

Six Ways to Keep Focused in Prayer

Let's face it! Many of us struggle to stay focused when we pray. Our culture is busy and there are so many things vying for our attention. What are some simple ways to combat the wandering mind when we want to focus our attention on God in prayer?

1. **Choose times for focused prayer when you are most mentally alert.** If mornings are your best time of day, get up a bit early to meet with God. Grab a cup of coffee or tea, your Bible and a blanket if needed. We are to pray without ceasing, so although setting aside a certain time to pray is important, don't forget to pay attention to the activity of God in and around you throughout each day.
2. **Keep paper and a pen nearby** so that if distracting thoughts come, you can quickly write them down so you won't forget and then go back into prayer.
3. **Engage your senses and creativity.** We have all been uniquely created by God, and He is a creative Father. Don't be afraid to stretch yourself in prayer through the use of your senses. For example, it is perfectly fine to sometimes draw your prayers to the Lord, to sing your prayers, or to use different body postures (try kneeling, lifting your hands, lying prostrate on the floor, bowing before Him, etc.).
4. **Prayerwalk your home, neighborhood, city, etc.** Prayerwalking is simply praying while you walk. Pray about what and who you see. For example, if you are walking through your neighborhood, you might pray for each family as you pass their homes, whether you know them or not. Notice things like swing sets and pray for the children in the home, or for sale signs which can

lead you to pray for a safe transition for those moving out, and for the neighborhood to be welcoming to the new family moving in...there are endless possibilities!

5. **Pray out loud.** It is more difficult to allow your mind to wander if you are praying out loud.
6. **Learn how to pray continually throughout the day.** If your mind *does* tend to wander, you can train yourself to be continually aware of the presence of God as you go about your day. Scripture does tell us to pray without ceasing. One way to do this is to cultivate thankfulness! Each moment you are aware of something you are thankful for, tell God about it! Even if it is just thanking Him that you were able to get up this morning! Begin to notice things around you that God is using to bless you, show His love for you, care for you and your family, etc.

God understands that our minds will tend to wander sometimes. After all, He created us! He has also given us a multitude of ways to seek after Him and to carry on conversations no matter when, where, or how they take place!