



Invite the Spirit to Transform You

a guide
by Glen Elliott



We're In a Tough Battle!

We are in a spiritual war. The Devil is fighting to ruin our souls. He attacks us by feeding lies to our human desires (the flesh). When we buy lies and follow the flesh, it controls our behavior, damaging our relationship with God and others and hurting ourselves. The Devil and our flesh are mighty foes. There's only one path to spiritual victory: to become more and more like Jesus through the truth and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Paul in Galatians 5 instructs us to crucify our flesh (our sinful desires), and we do that by walking with and allowing the Holy Spirit to lead us (Galatians 5:24-25). When we “keep step with the Spirit” and give him control and influence in our lives, we'll see the Spirit produce fruit like love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

Do you want this kind of fruit growing in your life? Do you want to be like this? Do you want to become more and more like Jesus? It won't come by sheer willpower. It won't come by following religious rules and rituals. It comes only by surrendering to the Holy Spirit as you let him have his way with you.

This guide provides an example of a daily prayer you might use and the spiritual practices that will help you daily surrender to the Holy Spirit and daily crucify yourself. Don't try to start and do all the spiritual practices at once. Choose one and develop it as a consistent habit. Then add another until it becomes a habit. But the key is to daily surrender to God and walk with the Holy Spirit as we follow Jesus.

A Prayer of Surrender and Commitment

John Stott is one of the great pastors and theologians who has had worldwide influence on the church. He is one of my heroes and models of Christlikeness. His book **Basic Christianity** is a classic. Every day when he woke up, he prayed this prayer. It's a great model upon which to build your own daily prayer of surrender.

Use this prayer or
make one of your own:

Heavenly Father,

I pray that this day I may live in your
presence and please you more
and more.

Lord Jesus,

I pray that this day I may take up my cross
and follow you.

Holy Spirit,

I pray that this day you will fill me with
yourself and cause your fruit to ripen in
my life: love, joy, peace, patience,
kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
gentleness, and self-control.



Spiritual Practices

Spiritual practices are our part in “keeping in step” with the Spirit. They help us walk or live in the Spirit and allow the Spirit to lead us. They invite God’s presence into us so he can transform how we think, what we believe, and how we act. As the Spirit has greater influence in us, we crucify our flesh and allow the character of Jesus to become stronger and more powerful in us. This is the front line of the spiritual war we face daily.

Here are two classic resources on the many different spiritual practices:

- **Celebration of Discipline**
by Richard Foster
- **The Life You’ve Always Wanted**
by John Ortberg

Below are the three basic and “standard” spiritual practices used by Jesus and the disciples. The books listed above can direct you in how to do these practices and introduce you to others. Note that many of the spiritual practices are aided by taking notes or by journaling.

Daily Quiet Prayer

Jesus prayed often (Luke 5:16). Prayer touches God, and God changes things. Prayer changes the one who prays. Prayer is something we learn to do. That’s why Jesus taught his disciples how to pray (Luke 11). The key to building this habit is to set a regular time and quiet place for prayer - both time and place are vital and unique to you. Then have a pattern you use (you can change it up from time to time). Use the Lord’s Prayer as a guide; that’s why Jesus gave it to us. Use an outline like: Praise, Thanks, Confession, and Requests.

Make sure your time is not just asking but a simple, honest conversation with God. Think about this time like having lunch or coffee with God to deepen your relationship with him.

A key part of this quiet time is to redirect our thinking from the ways of the world to the ways of Jesus. Romans 12:2 says: Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. In our prayer time, we seek to have our minds and our thoughts influenced and controlled by the Spirit of God. That's why prayer is so effective when combined with Bible reading.

Bible Reading and Reflection

The goal isn't to read the Bible for information or to finish a certain number of chapters. The purpose of Bible reading and reflection is to read God's Word to hear from God. Begin your time by asking God to speak to you, then really listen. Anticipate God speaking to you through his Word. What might you learn about God, yourself, others, or this world? How will it make a difference in your life, and what do you need to do about what you understood? In the end, Jesus said it isn't about what you read; it's about what you do with what you read (see Luke 6:46-49; James 1:21-25; John 14:15)

Fasting

We fast from something that we consume and has the potential to consume us. It can be something that we typically “can’t live without,” or it can simply be something we enjoy but, in fact, can distract us from God or serves as a substitute for complete dependence on God. Fasting from food is the usual kind of fast. This fast can be from certain foods like sugar or caffeine, certain meals like lunch, or for a period of time like a day or two. We can also fast or abstain from activities or hobbies (like watching TV, social media, gaming, our phones, etc.) or habits (like talking too much, shopping, etc., or anything we’ve come to depend on.

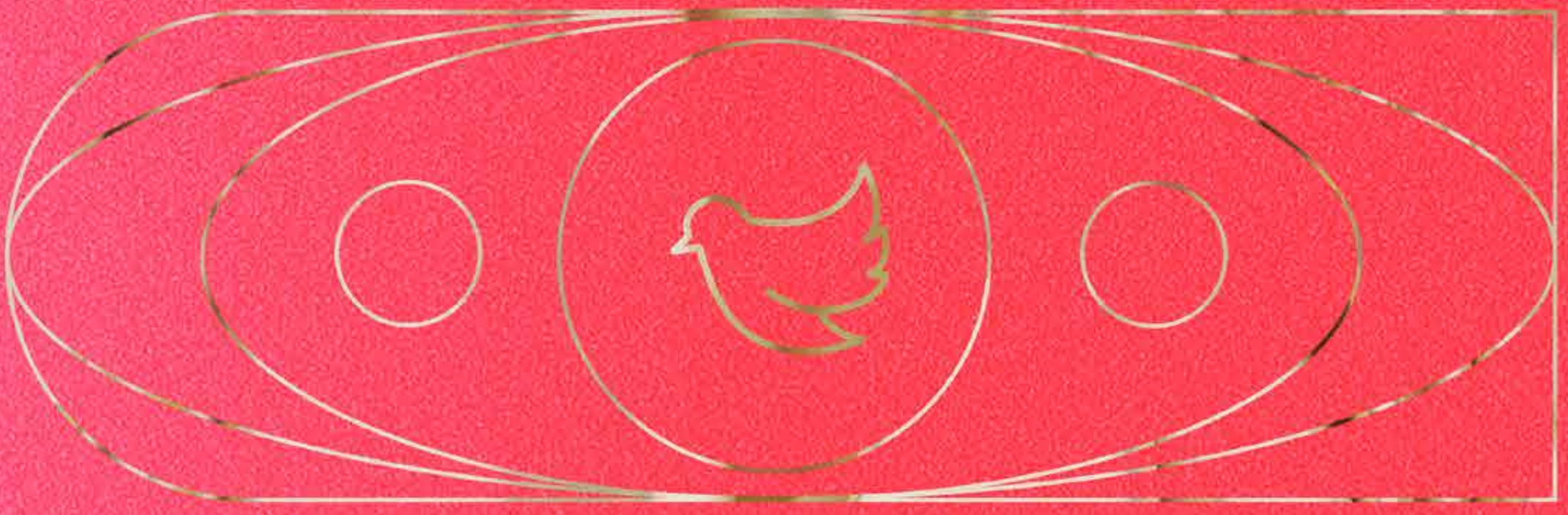
We fast for three basic reasons:

- It reminds us of our selfishness and self-focus. Fasting is a tangible act of crucifying ourselves. It's self-denial and dying to self.
- During our fasting, the desire or temptation to partake of the food, activity, or habit becomes our reminder or prompting to pray.
- We use the time we invest in eating, preparing food, or in the activity or habit we are fasting from for prayer, Bible reading, and reflection.
- Fasting is an act of self-denial and helps us be more in tune with the Holy Spirit.

Make a plan.

Get started.

Remember, the goal is to connect with and surrender to the Holy Spirit to give him more influence and control in your life. The result is that the Spirit will produce spiritual fruit.



Manifest

the evidence of the Spirit

