

Take a Prayer Walk

One of the most common struggles in the practice of spirituality is maintaining mental focus in prayer. When I try to pray, I often find myself thinking about my to-do list or daydreaming instead of talking to God. But walking as I pray—either in a large place indoors (such as a church building), or more frequently, outdoors—usually keeps my mind from wandering as easily. In addition, I typically bring a small Bible to prompt my prayer periodically during the walk.

The walking and the weather invigorate my sluggish soul. Looking up into the blue or out to the horizon refreshes my sense of the greatness of God. The sights, smells, and sounds of my Father's world surround me with reminders of His presence. The cadence of my pace, or occasionally stopping to stare into the distance, often enables me to concentrate in prayer more easily than when I'm still and my eyes are closed.

Abraham's son, Isaac, is an example from Scripture of walking while thinking on the things of God. Genesis 24:63 reports, "And Isaac went out to meditate in the field." Four hundred years ago, an English Puritan named Joseph Hall wrote in his influential book, *The Art of Divine Meditation*, "All our teachers of meditation have commended various positions of the body, according to their own disposition and practice. . . . But of all others, I think that Isaac's choice was best, who meditated walking."¹

Perhaps no one in church history is more closely associated with a life of meditative prayer than George Müller. He lived in Bristol, England during the nineteenth century where he founded an orphanage and a literature distribution ministry. Müller recorded more than fifty thousand specific answers to prayer, thirty thousand of which he said were answered the same day he prayed. Notice that his normal mode of prayer was a meditative prayer walk:

I find it very beneficial to my health to walk thus for meditation before breakfast, and . . . generally take out a New Testament . . . and I find that I can profitably spend my time in the open air.

I used to consider the time spent in walking a loss, but now I find it very profitable, not only to my body, but also to my soul. . . . For . . . I speak to my Father . . . about the things that He has brought before me in His precious Word.²

Simplify the struggle of staying focused in prayer, and refresh both body and soul with a leisurely walk in conversation with God from His Word.

¹ Joseph Hall, *The Art of Divine Meditation*, in *The Fifty Greatest Christian Classics*, vol. III, (1607; reprint ed., Lafayette, Ind.: Sovereign Grace Trust Fund, 1990), p. 432.

² Roger Steer, comp., *Spiritual Secrets of George Müller* (Wheaton, Ill.: Harold Shaw,

1985), pp. 61-62.

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