

Now please don't misunderstand me. There are times when we need to remain before the Lord until we have the assurance of His forgiveness or His enabling or until we have prayed for all of the items on our prayer list. But generally speaking, let us go to God more frequently for shorter periods of time, let us pray from the depths of our hearts, and let us make our words count.

A related way to become more real is by learning to call on God immediately for grace to help in times of temptation, thereby resisting the devil. We can resist temptations, especially temptations to slide back into besetting sins, but we cannot be successful in this without God's help. Rather than wait until a temptation has taken hold upon our desires, let us call on God for deliverance at the beginning of the enticement.

Still another way to become more real as believers is by behaving in ways that are consistent with our profession as Christians. There are a number of things that we can do:

We can be as Christian outside of church as we are inside(!)

We can do our work in such a way that it brings glory to God

We can become more Christlike before our families, our friends, our neighbors, and our co-workers, so that we will be able to open our lips, show forth God's praise, and witness of God's saving grace in our lives in a more effective, God-honoring way.

We can learn to drive our cars as Christians should, obeying the laws of the land and the rules of the road, and showing carefulness and courtesy in our interaction with other people's lives, property, and rights.

We can learn to respond to bad news and unhappy events with submission to God's will and recognition of God's control, instead of with denial or anger or despair. When Martin Luther came down to breakfast one morning, he found his wife Katherina in anguish and despair. He went back upstairs and returned dressed all in black. When his wife asked who had died, he