of peace and righteousness throughout sessions. When God speaks, there is a deep peace that permeates the interaction. Even when He tells us something we do not want to hear, we experience a "rightness" in what is said. Sometimes this is a sense of conviction of our own wrongdoing, or an action that we need to take that we know will be hard. Sometimes He gives us compassion for someone who has hurt us, or an insight that would never have occurred to us on our own.

We hope this short guide helps you as you seek to discern God's voice and align your work with what He has planned for you. However, it is just a short guide. If you need

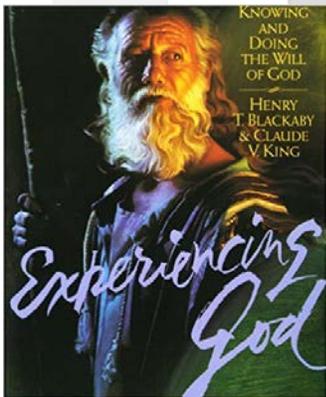


further assistance, reach out to others who love God and are walking closely with Him. At WhiteStone Professionals, we would LOVE to help you connect with God! Please contact us for coaching, workshops or other resources to help you in your walk with God and your work with people.

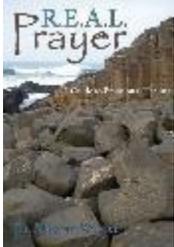
Additional Resources:



Wilder, E James, Anna Kang, John Loppnow, & Sungshim Loppnow. *Joyful Journey: Listening to Immanuel*. Life Model Works, 2015.



Blackaby, Henry T. & Claude V. King. *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God*. 1990.



Warner, Marcus. *REAL Prayer*. Deeper Walk International.