**October Prayer Practice**

(from CBF <http://www.thefellowship.info/Pray/Prayer-Practices/Breath-Prayer>)

The Apostle Paul exhorts us to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). But how do we do that? One ancient prayer practice allows us the opportunity to make prayer a part of our daily life - the breath prayer. Developing a breath prayer is very easy. Take 5-10 minutes to choose a breath prayer from scripture or compose one of your own. Here are three different options:

1. Choose a prayer sentence from the following examples1:

* Lord, come to my assistance.
* God, make haste to help me.
* Lord Jesus, have mercy.
* Abide in my love.
* My God and my all.
* My Jesus, mercy.
* I belong to you, O Lord.
* Bless the Lord, my soul.
* Open my heart to your love.
* Lord, I give myself to you.
* My Lord and my God.
* Lord, increase my faith.
* Not my will but yours be done.
* Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done.
* Jesus, my light and my love.
* May my being praise you, Lord.
* Our help is in the name of the Lord.
* Holy Spirit, pray in me.
* Lord, do with me what You will.
* Speak Lord, your servant is listening.

2. Turn to one of your favorite biblical passages to create one.

3. Spend a few moments in silence. Relax. Imagine Jesus standing before you, asking, "What do you want? What do you seek from me?" Respond with the first thing that comes to your mind. Write this down. Next, choose your favorite name for God (such as Father, Jesus, Lord, Abba, Holy One, etc.) and write it down. Now write a short sentence prayer that combines your favorite name for God with your answer to Jesus' question. For example, "Lord Jesus, give me peace"; "Jesus, help me to love"; "Father, give me courage."2

Ideally, your breath prayer should be 6-12 syllables. After you have chosen or created a breath prayer, make a goal to remain in God's abiding presence as you begin saying your prayer. Ponder the meaning and beauty of the words you are saying. Slowly say the first part of the prayer as you breathe in. Then slowly say the last part of the prayer as you exhale. There is no hurry or rush.

Say your breath prayer throughout the day whenever you remember. This form of prayer can also serve as a "tape" that can replace negative "tapes" or "commentaries" that often swirl around in our minds. Whenever you observe that you are negatively reacting to a person, event, or thing, say your breath prayer. For example, you are stopped at a red light. The light changes to green. You slowly begin to move into the intersection when you notice a car that did not stop at his red light. Instead, he plunges through the intersection as if you were not there. instead of screaming in your car at the driver who nearly caused a wreck, say your breath prayer. God does not want you to embody the negative thoughts and feelings and thus poison yourself. Once you're aware of the negative thoughts and feelings, gently say your breath prayer.

1. Adapted from Thomas Keating, Open Mind, Open Heart (New York: Continuum, 1992), 134-5.
2. Adapted from The Way of Pilgrimage: An Adventure in Spiritual Formation for the Next Generation: Leader's Guide (Nashville: Upper Room Books), 100.

November - Ignatian examen (thanksgiving)

December – Centering prayer (quiet and waiting)

January - Daily Office (community prayer)

February – labyrinth or walking prayer (body prayer)

March - Stations of the Cross (lent)

April – June: Directed primarily at individual prayer for the conference; issued every two weeks.

\*April – Petitioning Prayer

\*May – Intercessory Prayer

\*June -  Radical (collective) prayer

\*These are prayer “types” taken from Richard Foster’s book, Prayer, finding the Hearts True Home.  Beginning in March the prayer practices will be offered every two weeks and will be increasingly directed toward individual intercessions and petitions pertaining to biennial celebrations and events.