

Ephesians Week 6: Practices to Become What We Believe

Palms Down, Palms Up

What is Palms Down, Palms Up?

This is a simple prayer tool with two goals in mind; developing our prayer life into an active, fruitful partnership with God while simultaneously deepening our trust in His constant care and provision.

The Contemplatives referred to this kind of prayer as re-collection, which is a form of centring prayer. Centering prayers are used to help us refocus on God as sovereign, and bring us back to a place of rest with God at the center of our lives. This tool goes one step further. First you center, and then you move into petitioning and receiving from God. It is particularly useful in the mornings because you can begin with peace, and then bring your “real life” stuff of the impending day - the hopes, the fears, the needs - to the Lord.

How to Practice Palms Down, Palms Up:

Palms Down

- Before you start, find a seat in a comfortable position - not rigid but not slouched either - and invite the presence of God.
- Begin by placing your hands, palms facing down, on your legs. This palms down posture is a symbolic gesture that you want to ‘hand over’ your requests to God.
- As you sit before the Lord, name your worries or anxieties about the day ahead. Speak out your concerns for things like a meeting you will lead, a family member who is ill, a report you have to give in work, or a person you will need particular grace for.

REMEMBER, DON'T PRAY WHAT YOU THINK GOD WANTS TO HEAR, PRAY WHAT IS INSIDE YOU

- Continue praying. Whatever is weighing on your heart or on your mind, name it in prayer before God and imagine yourself releasing it on to God. You may even want to picture the hands of your Heavenly Father under your hands, receiving those things you are handing over to Him. As you engage with the presence of God, notice any sensation in your body or spirit - perhaps a sense of relief or release – as you surrender to His love and care.

Palms Up

- After a number of minutes in silence, turn your hands around, palms facing up, the backs of your hands gently resting on your legs. As you do, begin to ask Jesus for His peace, His courage, His presence, His power, His love or His direct action, in place of the worry, concern, anticipation or request that you had released to the Lord only moments before this.
- In the quiet, rest in this divine exchange, receiving fresh peace, presence and power in place of the natural concerns and requests. Be open to receive a particular promise from scripture, a sense of direction or an impression in your imagination concerning some of these requests.

Rest

- Finally, remain a few more moments without asking for anything. Simply rest in His love and believe that God is loving you in these moments. Allow His presence to be more than enough.