

“Shaped to Bear Good Fruit”

Exercise: A Prayer Memorial

This exercise helps you focus on connecting with God more closely in prayer, so you can bear good fruit.

Before you begin, take a moment to offer a prayer.

Dear Lord, thank you for reminding us that you are there when we struggle to bear fruit, and feel overwhelmed or burdened. We ask that you help us be honest with our feelings as we come to you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Jacob said, “I will build an altar of stones to God, because He answered me in my distress;
He has been with me wherever I have gone.”
(Genesis 35:3)

For this exercise, choose a receptacle (jar, bag or box) and objects to put inside (pebbles, paper clips or paper pieces). Or, if you wish, use bigger rocks and stack them in your yard for a memorial.

Whenever you talk with God, take an object and place it in the receptacle. When you feel sad, anxious, filled with joy, or concern for others...pray. Then memorialize every prayer by adding another object to your chosen receptacle. Over time, you can see your memorial grow, and remember that God is at work in you, and through you. He is shaping you, through your prayers, to prepare you to produce good fruit.

Often we pray in our heads; but using other senses, like sight and touch, can help us focus more in the moment.

- Pick up your object and place it inside your memorial (take time to talk with God about your concern or burden)
- As God answers, add another object to your memorial and thank him
- Be sure to pray specifically for God to be at work in your own life and character, and in the lives of those around you, to produce good fruit.

As you pray for one thing and another, you can watch your memorial grow. It becomes a tangible reminder of your need for God, your dependence on him, and his responses to you. It allows God to shape you, through your prayers, to bear good fruit.