



Getting to Know God Through Prayer Week 1

- Describe a time when God answered an important prayer in your life. How did the way God answered your prayer affect your relationship with Him?

Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my sighing. Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray. In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Psalm 5:1-3 (NIV)

- On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the highest, how would you rate your time spent talking with God this past week? Explain.

"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men... And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.

Matthew 6:5, 7 (NIV)

- How honest are you with God when you pray? What are some reasons that keep us from being totally honest with God?

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Philippians 4:6 (NIV)

- Describe how you communicate with God. What ways are most effective and meaningful to you?
- What types of things do you typically pray about?

Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NIV)

- What keeps most people from praying on a regular basis? What are some specific ways we can overcome those challenges?

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

John 10:27 (NIV)

- What is the biggest issue or need in your life currently? Spend some time praying for those needs as a group.

Final thought: With your group pray God will help you develop a deeper relationship with Him through prayer. Set aside a time each day over the next week to spend time talking with God.

Here are some suggestions you may want to use for your time with God this week:

Day 1—Spend time thanking God for all he has done in your life. Tell Him some specific things in which you are thankful for.

Day 2—Have an honest conversation with God by telling Him your true feelings about Him. Ask for a deeper relationship with Him.

Day 3—Pray for some specific needs in your own life. Pray for both large and small requests.

Day 4—Pray for others. Pray specifically for the needs that were voiced by your group. Pray for each member of your group by name.

Day 5—Listen to God. Present your requests to God from the four previous days and then simply pray, quietly listening for God's gentle whisper.



prayer

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For Further Study

To use this resource, simply select one or two questions from each category below that you think will help your group discussion. Alternatively, you can use these questions and scriptures in your own personal devotions during the week.

Open

- Who has prayed for you in the past? How have their prayers helped you?
- What role have someone's words of encouragement played in your life?

Explore

Read Philemon 1:1-7

- Who wrote this letter? (1:1)
- To whom was this letter written? (1:1)
- What do we know about the church from this brief introduction? (1:2)
- What two godly qualities did Paul desire for his readers? (1:3)
- What was always a part of Paul's prayers? (1:4)
- What had Paul heard about the readers of this letter? (1:5)
- How did Paul pray for his audience? (1:6)

- What did Paul suggest Philemon would gain by actively sharing his faith? (1:6)
- What had Philemon done for Paul? (1:7)
- What had Philemon done for the other Christians in the region? (1:7)

Reflect

- When are the normal times in a day or week that you pray?
- What are the subjects or concerns you most often address in your prayers?
- What do you think are the marks or ingredients of a good prayer?
- What is your reaction when someone says he or she is praying for you?
- How does it help a person to tell him or her that you are praying for them?

Apply

- Is there anyone God might be asking you to pray for this week?
- What are some specific ways you can improve your prayer life this week?



Why Didn't God Answer My Prayer? Week 2

- What is something you are currently praying for that God has apparently not yet answered? How have you handled this prayer not being answered?

Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."

Mark 11:24-25 (NIV)

Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

1 Peter 3:7 (NIV)

- The previous two verses would seem to indicate relationships with others have some affect on our prayers. What do you think the connection might be? Has your ability to pray ever been affected by your relationships?
- Discuss a time when God said "no" or "not now" to a request. Did you understand the reason for His answer then? Do you understand it now?
- Do you think there will be answers you may never understand? If so, how does that make you feel?

When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives...

James 4:3 (NIV)

- Describe a time when you prayed for something but your motives may have been less than pure. How did God respond to your prayers?

But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord...

James 1:6-7 (NIV)

- How would you rate the degree of faith you currently have in God's ability to answer prayers: High, low or in between? Why?
- What are some ways you've seen God work in others lives to build up their confidence and trust in Him? Have you experienced that in your own life? If so, how?

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us-whatever we ask-we know that we have what we asked of him.

1 John 5:14-15 (NIV)

Final thought: With your group pray for any requests that may have left you feeling confused, uncertain or even unheard. Be open and honest with God. He can handle it. Ask Him to help you examine your heart, your motives and your faith. Ask Him for a willingness to hear whatever His answer, whatever it may be, and to trust in His goodness and His wisdom.



Why Didn't God Answer My Prayer?

For Further Study

To use this resource, simply select one or two questions from each category below that you think will help your group discussion. Alternatively, you can use these questions and Scriptures in your own personal devotions during the week.

Open

- If you could ask God for anything, what would it be? Explain why you would ask for it.

Explore

Read Mark 11:20-26

- How did Jesus use this, seemingly insignificant, event as an opportunity to teach the disciples? (11:22)
- On what do answers to prayer depend? (11:22-25)
- What truth did Jesus illustrate with the withered fig tree? (11:23-24)
- What promise did Jesus offer regarding answers to prayers? (11:24)
- What can stand in the way of God's forgiveness? (11:25)
- How can holding a grudge affect the way God answers prayer? (11:25)
- How is some unanswered prayer accounted for? (11:25)

Reflect

- What does this passage say about the relationship between faith and forgiveness?

- When do you find it most difficult for you to forgive others?
- Has this passage challenged you to reexamine your faith in your conversations with God?

Apply

- What is one specific request that you could pray for each day for the next week? Share with the group how they can be praying with you.

Here are some suggestions you may want to use for your time with God this week:

Day 1—Pray for your unanswered requests. Have an honest conversation with God as to why these requests have yet to be answered. Read John 9:31

Day 2—Spend time praying for those in your life you may have grudges against. Ask God to soften your heart to those people and work toward reconciliation. Read 1 Peter 3:7

Day 3—Have an honest conversation with God about the current state of your faith. Pray that he will strengthen your faith. Read James 1:6-7 and Matt. 9:29-30.

Day 4—Seek God's will for your life. Not only ask God for His will, but also take time to listen for His response. Read 1 John 5:14-15 and Luke 22:42-43

Day 5—Thank God for the prayers you know He has answered in your life. Pray for those unanswered prayers that may have been mentioned by your group. Read Colossians 1:12, 1 Chronicles 16:8 and 1 Thessalonians 5:18.



Praying Like Jesus Prayed Week 3

- Describe your daily conversations with God. What types of things do you regularly pray for?

"This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'

Matthew 6:9-13 (NIV)

- Did you grow up knowing the Lord's Prayer? Was it something you simply recited out of memory or did it have meaning for you? Explain.

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well

Matthew 6:33 (NIV)

- Why do we tend to put our priorities over God's when we pray? What are some ways we can make our priorities the same as God's?

And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:19 (NIV)

- Share with the group some of the needs you currently have in your life. Ask them to help you pray for those needs.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9 (NIV)

- Describe how God's forgiveness has changed your life.

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NIV)

- Share with your group some of the temptations you struggle with. How can your group help you fight these battles?

Final thought: With your group pray the Lord's Prayer together. do not simply recite the prayer, but pray it with true meaning. Then finally, pray for the needs of your group that were mentioned earlier.



Praying Like Jesus Prayed Week 3

For Further Study

To use this resource, simply select one or two questions from each category below that you think will help your group discussion. Alternatively, you can use these questions and scriptures in your own personal devotions during the week.

Open

- What is the best answer to prayer you have ever received? How did that answer to prayer affect your relationship with God.

Explore

Read Matthew 7:7-12

- What did Jesus say will happen if we bring our requests to Him? (7:7)
- What happens when we seek in Christ's name? (7:7)
- According to Jesus, what is the result for those who "knock" on God's door? (7:7)
- How do loving parents respond to a child's request for bread? (7:9)
- How do loving parents respond to a child's request for fish? (7:10)
- What is true about the character of even the best human parent? (7:11)
- What is the likelihood of God giving His praying children what they need? (7:11)
- How are we to treat others? (7:12)

- Why is the command to treat others as you want to be treated so significant? (7:12)

Reflect

- What do you tend to pray for most?
- For what are you most reluctant to pray? Why?
- If earthly parents generally attempt to care for their children, what can you conclude about God in how he loves us?

Apply

- What specific request in your life is currently weighing on you most in your life? Share that request with your group and commit to pray for that request each day this week.

Here are some suggestions you may want to use for your time with God this week:

Day 1- Read the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13 and then spend time sincerely praying it to God. Ask Him to help make that prayer a daily part of your life.

Day 2- Pray that God will help you make His priorities your own. Ask Him what His will is for your life today. Read Matthew 6:33.

Day 3- Spend time praying for your needs and the needs of your group, friends and family. Read Philippians 4:19.

Day 4- Spend time with God confessing those sins in your life that you have yet to confess. Pray that God will help strengthen you in handling the temptations you currently have. Read 1 John 1:9 and 1 Corinthians 10:13.

Day 5- Thank God for all He has shown you during the Prayer series. Read Matthew 6:5-8.