



# Solemn Assembly

Six Postures Of Prayer



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**SIX POSTURES** that could change the course of your life.

*“Prayer is  
the link that  
connects us  
with God.”*

*AB Simpson*

# Ways to Engage

For some, coming to a church building during Solemn Assembly doesn't fit with work and life schedules. However, you can still engage in a number of ways as you work through this prayer guide. Here are some options:

## **Prayer Drive**

Whether you're on your way to work, school, the gym or the store, use this time to intentionally pray for the people or communities represented.

## **Prayer Walk**

Walk through your neighbourhood, apartment building, or office building and pray for the individuals and/or businesses.

## **Over Coffee**

Work through the book on your own and arrange to meet a friend for lunch or coffee to discuss it and spend time praying together.

## **Small Groups/Table Groups**

If you're part of a small group, consider attending Solemn Assembly when you would normally meet.

*“Come, let us sing to the LORD!  
Let us shout joyfully to  
the Rock of our salvation.  
Let us come to Him with thanksgiving.  
Let us sing psalms of praise to Him.  
For the LORD is a great God,  
a great King above all gods.  
He holds in His hands the depths of the earth  
and the mightiest mountains.  
The sea belongs to Him, for He made it.  
His hands formed the dry land, too.  
Come, let us worship and bow down.  
Let us kneel before the LORD our maker,  
for He is our God.  
We are the people He watches over,  
the flock under His care.  
If only you would listen to His voice today!”*

Psalm 95:1-7 New Living Translation

# Introduction

Prayer is one of the greatest and most precious gifts we have. It is the language of our relationship with God. No matter where we are at with prayer we can grow, and our prayer life can become more rich, meaningful and effective. Prayer is a two-way conversation with God. In it we have the opportunity to share all of life with Him and to hear His voice.

“To have God speak to the heart is a majestic experience, an experience that people may miss if they monopolize the conversation and never pause to hear God’s response.”

Charles Stanley

Solemn Assembly is a time set aside to intentionally go deeper into our relationship with God through prayer. Prayer is as essential to the body of Christ as lungs are to the human body. As followers of Christ we long for a deeper more meaningful prayer life. What if your prayer experience could be so much

more impactful by adjusting your body posture?

Postures have power. Posture and body language are a big part of our communication with each other as human beings. Without any words being spoken a person’s posture says a lot—whether they’re relaxed, guarded, disconnected or engaged. We communicate our excitement and our sorrow through postures.

Postures can be not only a response but also proactive. What does your posture during prayer communicate? Is it possible that you could proactively influence the posture of your heart towards God through choosing a physical posture that expresses what you want to say?

The purpose of this booklet is for intentional prayer being focused on the various postures of prayer found in scripture: bow down; lift your hands; fall on your face; bend your knee; and clap your hands.







## POSTURE 1:

# God's Posture Towards Us

Before we move to considering our posture in prayer we begin with a question regarding God's posture. When you come to God in prayer how do you picture His posture towards you? Because posture and body language are so crucial in communication, it's important that we have an accurate picture of God's posture towards us. How we picture Him will deeply influence how we come to Him and even our desire to be with Him.

If we picture God with His arms crossed, slightly annoyed or with a posture that portrays disappointment we won't want to come to Him and when we do, we won't want to stay long in His presence. According to Scripture, this is a very faulty and destructive image. Because of what Jesus did for us on the cross, God welcomes us into His presence. Here's an accurate picture of God's

posture as we come to talk to Him in prayer:

*"I love the Lord because He hears my voice and my prayer for mercy. Because He bends down to listen, I will pray as long as I have breath!"*  
Psalm 116:1-2

What an incredible picture of the God who created the universe. He bends down to listen to our prayer. He doesn't want to miss a single word. No matter how stumbling and faltering your prayer may be, God loves to hear your voice.

So, come to Him.

Pour out your heart to Him.

Listen to Him.

Through prayer, learn to partner with Him in His great mission to redeem and restore lives because of His relentless love for us all.



## Remind

What do you sense God wants you to be reminded of regarding His posture towards you?

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## Relate

In what ways do you relate with the Psalmist in His response to God? What do you want to express to God today?

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## POSTURE 2:

# Bow Down

*“Come, let us worship and bow down.  
Let us kneel before the Lord our maker,  
for He is our God.”*

Psalm 95:6-7a New Living Translation

It's been said that no one goes to the Grand Canyon to get a better self-image. Instead, you get a sense of awe and wonder at the beauty and grandeur—a sense of something so much bigger than yourself. You recognize your smallness and vulnerability. In an age desperate for proving our self-worth and finding our identity why do we flock to places like the Grand Canyon? We were created for awe and wonder. We were created to worship something bigger than ourselves, more specifically, Someone bigger than ourselves.

Bowing down is a symbol of reverence; a sign that you are in the presence of someone to whom you want to show deep respect. If reverence is absent,

we do not have a healthy prayer life. Although Scripture gives us this amazing invitation that we can *come boldly to the throne of grace*, we are also reminded that we enter the presence of a Holy God who is infinitely wiser, stronger and more powerful than us. If we lack reverence, if we're nonchalant, we're missing something.

Prayer is not a conversation between two equals. It fills our hearts with even greater wonder and reverence, when we think that the Creator of the universe, the one who holds the stars in His hands, invites us to come to Him as children... to come to Him, our good and loving Father, who longs for us to invite Him into the centre of our lives.

In our western culture irreverence is *en vogue*. Showing disrespect is normal and even celebrated. Social media, news feeds, and the air waves are peppered with disrespect and very little is held sacred. This tends to feed a perspective that I'm answerable to no one but myself. Reverence is the opposite. There is Someone so much greater than me. When I bow my head in reverence, I get right-sized and my world gets re-ordered. I learn respect not only for God but also for what He holds dear—other people who are all made in His image, the planet and even myself.

## SCRIPTURE

As you read the following passages, ask the Holy Spirit to open your ears to what He wants you to hear. If you're in a private setting, it can sometimes be helpful to read out loud.

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*"When the Lord made a covenant with the Israelites, He commanded them: "Do not worship any other gods or bow*

*down to them, serve them or sacrifice to them. But the Lord, who brought you up out of Egypt with mighty power and outstretched arm, is the one you must worship. To Him you shall bow down and to Him offer sacrifices."*

2 Kings 17:35-39

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*"...He [Jesus] gave up His divine privileges; He took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When He appeared in human form, He humbled Himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. Therefore, God elevated Him to the place of highest honor and gave Him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*

Philippians 2:7-11 New Living Translation

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*"But I, by your great love, can come into your house; in reverence I bow down toward your holy temple."*

Psalm 5:7

# Bow Down

## *Respond*

After reading these passages, how do you want to respond to God in prayer?

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## *Reverence*

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your reverence for God? Consider bowing your head right now and talking to God about this. You may want to spend some moments in silent reverence, simply acknowledging that He is God.

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## Commit

Consider how you may want to commit to a new or refreshed sense of reverence in your relationship with God. How might this affect your times of prayer and devotion? Your heart posture as you gather with other believers in worship? What else do you want to express to Him today?

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## What if...

What if bowing down in reverence not only honored Jesus by showing Him the respect and honor He deserves but also changed your heart toward life and relationships?

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**What if by adjusting your body posture your prayer experience with God could be more impactful?**



### POSTURE 3:

# Lift Your Hands

*“Accept my prayer as incense offered to you,  
and my upraised hands as an evening offering.”*

Psalm 141:2

The posture today is lifted hands. In Hebrew the word is *yada* —to hold out or throw out the hands – a posture of excitement and enthusiasm for God in praise and worship\*.

We’ve all seen this posture at sporting events. It’s the spontaneous response to a great play, a score, a win – the hands go up! As Christians we follow the One who has won the greatest victory of all time. Jesus has conquered sin and death. He is King of kings and Lord of lords... yet we still live in a broken world where we don’t always see or experience His victory.

In World War II a decisive victory was won on D Day in June 1944. Many historians would say this is the day the war was won. It was the monumental turning point; however, there was still

a cleanup operation that had to take place. There were battles that still had to be fought. VE Day, Victory in Europe, wasn’t declared for another 11 months.

For Christians, D Day has happened. Jesus won the decisive victory. But we are living in that in between time when we don’t yet see the supremacy of Jesus in all things. As His Ambassadors we pray and work for His Kingdom to come and His will to be done on earth as it is in Heaven. We are part of the cleanup operation and we experience pain and brokenness of the ongoing battle.

At times we get discouraged. The writer of Hebrews says *Strengthen the hands that hang down and the feeble knees.* Our hearts are strengthened

when we put our focus back on the victorious King and our good, good Father, and raise our hands in confidence. With lifted hands we declare that the story isn't over. Jesus, the King of Love has won, He is winning, and He will win!

## SCRIPTURE

As you read the following passages, ask the Holy Spirit to open your ears to what He wants you to hear. If you're in a private setting, it can sometimes be helpful to read out loud.

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*“Ever since I first heard of your strong faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for God’s people everywhere, I have not stopped thanking God for you. I pray for you constantly, asking God, the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give you spiritual wisdom and insight so that you might grow in your knowledge of God. I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope He has given to those He called—His holy people who are His rich and glorious inheritance. I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God’s power for us who believe Him.*

*This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated Him in the place of honor at God’s right hand in the heavenly realms. Now He is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but also in the world to come. God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made Him head over all things for the benefit of the church. And the church is His body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with Himself.”*

Ephesians 1:15-23 New Living Translation

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*“O God, you are my God; I earnestly search for you. My soul thirsts for you; my whole body longs for you in this parched and weary land where there is no water. I have seen you in your sanctuary and gazed upon your power and glory. Your unfailing love is better than life itself; how I praise you! I will praise you as long as I live, lifting up my hands to you in prayer. You satisfy me more than the richest feast. I will praise you with songs of joy.”*

Psalms 63 New Living Translation

\*from Holy Roar – 7 Words that will Change the Way You Worship by Chris Tomlin and Darren Whitehead

# Lift Your Hands

## *Respond*

After reading these passages how do \_\_\_\_\_  
you want to respond to God in prayer? \_\_\_\_\_

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## *Raise Your Hands*

What about our amazing God and \_\_\_\_\_  
Saviour might make you want to raise \_\_\_\_\_  
your hands in response to? \_\_\_\_\_

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# Pray

Who in your circle today is in need of confidence? Pray for them.

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# What if...

What if lifting your hands in confidence not only honoured Jesus for the victory He has won but also brought you new freedom and peace?

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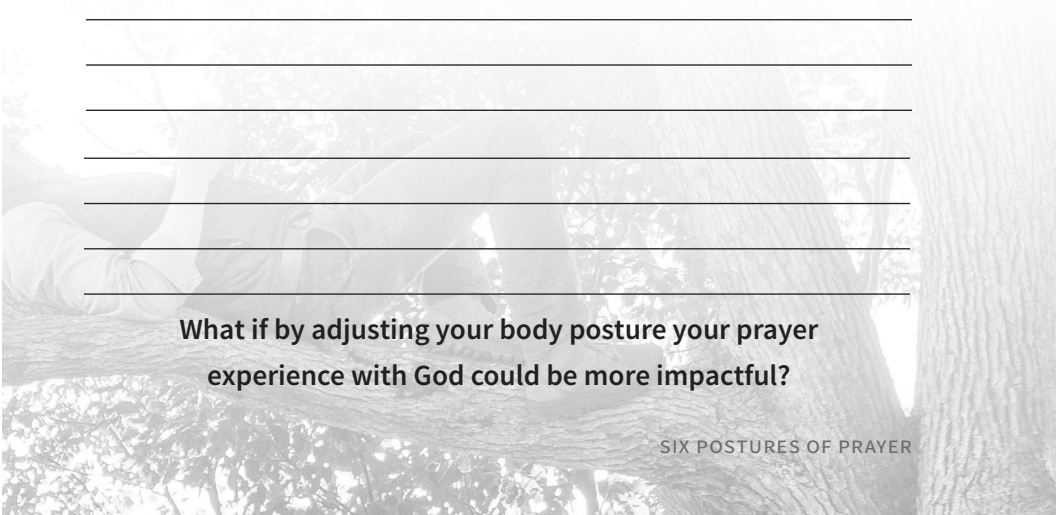
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**What if by adjusting your body posture your prayer experience with God could be more impactful?**



## POSTURE 4:

# Fall On Your Face

*“Then they bowed down and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground.”*

Nehemiah 8:6

Can you think of a posture that requires more humility than lying flat on the floor, face down? You are completely defenseless. This is complete trust and dependence.

Over and over in Scripture we are told to trust in the Lord. Psalm 62:8 says, *“Trust in Him at all times, oh people; pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us.”* This is how we are designed to live... in a relationship of complete dependence on God. Scripture talks of all the things we are tempted to put our trust in besides God— money, power, other people, governments, ourselves and our plans. None of these are ultimately trustworthy. So why is it so hard to trust?

At the core of the human problem is pride. We first see pride in Genesis 3 when humans decide it’s better to trust themselves than God. Since then pride has been at the core of our problems. Throughout Scripture and history, it seems that insurmountable problems bring us back to the recognition that we need help. We need God.

In 2 Chronicles 20, King Jehoshaphat gives us an amazing picture of complete dependence, humility and trust. He receives word that three nations have joined forces and have declared war on Israel. Jehoshaphat knows that unless God helps them, they are doomed. Verse 3 says *“Jehoshaphat was terrified by this news and begged the LORD for guidance. He also*

ordered everyone in Judah to begin fasting.” (NLT). His first response was to pray and to ask others to pray.

Jehoshaphat worships, proclaiming God as the one ultimately in control. He recounts ways that God has shown Himself trustworthy, then expresses complete dependence on God and trust in Him. He ends with the humble yet expectant statement, “*We don’t know what to do but our eyes are on you.*” 2 Chronicles 20:12b NLT.

## SCRIPTURE

As you read the following passages, ask the Holy Spirit to open your ears to what He wants you to hear. If you’re in a private setting, it can sometimes be helpful to read out loud.

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*“After this, the Moabites and Ammonites with some of the Meunites came to wage war against Jehoshaphat... Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the LORD, and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah. The people of Judah came together to seek help from*

*the LORD... Then Jehoshaphat stood up... and said: “LORD, the God of our ancestors, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in your hand, and no one can withstand you. Our God, did you not drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel and give it forever to the descendants of Abraham your friend? They have lived in it and have built in it a sanctuary for your name, saying, ‘If calamity comes upon us, whether the sword of judgment, or plague or famine, we will stand in your presence before this temple that bears your name and will cry out to you in our distress, and you will hear us and save us.’ “But now here are men from Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, whose territory you would not allow Israel to invade when they came from Egypt; so they turned away from them and did not destroy them. See how they are repaying us by coming to drive us out of the possession you gave us as an inheritance. Our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.”*

2 Chronicles 20:1-12

# Fall On Your Face

## Thankful

Where have you seen God's faithfulness in the past? Thank God for this and reaffirm your trust in Him.

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## Obstacles

What seemingly insurmountable obstacle do you want to bring to God today? Where has desperation or fear taken hold? It may be for yourself, someone you love, for your community, or nation.

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## Trust

So in response, with your whole body, are you willing to express your complete trust and confidence in God alone? Assume a “fall on your face”, prostrate posture, and tell God of your trust and confidence and anything else you want to say. Listen to what He may want to say to you through His Holy Spirit.

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As you rise commit yourself to living in a way that expresses the trust in God that you have declared.

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## What if...

What if a facedown posture is the doorway to a new prayer experience with God as you learn to depend more fully on Him?

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**What if by adjusting your body posture your prayer experience with God could be more impactful?**

## POSTURE 5:

# Bend Your Knee

*“My response is to get down on my knees before the Father..”*

Ephesians 3:14 The Message

The posture of kneeling is a picture of submission. It's the opposite of someone trying to take control of a situation. When kneeling before a monarch, this posture is often accompanied with the words, *I am at your service, your majesty.* Prayer on bended knee says the same to God. You are King and I am at your service. My life, my strength, my allegiance is yours.

We find a great example of this kind of unconditional allegiance to God in the powerful government official named Daniel in the Old Testament. Although he's second in command in the kingdom of Persia, he never deviated from his pattern of kneeling three times a day and expressing his ultimate allegiance to Yahweh, the Lord of Heaven. Even when

threatened with death in a lion's den, Daniel prays as usual and abandons the outcome to God. In the end, the amazed king orders the whole nation to bend their knee to Daniel's God.

Scripture has many examples of people bending their knees and hearts to God in full surrender, but none is greater than Jesus in the garden. He knelt and prayed fervently that there might be another way than the agony of the cross, and yet He abandoned His own desires praying not my will but Yours be done. Jesus abandoned Himself to God; the outcome was a way made for us to come back into life giving relationship with God, with ourselves and with each other. The effects of the fall were reversed as Jesus overcame sin and death.

## SCRIPTURE

As you read the following passages, ask the Holy Spirit to open your ears to what He wants you to hear. If you're in a private setting, it can sometimes be helpful to read out loud.

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*“He walked away, about a stone’s throw, and knelt down and prayed, “Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.”*  
Luke 22:41

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*“Then the other administrators and high officers began searching for some fault in the way Daniel was handling government affairs, but they couldn’t find anything to criticize or condemn... So the administrators and high officers went to the king and said, “Long live King Darius! We are all in agreement—we administrators, officials, high officers, advisers, and governors—that the king should make a law that will be strictly enforced. Give orders that for the next thirty days any person who prays to anyone, divine or human—except to you, Your Majesty—will be thrown*

*into the den of lions...But when Daniel learned that the law had been signed, he went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room, with its windows open toward Jerusalem. He prayed three times a day, just as he had always done, giving thanks to his God. Then the officials went together to Daniel’s house and found him praying and asking for God’s help. So they went straight to the king and reminded him about his law... Then they told the king, “That man Daniel, one of the captives from Judah, is ignoring you and your law. He still prays to his God three times a day.”*  
Daniel 6:4-13  
(read the full story in Daniel 6)

# Bend Your Knee

## *His Place*

What do you want to say to God regarding His place in your life?

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## *Help*

Where do you need His help today?

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### *Surrender*

Is there any area you need to  
surrender and embrace the words,  
"Thy will be done."?

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### *What if...*

What if bending my knee in submission  
was the doorway not only to peace for  
me but to life for others?

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**What if by adjusting your body posture your prayer  
experience with God could be more impactful?**

## POSTURE 6:

# Clap Your Hands

*“Clap your hands, all you nations;  
shout to God with cries of joy.”*

Psalm 47:1

Clapping your hands is a natural response to something wonderful. It's the overflow of a heart that is celebrating. Children clap their hands with delight at everything from the first snow fall to the sight of a friend coming up the walk for a play date. There may be no greater joy we could bring to the heart of our Heavenly Father than to celebrate Him for the good things He has done. To choose to put away the list of requests, celebrate the Giver of Life and all the good gifts He has given.

“We engage in celebration when we enjoy ourselves, our life, our world, in conjunction with our faith and confidence in God's greatness, beauty, and goodness. We concentrate on our life and world as God's work and as God's gift to us.”

Dallas Willard

C.S. Lewis says that there are four things that are obstacles to our adoration or celebration of God.\*

### **1. Inattention.**

How easy it is to be caught up in the whirl of life and miss the overtures of Divine Love.

### **2. The wrong kind of attention.**

We see a sunset and do an analysis instead of offering a doxology.

### **3. Greed.**

Instead of saying thank you we say encore.

### **4. Conceit.**

When conceit takes over the attention is again on how wonderful we are—which is why it so easily severs the cords of adoration.

Celebration slows us down so we enjoy what is and replaces our constant striving with deep satisfaction. Prayers of celebration generally fall into two categories—thanksgiving and praise—and Scripture is filled with examples and instructions for both. In thanksgiving, we consider all that God in His kindness has done for us. In praise, we adore and celebrate God simply for who He is—apart from His good gifts.

## SCRIPTURE

As you read the following passages, ask the Holy Spirit to open your ears to what He wants you to hear. If you're in a private setting, it can sometimes be helpful to read out loud.

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*“Keep me safe, O God, for I have come to you for refuge. I said to the Lord, “You are my Master! Every good thing I have comes from you.” The godly people in the land are my true heroes! I take pleasure in them! Troubles multiply for*

*those who chase after other gods. I will not take part in their sacrifices of blood or even speak the names of their gods. Lord, you alone are my inheritance, my cup of blessing. You guard all that is mine. The land you have given me is a pleasant land. What a wonderful inheritance! I will bless the LORD who guides me; even at night my heart instructs me. I know the LORD is always with me. I will not be shaken, for He is right beside me. No wonder my heart is glad, and I rejoice. My body rests in safety. For you will not leave my soul among the dead or allow your holy one to rot in the grave. You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence and the pleasures of living with you forever.”*

Psalm 16 New Living Translation





## Obstacles

Are there any of the four obstacles to adoration that you want to process with God in prayer? He welcomes us where we're at and is so willing to help us overcome obstacles. Ask Him for a thankful heart that can engage celebration.

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## What if...

What if clapping your hands in delight in response to who God is or what He has done could bring a smile to the face of your Heavenly Father?

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**What if by adjusting your body posture your prayer experience with God could be more impactful?**



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