



bmedia™

PRAYER & PERSONAL
BIBLE STUDY

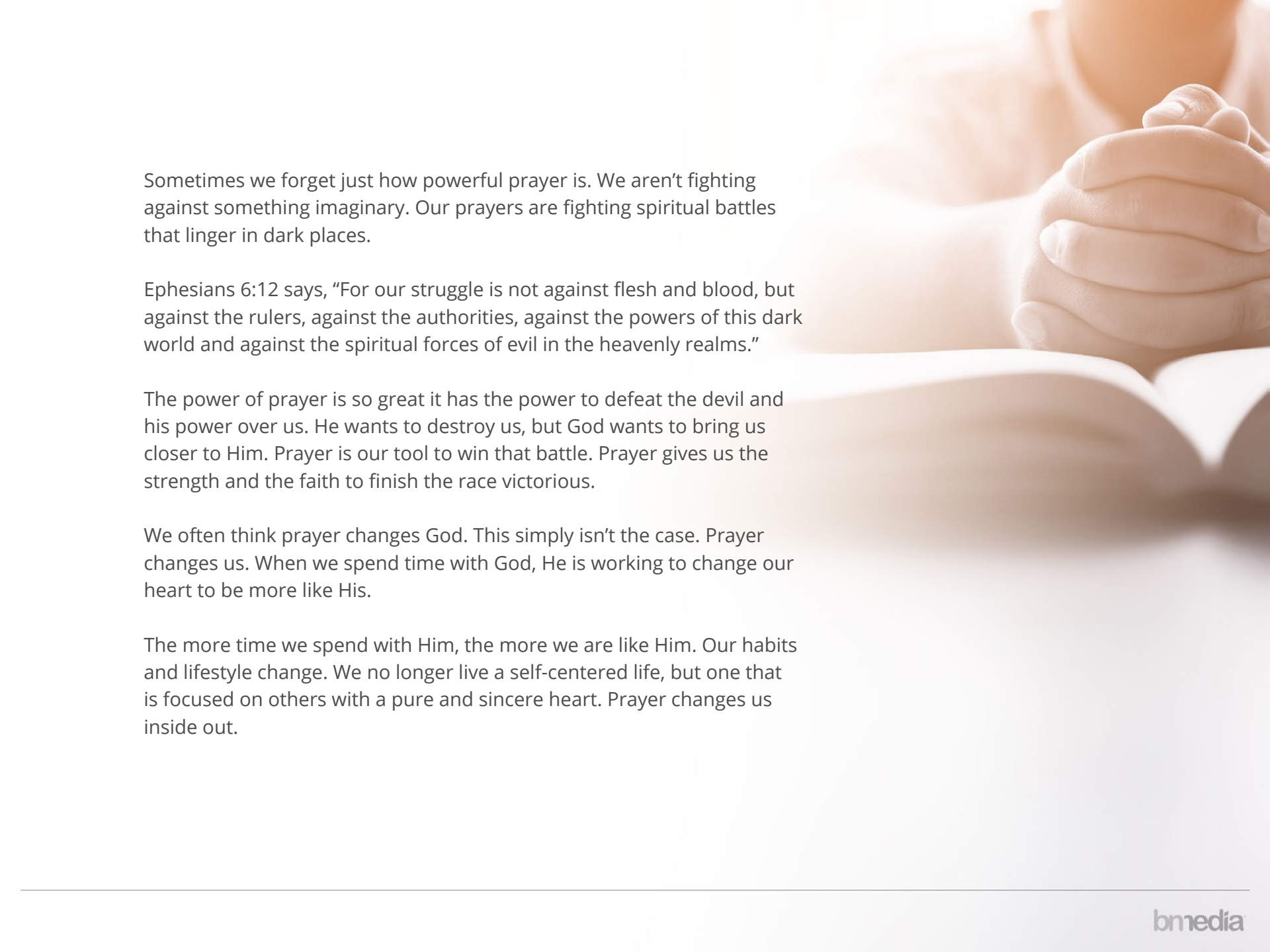
Importance of Prayer

Prayer is one of the most important things a Christian can do. It is a time when a person is communicating with God and it should be taken very seriously. While there is deep theological meaning in prayer, it doesn't have to be difficult. It's something anyone can do, anywhere, at any time.

It's impossible to know someone if you don't spend time with them. Prayer is an opportunity to spend time with God. To really understand the heart of God, you need to pray.

In John 15:15, Jesus says He no longer calls us his servants, but His friends. Talking with God develops a deeper relationship with Him. The deeper the relationship becomes, the more time you want to spend with Him.

In 1 Corinthians 3:9, God calls us His fellow workers. How can we be His fellow workers if we refuse to talk to Him?



Sometimes we forget just how powerful prayer is. We aren't fighting against something imaginary. Our prayers are fighting spiritual battles that linger in dark places.

Ephesians 6:12 says, "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

The power of prayer is so great it has the power to defeat the devil and his power over us. He wants to destroy us, but God wants to bring us closer to Him. Prayer is our tool to win that battle. Prayer gives us the strength and the faith to finish the race victorious.

We often think prayer changes God. This simply isn't the case. Prayer changes us. When we spend time with God, He is working to change our heart to be more like His.

The more time we spend with Him, the more we are like Him. Our habits and lifestyle change. We no longer live a self-centered life, but one that is focused on others with a pure and sincere heart. Prayer changes us inside out.

How to Pray

Prayer is an amazing privilege. We have an open invitation from the God of the universe: “Call to me and I will answer you” (*Jeremiah 33:3a*). We have a promise that He hears us: “You will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you” (*Jeremiah 29:12*).

Deep in the heart of every believer is the conviction that prayer is important. Most believers know that there is, perhaps, no activity more important than prayer to the development of the human spirit, and to molding our character to be more like that of Jesus.

Throughout the pages of our Bibles, we see examples of men who prayed. Even Jesus, the Son of God, prayed.

There are many reasons why people do not pray as they should. These reasons include:

- Lukewarmness in their relationship to the Lord (apathy)
- Lack of forgiveness toward others
- A disobedient lifestyle that hides from God
- Over confidence in self



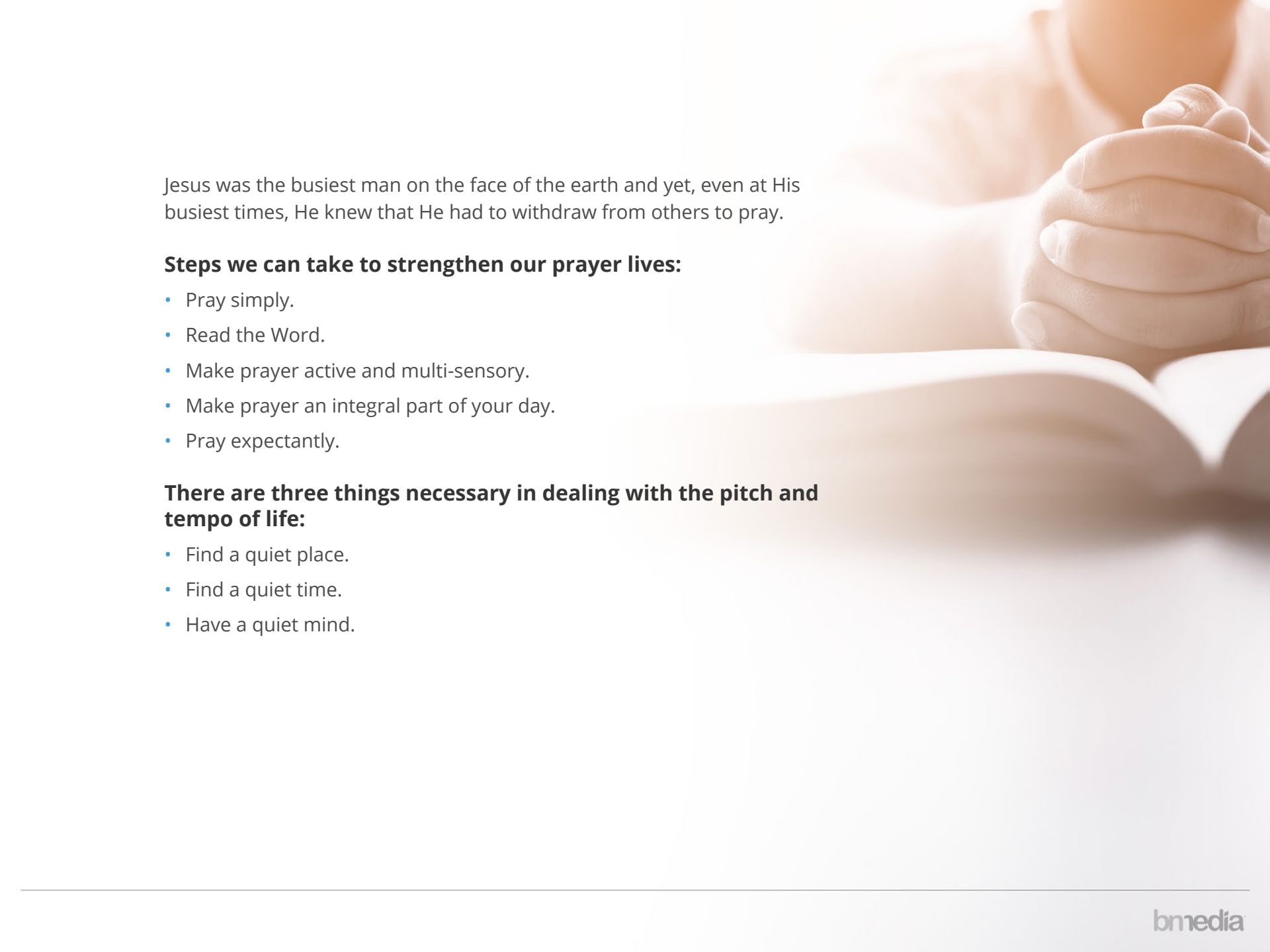
There are primarily two structural problems that we all face when seeking to bring order to our prayer life:

- We struggle with issues related to the pitch and tempo of modern life.
- We struggle with the same issue the disciples had: “how to pray.”

Jesus said to His disciples, “Could you not watch with Me for one hour?” (Matthew 26:30). The truth is many believers have difficulty filling 15 minutes with prayer. How do you prayer for one hour?

Before we can deal with any of these issues, we need to stop and ask ourselves some questions:

- What are the most important things in this life?
- What really comes first in my life?
- Am I more interested in religious service or getting to know God in a personal way?
- What means more to Christ, my work for Him or my relationship with Him?



Jesus was the busiest man on the face of the earth and yet, even at His busiest times, He knew that He had to withdraw from others to pray.

Steps we can take to strengthen our prayer lives:

- Pray simply.
- Read the Word.
- Make prayer active and multi-sensory.
- Make prayer an integral part of your day.
- Pray expectantly.

There are three things necessary in dealing with the pitch and tempo of life:

- Find a quiet place.
- Find a quiet time.
- Have a quiet mind.

Reading the Bible

First and foremost, the Bible is essential for knowing God and His will for our lives. The book of Romans tells us there are certain things we can know about God from general revelation. Without Scripture people can know about God's power and divine nature by examining creation (*Romans 1:20*). They also know God's law because it is written on their hearts (*Romans 2:14–15*).

However, there is a vast difference between knowing about God and personally knowing God. Everyone knows about God—which is why you are without excuse if you reject Him—but only a fraction personally knows Him.

The Bible is the foundational truth that teaches the history of the universe, the origin of sin, the reason for death, morality, and so on. Apart from God's Word, mankind would never learn the all-important message of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.



The first steps to reading the Bible:

- Seeing the need for it.
- Making a personal commitment to it.
- Choosing a translation of the Bible for it.
- Adopting a plan for it.
- Establishing a schedule for it,
- Keeping the schedule you have established for it.
- Being willing to invest in it.

There are many ways to approach the study of God's Word. These include:

- Reading the Bible straight through
- Reading the Bible chronologically
- Reading the Bible topically

The Bible seems like a very large book, but when you consider that it is the only book that the Christian must master in his or her lifetime, it is not overwhelming.

In addition to memorization and meditation, believers should adopt the following ways of interacting with the Word of God, so that they can grow in their knowledge of the Word throughout their lifetime:

- Read it devotionally.
- Study each book of the Bible in depth.
- Study it topically.