

6 Ways to Stay Present to God and Others



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by [Kim Butts](#)

A few years ago, my husband went through his second of three battles with cancer. Following treatment that put him in remission, he had an appointment with an integrative oncologist to discuss some alternative ways to keep him healthy. Along with a green smoothie recipe and some other recommendations, Dr. Park talked a lot about stress. This was not a huge surprise as most of us now know how damaging stress can be to our bodies; however, it was how he used an example from his own life as a physician that gripped my heart. He is

not a believer in Jesus, but his counsel agrees so completely with the counsel of God. Dr. Park said, "If I came into this room today fully aware and pre-occupied with the fact that there are other patients in rooms waiting for me to get to them, I would come in here worried and stressed. I would hate coming to work every day knowing that I can never keep up as I would like to. But," he said, looking at my husband, "I choose to come in and focus on you – just you. I have learned how to simply live in the moment I am in and not the moments I can do nothing about other than worry. Stay present to the moment you are in. It will help you relieve worry and stress."

I translated this exchange with the Dr. into spiritual terms: Stay present to God who is in this moment with you. His yoke is easy and His burden is light (Matthew 11:30). Every moment of every day God is present to us. He doesn't take breaks to involve Himself elsewhere. He is within us, about us, for us, and desiring to engage with us in all things. This is a great encouragement to me. And, it is a way to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). As I increase my awareness of Christ in me...continually breathing life into my experiences (good or bad, exciting or mundane), I can lessen my worry about what is next, who is waiting for me to do something, what has happened in the past, or how much work there is to be done. This awareness allows me to stop being conformed to the image of the world, but instead to be transformed by the renewing of my mind (Romans 12:2). I want to be able to stay in the moment with God's peace and presence rather than in moments that contain stress and worry.

Here are some suggestions on how to live this out in a practical way:

- **Put on the armor of God** (Ephesians 6:10-17) so that the enemy is unable to tempt you to be anxious about other moments rather than the one you are in. We are all in a major war and it is important to be clothed with Christ (the armor) in order to win the daily battles of staying

present to the moments He invites us to step into. Don't forget to praise God that He is the Ultimate Victor in this war! We just want to be His faithful warriors.

- **Sit quietly in the presence of God** for a few minutes, apart from noise or other distractions. When you are comfortably settled there, release to Him whatever is causing you worry, anxiety, stress or concern. Ask Him to free you from the rushed, crazy pace of the world and to teach you how to be present to Him only. Picture the Father gently touching your head with the intent to release you from the rushed ways of the culture in order to transform you by renewing Your mind.
- **Read and pray through Philippians 4:6-7** as a powerful way to overcome the distraction or worry of the other people, events, undone work, etc. that keep you from staying in the spiritually important moments: "Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus." The Devil would like nothing more than to keep us from the moments when we are seeking God's face, developing and maintaining meaningful relationships, and serving His kingdom.
- **Practice staying present to God in every moment.** He might wish to speak to you in the most difficult, awkward, or unexpected times. Practice being attentive in the midst of your everyday life. Whether you are overcome with joy, filled with uncertainty, or if you are running away from the moment due to fear or frustration, don't disconnect from God's presence. He is near – always.
- **Practice focusing on and being present to other people.** (especially your family members) you are with by turning off your phone, and/or looking at them instead of an iPod, game or computer screen. Invite God into the

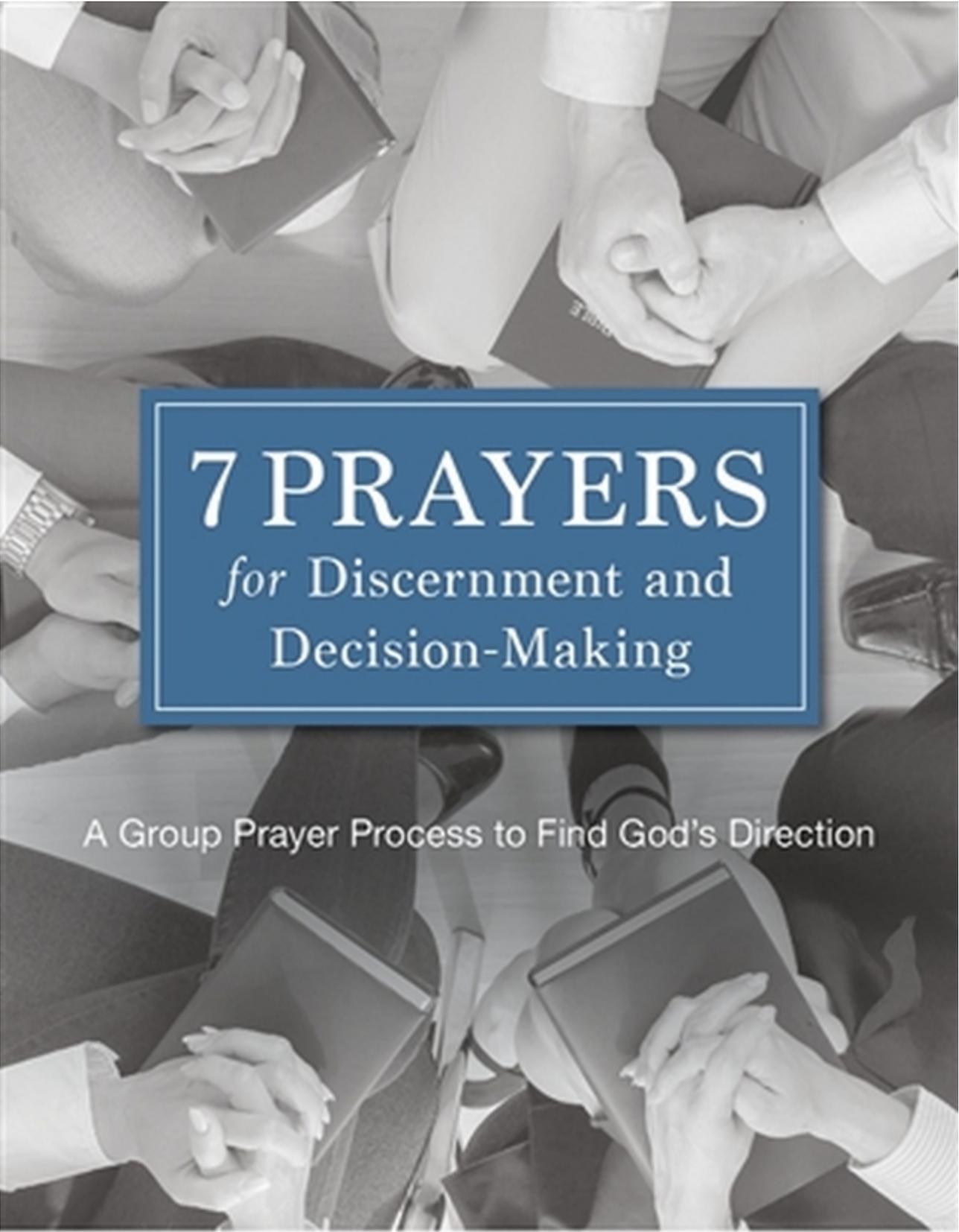
moment and see if He doesn't give you plenty of time to go back to the other things you feel are needing your attention. And, you will not damage relationships with people who feel you are just too busy or that they are not worth your time. Sometimes we miss opportunities God places in front of us because the enemy has succeeded in distracting us. He will even use good, godly things as distractions. What kingdom opportunities are lost because we aren't staying in the God moments?

- **Pray:** Father, You are the Peace-giver, and the God who lives in each of my moments, who walks beside me, and who deserves my worship and my time. Keep me from being worried, stressed or distracted by things that rob me of the moments when You have directed me to people, situations or work that will build Your kingdom on this earth. May I rest in the knowledge that You will care for the people and projects that are waiting for my attention so that I can stay focused on whoever You lead me to and whatever You desire me to accomplish for the glory of Your Name alone!

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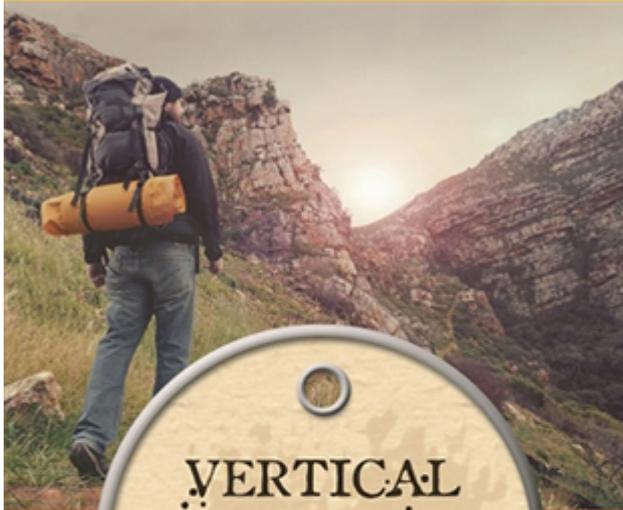
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