

Abide Breath Prayer



PASSION: A breath prayer is like breathing the oxygen of the Kingdom!

God breathed the breath of life into Adam's nostrils, and man became a living soul. (Genesis 2:7)
Job said, "The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life." (Job 33:4)
All Scripture is God-breathed. (2 Timothy 3:16)
Jesus breathed on the disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." (John 20:22)

The breath of God has always been central in the Kingdom of God. Praying can be as simple and essential as breathing. A dear friend and trainer once said to me, "We breathe in the Word, we breathe out in prayer." God breathes His prayer into our soul, then we breathe that prayer back to Him. Inhaling and exhaling, breath prayer is speaking back to God those treasured phrases that continue to give us life today.



PROBE: As we sit at home with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in their temple, in our very heart and soul, we breathe in the aroma of their presence. We relax, inhaling deeply of the oxygen of life that comes from the source of life. We listen and recall the powerful words of life that He has spoken. God whispers, "**Remember.**" So we repeat these life-giving phrases of identity, security, and significance. This is breath praying. We may express breath prayer out loud, silently, or just under our breath. We hear Him saying the words again as though spoken for the first time:

(As you inhale, say...)

I am the true vine...
Abide in me...
I am the vine...
Apart from me...
Just as Father loved me...
Abide in my love...

(As you exhale, say...)

Father is the vinedresser
and I in you
you are the branches
you can do nothing
I have loved you
Lord, I abide in your love

Our tendency is to gulp these words quickly. The challenge is to sip each phrase over and over, slowly, until each delicious phrase becomes a close friend. Then move on to the next phrase. Each phrase could be savored for days before moving on. Clearly, these phrases are from John 15. Consider that abide also means to remain, continue, live, dwell. Allow these phrases to become deeply embedded in your heart and soul through the practice of breath prayers.

Breath prayers are not intended to replace our normal practice of intercession, petition, thanksgiving, and worship. Breath prayers are simply another way to "*pray without ceasing.*" (1 Thessalonians 5:17) A breath prayer, spoken over and over throughout the day focuses us on God. We are in Him. He is in us. With breath prayer, we are "*setting our mind on the things above.*" (Colossians 3:2)

This isn't a new or original idea. The early Desert Fathers practiced what they called breath prayer to help them stay focused on God. They would pray, "Lord Jesus Christ... have mercy on me." Join them in reminding ourselves about abiding in Him.



PRACTICE:

- Think of a simple but meaningful phrase, a favorite sentence from Scripture, perhaps reminiscent of a memorable time with God that captures your heart for abiding in Christ. Make that your breath prayer for a week.
- Relax, close your eyes. Pray your breath prayer over and over several times throughout the day. Let it become personal, expressing your longing for God. Savor hearing God express His desire for you.
- It may help to set your watch or phone to buzz on the hour as you learn to repeat your breath prayer.
- What is God saying to you about abiding more deeply?
- How will you live differently?