

## Adventures in Prayer Week 5

### Prayer in Movement and Action

What might it mean to pray with our bodies as well as with our words? What might it look like to allow our words to overflow into movement and action as we pray?

#### 1. Posture

The Bible has many examples of people taking different physical postures to pray. Prayer in the Jewish tradition could be a very physical business.

- lying prostrate in worship
- kneeling in penitence
- standing in reverence or praise

What might it mean to embody our prayers by letting our posture reflect the attitude of our heart?

#### 2. Movement

Movement has a way of unblocking us, of opening our minds and hearts in different ways. Praying for your community as you walk around it is a different experience to praying for it from your armchair.

When we move, we see differently and we may find we become more aware of the flow of the Spirit.

Movement in prayer might include dancing or prayer walking.



#### 3. Action

There are moments when our prayers seem to compel us to action, and our actions feel more like prayers. Is the line between the two perhaps more blurred than we sometimes think? When we put an arm around a grieving person, is that a prayer or an action? We are doing something physical, but the action has other layers to it. The same is true when we sign a petition, attend a protest, carry out an act of kindness or,

sometimes, even tend a garden. Our heart longing is that our simple action might have deep and lasting consequence, and one might say that makes it a prayer.

*How might we blur that line between prayer and action even more?*

*How might we make more of our prayers active and more of our actions prayerful?*

### Questions for Reflection

- Have you ever felt you wanted to adopt a particular posture or make a certain movement while you were praying?
- Are there any postures which feel 'wrong' to pray in? Why?
- Posture, movement and action can all be helpful in focusing prayer, but they can also be distractions. Have you ever been distracted by your physical surroundings or your body position as you've prayed?
- How is Prayer different for you when you're moving around? Which aspects of prayer are easier/more difficult when you're walking or driving, for instance?
- Have you ever done something (for yourself or someone else) that felt like an act of prayer, even if you didn't formulate any words to express it?
- What are you talented at? Music? Baking? Photography? Car mechanics? Computer programming? If our actions can be imbued with prayer, how might you use your talent to pray for others?

### Prayer activities

1. Read psalm 51, adopting different postures for different sections. For instance, lie face down on the floor for verses 1-6, kneel for verses 7-14 and stand for verses 15-21. Notice how the postures shape the way you read and pray the words.

2. Go for a prayer walk around your community. At its simplest and deepest, prayer-walking isn't about walking while we formulate prayers in words in our minds; it's allowing the physical movement of our bodies to become the prayer. As you walk, don't try to form prayers in words in your mind, simply let your movements express the prayers in your heart. You might walk faster and more confidently at times, as you feel hope surge or defiance against injustice, or you may find your steps slowing and becoming heavier as you walk through places where there is pain and darkness. Let your movements be your prayer.



3. Practice embodying your prayers, even when you're not walking around. As you commune with God, notice where your prayers are going and change your body position to reflect those prayers. You may find yourself sitting with open hands, kneeling in a yielding posture or pacing the room in frustrated longing.

4. Use your talents to create something for someone. It could be anything from a sculpture masterpiece to a good cup of tea. As you make it, pour your love and care for that person into your physical actions, so the process becomes a prayer.