

## **The Five Finger Prayer.**

You start with folding your hands, your thumb is nearest you. So, start by praying for those closest to you, your loved ones, your family and friends. Then move to your index finger, the pointer, those that point us in the right direction, our Bible teachers, your pastor, and school teachers.

Next is the tallest finger. It calls us to pray for those in authority, our national and local leaders, our church leaders, your supervisor at work. Then there is your ring finger and it is usually the weakest. Pray for the weak, those who are marginalized or in trouble or who are suffering. Then comes the little finger, leaving yourself as the last person to pray for, reminding us of our smallness in relation to God's greatness. Ask God to supply your needs. Philippians 4:6, 19 says, *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus."* (Philippians 4:6,19 NIV).

**A-C-T-S.** The A is for **Adoration**. Start your prayer with worshiping God. This may be a song, or declaring God's attributes, such as God, You are Holy, You are Love, You are Creator, You are Redeemer, and I worship you.

The C is for **Confession**. The word means "to agree with." We confess what we do wrong, agreeing with God that it is a sin against God, believing God forgives us and restores us. 1 John 1:9 says, *"But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from everything we've done wrong."* (1 John 1:9 CEB).

The T is for **Thanksgiving**. In "adoration" we focus on who God is, in "thanksgiving" we focus on what God has done. Thank you for loving me, keeping me, protecting me, saving me, providing for me, but not only me, but your children everywhere. God, you are so good to us.

The S is for **Supplication**. Supplication is when we pray for our and others' needs. It is asking God for something. What do you or others need from God? Do you need mercy, do you need healing, do you need guidance, do you need patience?

**The Welcoming Prayer Practice.** (Based on Father Thomas Keating's teachings on Centering Prayer)

### **STOP**

Become aware of the energy of a distressing, hurtful, or painful feeling, thought, bodily sensation that you experienced this week. Maybe anger, fear, discouragement, grief, pride, envy, gluttony, greed, lust, or apathy, a lack of feeling anything. Then,

### **FOCUS**

Do not try to drive the reaction away. Instead, gently sink into the energy. Take a deep breath and bring your full awareness to what you are experiencing. Stay with it. I know it is not easy. Now,

### **WELCOME**

Use the word "WELCOME" as a symbol of your intention to consent to the presence and action of the God's Indwelling Spirit in what you are experiencing. Allow yourself to be in the presence of God. And lastly,

### **LET GO**

Let's pray this together: "I let go of my desire for **POWER** and **CONTROL**"

"I let go of my desire for **WORTH** and **AFFECTION**"

"I let go of my desire for **SECURITY** and **SURVIVAL**"

"I let go of my desire to **CHANGE THIS SITUATION.**"

The *Blessing of the Body* taken from "Out of the Ordinary: Prayers, Poems, and Reflections for Every Season" by Joyce Rupp. This blessing is designed for use with groups, inviting those present to each find a partner to bless. But, it could also be used by just two individuals, with one blessing the other. When used with groups, partners should face each other and then ask about the other person's comfortableness with being touched. If they prefer a non-touch blessing, the other person can simply hold his or her hand near the part of the body being blessed, rather than touching it.

As I pray each blessing out loud silently bless one another at the same time.

**Forehead:** May you have keen insights and think clearly. May your thoughts be kind and wise. May you resolve anything in your mind that keeps you from being your true self.

**Ears:** May you listen to the inner Voice of the Beloved and act on the word of God. May you hear the melodies of your own goodness and treasure who you are.

**Eyes:** May you have inner vision to see more clearly the path that is yours. May you look upon others with love as you search for your way home.

**Mouth:** May you speak with love, proclaim the truth, and make your needs known. May you laugh at the absurdities of life and taste life with joy and enthusiasm.

**Nose:** As you take in air and let out air, may you be reminded of the cycle of life with its dying and rising, its emptying and filling. May you breathe in the aroma of goodness and breathe out what needs to be let go.

**Hands:** May you use your hands to touch all of life with reverence and gratitude. May these hands reach out with care to others. May these hands be willing to receive from others.

**Skin:** May you be not too thick-skinned or too thin-skinned as you journey. May you reverence and protect the dignity of others no matter what color of skin they have.

**Heart:** May you develop awareness of what stirs deep within you. May you have a vibrant, compassionate heart, one that is filled with generosity and kindness.

**Feet:** As you travel through the many ups and downs of life, may all the places your feet take you lead you to greater transformation and inner freedom. May you develop an ever firmer foundation for your spiritual path.

I invite each of you now to repeat what I will say. Whisper these words into the ear of your partner. To do so, you will need to be very close to each other. **May the Shelter of God embrace you in your difficult moments. May the Dance of God play in your joyful moments. May the Peace of God be with you wherever you are on your journey of life Amen!**