

Drawing Near to God in Biblical Repentance
“A Biblical Pattern for Cleansing and Spiritual Power”
(Preparing for personal prayer, evangelistic visiting, teaching or prayer meetings)

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In this appendix, I present a brief but powerful pattern for dynamic cleansing and closeness to God. And best of all — anyone can do it! While *Drawing Near to God* is no rigid program, it is a simple relational journey with God. It is designed to be accomplished in as little as a few minutes (or as long as God leads). In many cases, God uses such Scripture-based cleansing to literally revolutionize believers’ relationship with Himself. Yet the entire process is concise enough for use by any believer in their quiet times.

This type of biblical cleansing is also crucial in helping outreach groups experience true New Testament power *for* going out to witness. (Acts 1:8) Without interfering with outreach strategies, this process can easily fit within any evangelistic effort. The result of deeper surrender to Christ is far more empowered soul winners and greater evangelistic results (John 15:4-15) There is no question that full cleansing and surrender adds far greater power to all we do as Christians.

Clean Hearts Mean Powerful Prayer Meetings

Drawing Near to God is further designed to bring much deeper cleansing and power into church or small group prayer meetings. Believers, one thing is certain — without greater cleansing in today’s quiet times, prayer meetings and outreach, we will *never* experience the full reviving power of God! Today’s typical brief pauses for cleansing are by no means enough to secure full New Testament power.

If we are to have hope of true revival, we simply cannot continue to neglect deeper cleansing in our personal and corporate experience. Yet, there is hope and we can experience God’s cleansing! *Drawing Near to God* is a simple biblical path by which any believer or church can return to powerful cleansing and intimacy with Christ. Above all, deeper cleansing helps us again seek the “Reviver Himself,” not just “revival.”

Learning to Seek “Christ” — not Just His “Power”

As believers embrace full yielding to Christ, it is important to do it for the right reasons. Beyond question, our motives and perspectives are incredibly important to God! (James 4:1-4) God always reads the content and purity of our hearts. In a day with so much emphasis on success, power and blessing, it is crucial to recapture to the *primary reason* we fully surrender to Christ. In short, we do it in simple loving obedience to please Jesus and further His kingdom.

If our main reason for cleansing is to attain success or “get out of some problem,” we are on a false foundation. Loving and obeying the “Blessor” is the goal, not just the attainment of temporal “blessings.” But of course, in the process of true surrender we gain something truly awesome — power for evangelism and glorifying His name!

To be sure, all who seek Christ will certainly receive many personal benefits and it is definitely right to pray for blessings. However, the primary blessing and purpose is simply loving, obeying and glorifying God! (Matthew 22:37; John 17:3) Indeed, we must be prepared for the fact deeper surrender will at times mean some forms of persecution and loss. Yet one thing is certain — Christ’s fullness is worth any cost a million time over! Child of God, you are about to experience the very meaning of life itself — *closeness and surrender to Jesus!*

Preparing for Cleansing and Spiritual Fullness

We now describe the practical process of full cleansing and yielding to Jesus. While *Drawing Near to God* is designed for practical use in a fairly brief time, always let God guide your unique pattern. It is perhaps most intended to bring cleansing and power into daily quiet times. While in this practical book, we mostly focus on strengthening personal prayer, readers should be aware of the many powerful uses. Furthermore, I definitely suggest that at least once a week, believers take extra time and very thoroughly pray through all the optional cleansing questions in this section. This will prevent hidden sins from building up without your awareness.

Whatever your particular use, simply follow the process of allowing God to examine four major categories for confession and surrender. Above all, let your cleansing journey be *flexible* and guided by the Holy Spirit. This cleansing journey is *not* some rigid program that we all have to do exactly the same way! *At its heart, cleansing is a love relationship of listening to God’s voice for genuine closeness, surrender and power.* This process is not about getting “beat up” but lifted up!

Embracing Clean Hands and Pure Hearts

Child of God, are you ready to draw near to Your Lord? He is certainly ready to draw near to you! God not only promises to meet you, in James 4:8 He reveals the exact process by which you meet Him. “*Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. **Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.***” Do you see the simple keys to approaching God? According to James, the keys are *cleansing* your hands and *purifying* your hearts. But what does cleansing our hands and purifying our hearts actually mean? How do we accomplish this in daily life?

Cleansing the hands represents the “outward things” we do or say while purifying the heart represents our “inner attitudes, motives and thoughts.” No cleansing is complete if it fails to include *both* the outward actions and inner motivations. In this journey, God will definitely transform both areas! Whether you are experiencing this process in your own quiet time, a church-wide prayer meeting or preparing for some ministry, simply pray through the steps of surrender. And rest assured of one thing — God will touch and change your life!

Four Simple Steps for Cleansing and Fullness

In this section, I present a condensed version of yielding the seven areas of our lives to Christ’s Lordship. Each life is actually made up of seven major areas. Yet for purposes of simplicity in daily times of cleansing, I have combined the seven into four.

For full cleansing and surrender to Jesus, I suggest four basic steps. **(1) Prayerfully work through all four categories of cleansing.** Though this is designed for a fairly brief time of cleansing (7 to 15 minutes), pause long enough for God to reveal issues that hinder His Spirit. Simply confess and forsake whatever He reveals. **(2) As you confess your sins, ask God for wisdom in concrete steps of repentance.** Remember, we must confess *and* forsake our sins. (Proverbs 28:13) **(3) Specifically ask Christ to fill and empower you with the Holy Spirit.** (Luke 11:13) Ask in faith for the fullness of God's presence. Do not rely on your feelings. You are forgiven, filled and empowered by faith, not feelings. **(4) Claim the glorious fact Christ's righteousness is "counted" unto you.** (Romans 4:5) Rest in the confidence God now empowers you for spiritual growth and dynamic witness. You are accepted, filled and empowered by *His* righteousness, not yours.

And now dear reader, embrace God's promises and go straight to your Lord in confidence. *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* (1 John 1:9) *"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out."* (John 6:37) As you embrace your cleansing journey, look to Jesus — the author and finisher of our faith. Pay careful attention to prayerfully reading all the Scriptures. After all, it is *God's Word* that cleanses and transforms. Please prayerfully work through all four categories.

Drawing Near to God **"Four Categories for Powerful Cleansing and Surrender"**

Category One — Cleansing of Attitude and Thoughts

"For as a man thinks in his heart, so is he." (Proverbs 23:7a) *"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all."* (Ecclesiastes 12:13) *"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."* (Matthew 6:33) *"Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment."* (Matthew 22:37-38) *"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."* (Romans 12:2) *"Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."* (2 Corinthians 10:5) *"You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures."* (James 4:3)

As we seek God to cleanse and fill our hearts, simply pause and ask God to reveal any sinful attitudes or thoughts you need to confess and forsake. I suggest you pray something like this, "Father, please show me attitudes and thoughts I need to surrender and change." Some issues to pray through are: *self-will, failure to hallow God, anger, bitterness, pride, impurity, complaining, lukewarmness, fear, etc.* For each of these areas, simply ask, "Am I in any way placing my will over God's will and glory? Do I have any unconfessed anger or bitterness? Do I have points of unyielded pridefulness? Do I have on-going patterns of impurity? Am I often complaining? Do I frequently think fear instead of faith? Am I lukewarm," etc.? After each searching question, pause and confess whatever God reveals.

As God has searched your heart, simply confess what He reveals and resolve by His grace to fully repent. Now in faith ask Christ to fill and empower you with the Holy Spirit. My friend, God has pledged to answer that prayer! (Ephesians 5:18) If you are doing this for fairly brief daily cleansing or before some ministry, simply confess any wrong thoughts and move to Category Two. However, if you have more than a few minutes, you might want to pray through the following optional questions for even deeper cleansing of attitudes and thoughts. The expanded questions will definitely take your cleansing to a deeper level.

Optional Questions for Deeper Reflection and Cleansing

1. Do I truly seek to hallow God and exalt His Name in all my attitudes and thoughts?
2. Am I exhibiting a profound reverential fear and awe of God in all my attitudes? Am I in any area placing my will over God's?
3. Are my thoughts actually more consumed with work, hobbies or family than with Christ? Do my motives in prayer or service revolve around some personal gain or interest?
4. Is my greatest affection and excitement more for things on earth than spiritual growth and serving Jesus? Have I failed to center my thoughts on reaching the lost and unchurched?
5. Do I have any persistent thought patterns that are angry, bitter, resentful or unforgiving?
6. Is there any pattern of dwelling on impure thoughts or looking at unclean images? Do I watch programs or view Internet sites that feature immorality?
7. Do I tend toward pride and want very much to be noticed by others? Am I always seeking human awards?
8. Am I in any way envious, self-seeking and over-competitive? Am I jealous when certain others are praised?
9. Do I tend to worry and fret more than believe and trust God? Am I failing to claim God's promise and cast my cares upon Him?
10. Do I tend to gripe and complain instead of praise and thank God in all things?
11. Am I lukewarm about God and His service? Have I lost my first love and excitement for Christ? Am I lukewarm about prayer, Scripture reading, service, sacrificial giving or witnessing?
12. Do I have wrong attitudes and thoughts that have remained in my life a long time? Do I take sins of attitude lightly? God doesn't – sins of attitude and thoughts are actually the seed bed of all sin! (Pride, jealousy, lukewarmness, self-will, unbelief, etc.)

Category Two — Cleansing of Words and Relationships

“Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another.” (Romans 12:10) “Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.” (Ephesians 4:29) “Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” (Matthew 5:23-24) “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” (Matthew 6:14-15) “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34-35) “That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.” (John 17:21)

Pause and ask God to reveal any words or relationships you need to confess and forsake. I suggest you pray something like this, “Father, please show me words or relationships that I need to surrender and change.” Some to prayerfully consider are: *angry, bitter or harsh words, refusal to ask forgiveness, refusal to truly forgive, wrong or improper relationships, having relationships that appear wrong, neglect of family, being wrong with other church members, etc.* Pause and let God speak to each area.

As God has searched your heart, simply confess what He has revealed and resolve by His grace to fully repent. Now in simple faith, ask Christ to fill and empower you with the Holy Spirit. Our blessed Lord has promised to do just that! (Luke 11:13) We now turn our attention to cleansing from sins of commission or omission.

If you can give more than the few minutes, you might consider praying through the following optional questions for deeper repentance. These expanded questions will definitely take you into a deeper level of surrender and power. If your time needs to be brief, simply confess what God has revealed and trust Him to fill you with His Spirit and power.

Optional Questions for Deeper Reflection and Cleansing

1. Do I use words or have any relationships that fail to hallow God’s Name or hinder His kingdom?
2. Do I fail to revere God in some of my words and relationships?
3. Have I spoken words that are critical, harsh or unkind? Do I often seem to offend others or hurt their feelings?
4. Have I exaggerated, overstated or lied in any of my words?
5. Do I use God’s name in any way other than prayer, praise or godly discussions? Have I at any time used words that are crude or unclean?
6. Do I tend to spout off opinions before I pray or even hear all the facts?
7. Have I committed any form of gossip, innuendo or slander? Have I spoken against people behind their backs?
8. Have I spoken words that are critical, negative and discouraging to others?
9. Is there anyone I have offended yet I have ignored God’s clear command to ask forgiveness and seek reconciliation? If you have neglected to address strained relationships, you are utterly out of fellowship with God. (Matthew 5:23-24) According to Scriptures, your prayers and power are seriously blocked!
10. Is there anyone against whom I still harbor the slightest anger or grudge? It is vital to realize your prayers and fellowship are totally blocked by any unforgiveness in your heart. (Matthew 6:14-15; Mark 11:25)
11. Do I have any relationships that are questionable or have the “appearance of evil?” Are some of my relationships improper? Do I have any conversations or rendezvous I wouldn’t want my spouse, parents or pastor to know about (either in person, by Internet or phone?)
12. As a husband, am I acting as a faithful spiritual head of my home? As a wife, am I respectful and faithful in my role? Have I in any way dishonored or neglected my parents?
13. Have I been a part of any unresolved anger or division in my church? Have I waited on others to make the first move towards peace and love?
14. Do I disobey God’s command by showing little respect or reverence for those who lead my church?

15. Have I quenched God's Spirit by placing my own personal preferences ahead of others in issues like worship or church policy? Have I made a big deal about petty issues such as sitting in a particular place, the location of my classroom or other matters equally small?
16. Have I exhibited pettiness by continual complaining and fault finding toward my church?
17. Would other church members mostly describe me as mature, loving, positive and faith-filled or somewhat complaining, divisive, quick-tempered and negative? In God's eyes, little could be worse than being known as divisive, unkind and negative! (Proverbs 6:16; Philippians 4:8)

Category Three — Cleansing from Sins of Commission and Omission

"For I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin is always before me." (Psalms 51:3)
"Whoever commits sin also transgresseth the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4 KJV)
"And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes." (Luke 12:47)
"Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin." (James 4:17)

Pause now and ask God to reveal any sins of commission or omission you need to confess and forsake. I suggest you pray something like this, "Father, please show me attitudes and thoughts I need to surrender and change." Some to consider are: *the idolatry of placing things or people ahead of God, immorality or viewing uncleanness, words that are unkind or unclean, neglecting God's Word and prayer, failure to tithe, neglecting damaged relationships, neglecting Christian service, failure to witness, etc.* Pause for at least 4-5 minutes to give God time to reveal various points of sin.

If you have more than the few minutes, you might consider praying through the following optional questions for deeper repentance. God will definitely use the expanded questions to bring a deeper level of cleansing and surrender. If your time is brief, simply confess what God has revealed and claim His fullness and power by faith. His grace is sufficient!

Optional Questions for Reflection and Cleansing

1. Am I more concerned about my comfort and desires than exalting the Name and Kingdom of God?
2. Have I committed idolatry by placing anyone or anything above God and kingdom service?
3. Do I commit sins of immorality by actions, thoughts or the things I view? (TV, movies, Internet, improper books, etc.)
4. Do I continue any habits that I know are wrong? (Gambling, reading horoscopes, places I frequent or things that harm my body, etc.)
5. Have I said things that are harsh, unclean or irreverent?
6. Do I waste time on things that should never take precedence over church or family? In other words, do I find time for everything *except* meaningful service to God?
7. Have I neglected *significant* regular time in God's Word and prayer? In my typical day, do I make time for most everything except time with God? Have I settled for brief, casual devotions instead of fervent, God-seeking intercession?
8. Do I fail to abide in Christ by neglecting to let Him regularly examine my heart in deep cleansing?
9. Am I robbing God by failing to tithe and give offerings?

10. In my giving, do I calculate the least possible tithe and give little more? Have I neglected to be a cheerful, sacrificial giver? Do I spend so much on “things” that I cannot give generously to God?
11. Have I neglected to ask forgiveness of those I have offended or refused to forgive those who have offended me? Have I denied that I have broken or strained relationships?
12. Am I neglecting to discover and use my spiritual gifts? Am I far more a “taker” than a “giver” in my church? Am I more a “spectator” or “church-hopper” than a committed, ministering member of my local church? Have I neglected to seriously pray about sacrificial service or missions?

As God has searched your heart, simply confess what He has revealed and resolve by His grace to fully repent. In simple faith, ask Christ to fill you with the Holy Spirit. He will surely answer your prayer! (Luke 11:13; 1 John 5:14-15) Our final element of cleansing focuses on ways we have not fully surrendered to Christ’s Lordship.

Category Four — Cleansing from Rejecting Christ’s Full Lordship

“But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46) “And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.” (Luke 14:27) “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.” (John 12:24) “But Jesus said to him, “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” (Luke 9:62)

Pause and ask God to reveal any areas you have not fully yielded or ways you have ignored His voice. I suggest you pray something like this, “Father, please show me areas I have rejected Your total Lordship in my life.” Some areas to consider are: *delayed or partial obedience, tolerating areas of ongoing sin, lack of full yielding, refusal to fully surrender, self-reliance, resisting God’s breaking, etc.* Pause for several minutes to give God time to speak.

If you have more than the few minutes, you might consider praying through the following optional questions for deeper repentance. God will use the expanded questions to bring a deeper work of surrender. If your time needs to be brief, simply confess what God has revealed and trust Him to fill you with His Spirit and power.

Optional Questions for Reflection and Cleansing

1. Has God spoken to me about an area of my life yet I still resist full obedience?
2. Have I said I am “working on” some area of sin yet I have supposedly been working on it for months (or years) with little real change?
3. Have I “said” I have fully yielded something when in truth, I have not?
4. Has God called me to some challenging new ministry or decision but I am putting it off because of fear?
5. Is there something God has told me to do or give up, yet I am acting like I am not sure what He is saying (when deep down I already know)?
6. Are there areas of repentance where I’ve taken a few steps but stopped short of full obedience?
7. Has God asked me to die to some cherished possession, person or dream, yet I still have not yielded?

8. Do I confess sins but fail to really forsake them? Do I commit the same sins over and over? (Such patterns are an especially dangerous form of abusing grace.)
9. Do I reveal pride and self-reliance by thinking a “little prayer” is all I need?
10. Have I resented God’s breaking and pruning by complaining about my sufferings and trials? Do I fail to seek God’s lessons in trials or think mostly of just “getting out of the difficulty?”
11. Am I in any way envious or resentful that others seem to have greater blessings or comforts than me? Do I pridefully think, “I am as good as them, why doesn’t God bless me?”
12. Do I become irritated or somewhat resentful when God (or people) do not work in ways I desired or expected? Remember if something (including ministry) has the power to make you resentful at God, it has become an idol!

As God has searched your heart, confess and forsake whatever He has revealed. Remember, you are “justified” by Christ’s righteousness and “accepted” in the Beloved. In simple faith, ask Christ to fill you with the Holy Spirit. Stand strong in His wonderful promise to do just that! (Luke 11:13) Do not let your “feelings” dictate your faith in God’s acceptance, fullness or power to use your life. Trust His indwelling power and acceptance even though we are all a continuing “work in progress.”

Moving Forward in Jesus

Dear saint, as you have worked through four areas of cleansing, you can now pray with glorious confidence through Christ’s righteousness! You can and should now ask for the filling of the Holy Spirit. *“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”* (Luke 11:13) *“And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit.”* (Ephesians 5:18) If you ask in faith, God will surely empower your life!

If this cleansing time was to prepare you for outreach, soul-winning, teaching or preaching, you can now go forth in total confidence of His awesome anointing and direction. And remember “with God, all things are possible.” (Philippians 4:13) Let us praise the name of the God Whose grace is greater than all our sin and weakness!