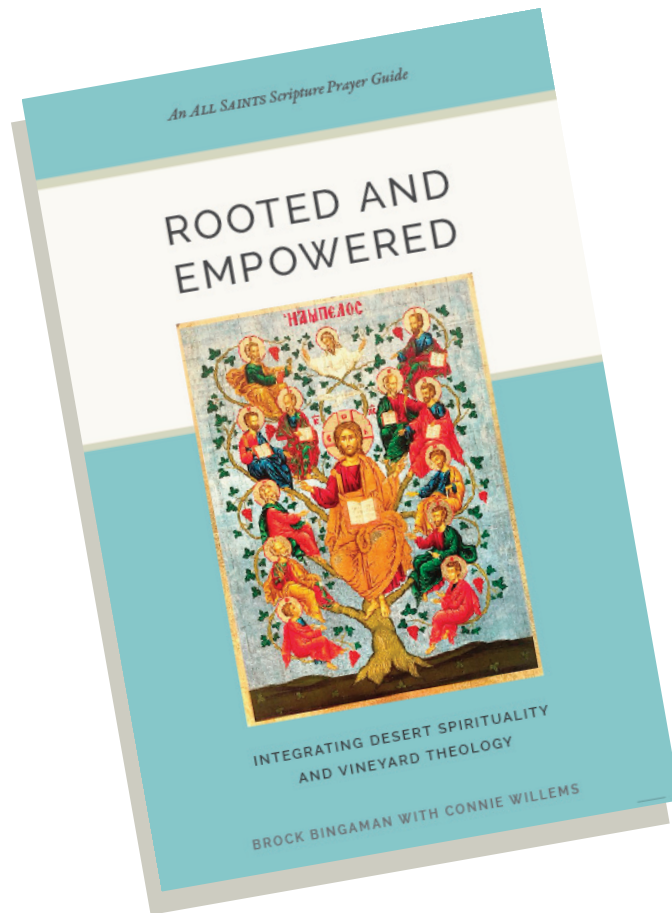


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## ROOTED AND EMPOWERED

Integrating Desert Spirituality and Vineyard Theology



  
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ST. HESYCHIOS THE PRIEST

## On Watchfulness and Holiness

### Read

*Invite the Holy Spirit's presence as you read the following Scripture.*

#### PROVERBS 4:23 (NASB)

Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life.

#### 2 CORINTHIANS 10:4-5

For the weapons of our warfare are not merely human, but they have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to obey Christ.

### Pray

*Pray based on the Scripture passage(s). Following are ways to get started. Add additional prayers of your own.*

Lord Jesus, empower me to watch over my heart with diligence. May your living water spring up in me.

Father, you have given us your weapons with divine power to destroy inner strongholds of arguments, proud thoughts, and thoughts.

Father, I surrender every argument and proud obstacle raised up in me against the knowledge of you.

Jesus Christ, my thoughts are yours; take them captive to obedience to you.

## Listen

*Listen for God's response to you. Note what you sense the Lord saying.*

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### ***On Watchfulness and Holiness: St. Hesychios the Priest***

Watchfulness is a spiritual method which, if sedulously practiced over a long period, completely frees us with God's help from impassioned thoughts, impassioned words and evil actions.

Be watchful as you travel each day the narrow but joyous and exhilarating road of the mind, keeping your attention humbly in your heart, reproaching yourself, ready to rebut your enemies, thinking of your death and invoking Jesus Christ. You will then attain a vision of the Holy of Holies and be illumined by Christ with deep mysteries. For in Christ 'the treasures of wisdom and knowledge' are hidden, and in Him 'the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily' (Col. 2:3, 9).

Watchfulness and the Jesus Prayer . . . mutually reinforce one another; for close attentiveness goes with constant prayer, while prayer goes with close watchfulness and attentiveness of intellect.

Whenever we are filled with evil thoughts, we should throw the invocation of our Lord Jesus Christ into their midst. Then, as experience has taught us, we shall see them instantly dispersed like smoke in the air.

When combined with watchfulness and deep understanding, the Jesus Prayer will erase from our heart even those thoughts rooted there against our will.

But he who through unceasing prayer holds the Lord Jesus within his breast will not tire in following Him, as the Prophet says (cf. Jer. 17:16, in the LXX). Because of Jesus' beauty and sweetness he will not desire what is merely mortal.

The single-phrased Jesus Prayer [a powerful sword] destroys and consumes the deceits of the demons . . .

It is through unceasing prayer that the mind is cleansed of the dark clouds, the tempests of the demons. And when it is cleansed, the divine light of Jesus cannot but shine in it . . .

Let us hold fast, therefore, to prayer and humility, for together with watchfulness they act like a burning sword against the demons. If we do this, we shall daily and hourly be able to celebrate a secret festival of joy within our hearts.

Let us live every moment in 'applying our hearts to wisdom' (Ps. 90:12), as the Psalmist says, continually breathing Jesus Christ, the power of God the Father and the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24).

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References to the *Philokalia* are to the English version edited by Palmer, Sherard, and Ware. The *Philokalia* 1, 162; 166; 178; 179; 186; 188; 189, 191; 193; 193; 195.