

# Prayer Study

Leaders's Guide

## Hook:

*What words do you think of when you think of 'Prayer'?*

*How many of you have questions about prayer? What are they?*

*If you were to stand with Jesus, what questions would you ask him about prayer?*

*When has prayer been strongest in your life? What were the circumstances?*

*If your prayer life were the way you would desire, what would it look like?*

*What motivates you to pray most?*

*If prayer is a response to God, what sort of encounter with Him would compel you to pray well?*

What do you think about the following quotes?

*If we were really convinced that prayer changes the way that God acts, and that God does bring about remarkable changes in the world in response to prayer, as scripture repeatedly teaches that he does, then we would pray much more than we do. If we pray little, it is probably because we do not really believe that prayer accomplishes much at all. **Wayne Grudem 'Systematic Theology'***

*Genuine prayer is conversation with a person whom we know well, and who knows us. Such genuine conversation between persons who know each other never depends on the use of certain formulas or required words, but is a matter of sincerity in our speech and in our heart, a matter of right attitudes and a matter of the condition of our spirit. **Wayne Grudem 'Systematic Theology'***

*The sovereign God on his throne, who has planned all things from the beginning to end has arranged His plan in such a way that the prayers of the saints are one of the major means He uses to accomplish His final goal. Instead of the sovereignty of God clashing with the prayers of the believer, the two actually presuppose one another and fulfill and under gird one another. **Douglas Kelly If God Already Knows, Why Pray?***

*If you abide in me and, and my words abide in you, you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you. **John 15:7***

*Truly, truly, I say unto you, whatsoever you shall ask the father in my name, he will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in my name, ask and you shall receive, that your joy may be full. **John 16: 23-24***

## Look:

### John 17

*This passage has historically been called 'Jesus' High Priestly Prayer'. Obviously Jesus' prayers are models of how we might pray so it serves us well to take a deeper look at this passage before us. This is also a prayer that takes place soon before Jesus would return to His Father's side. Therefore it would seem to hold increased significance as it is one of the last times we hear from Jesus and indeed the longest prayer that we have recorded of His. Search deeper into this prayer and ask Jesus to teach you about prayer!*

*-Background: This prayer takes place right after the last supper and just before Jesus would be taken into captivity. These are some of His last words to the disciples through them listening into His prayer.*

*-Purpose: "Father glorify your son that the Son may glorify you." 17:1b Take care of the believers after Jesus leaves.*

*-Attitude: (He uses the pronoun 'you' over and over) He constantly praises His Father. He acknowledges who has done the real work. His role was to do the visible work, God's was to fulfill the work and so the glory goes to Him.*

*Antithesis- Me, Me, Me, 'My' life, 'My' ministry, 'My' glorification, look what 'I' have done.*

- ✓ What is the surrounding context of this passage?
- ✓ What does Jesus pray for in this passage? Take 5 minutes to write down all that you see him actually pray for.
- ✓ What was Jesus' demeanor before the Father in this passage?
- ✓ According to this passage, why pray? What motivates Jesus to pray?
- ✓ As a corollary, what are potential wrong motivations to pray?

### **1. Protection vs. 6-12**

*Main idea: He really sensed the battle to make this the first thing he prayed. Do you live or pray like there is danger? What if you did sense the danger raging for the souls of mankind? What would it do to your prayer life?*

- ✓ Why might Jesus' first prayer be for protection?
- ✓ No matter 'why', what does it show about his concern for believers?
- ✓ If you were a parent, how would you protect your children? What are things in this world that you would want them to be protected from?
- ✓ Are there things you don't understand about how He is protecting you or others potentially?

### **2. Full measure of Joy vs. 13-16**

*Main Idea: Jesus is concerned not just with obedience of his followers, but with joy that would lead to obedience! This is 'Encounter and Respond' language. If we would have a joy encounter with God, we would respond in obedience.*

- ✓ If you asked the average American what they would think Jesus would be most concerned about, what do you think they would say?

*Obeying, following the rules, being a good person etc. Interesting that he prays for protection, then joy!*

- ✓ -What are you praying for others....Joy in Christ? What are you experiencing? Don't we usually pray for others what we want or are experiencing ourselves? Where does the power for your Christian life stem from?

### **3. Sanctify them by truth vs. 17-19**

*Main Idea: Once again, isn't it interesting to look at that for which He prays to the Father? Sanctify- 'to set apart for Holiness'. -He knows 2000 years before our time that the concept of 'Truth' would be crucial to our growth in faith. Today there is a battle, (remember point #1) for truth and the outcome of the battle will determine the outflow of joy into our lives (#2). The battle for truth is a major component to our sanctification.*

*1 Thess 2:13 But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.*

*1 Thess 5:23- Now may the God of peace himself **sanctify** you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*Ephesians 6:25-27 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.*

*Romans 6:19 I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to **sanctification**.*

*-Sanctification really has 3 parts. We were 'sanctified' in one sense the moment we were saved. 1 Thess 2:13. We were set apart for Jesus and by Jesus completely. Secondly, in the more common usage, we are constantly sanctified by the Spirit working in our lives. It is his work and he is always working in us. Life as a Christian is a constant sanctification process of becoming more and more like Christ. Thirdly, we have a part of the process as we pursue the Spirit's control of our life. It is His work which we work out in our lives.*

- ✓ What does 'Sanctify' mean? When does the process of sanctification begin in one's life? Who controls the sanctification process in our lives?
- ✓ What difference does it make to know that Jesus prayed for our sanctification 2000 years ago?
- ✓ What does he imply might be a barrier to our sanctification?

*Truth....*

- ✓ How might this be a barrier to our sanctification process?  
*Jesus prays that the Word will give us truth. The word plays a part in our sanctification. If the word is not a regular part of our lives, sanctification will be stunted.*
- ✓ How might we work with the spirit to be sanctified?
- ✓ What is God's part and what is our part in the process?

#### **4. Unity vs. 20-23**

*Main Idea: There is a plan of multiplication in Jesus' prayer. It is his design to use a small number of disciples to grow a movement that would impact the world. It might be said that the greatest impact Jesus has had was to pray for the believers to multiply their lives and grow into a unified Church. You and I can join in the missional plan of Jesus by praying for the development and unity of the Church around the world! That is His desire so we know there is power behind our pray for it.*

- ✓ Paraphrase this section in your own words.... Take 2 minutes alone...
- ✓ Why is unity in the church so important?
- ✓ Do you sense unity in the church? Why/Why not?
- ✓ What are the dangers of your personally not being connected to a local church?
- ✓ What is a next step for you to be a part of the fulfillment of this prayer?

#### **5. Glorious Salvation vs. 24-26**

*Main Idea: Jesus wants us to be with Him. He wants those that don't know Him to come to faith in Him. If He prays this way we know that it is His will and we can pray alongside Him in this way. This is a great confidence to hear His prayer for us and those that still don't know Him.*

- ✓ What impact does this section make on you?
- ✓ How do you apply this section?
- ✓ What do you think it will be like to experience His glory?

#### **Took:**

Reflect: What difference does this prayer make to you?  
How does it motivate you towards prayer?  
What do you want to take away and remember?

Take time to write down a couple prayers in each category and place in your journal.....

***For further reflection and personal study:***

Ephesians 1:15-23 For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, 16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Colossians 1:3-14 We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, 4 since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, 5 because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, 6 which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and growing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, 7 just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf 8 and has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

9 And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, 10 so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. 11 May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, 12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. 13 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Matthew 6:5-15 “And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 6 But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

7 “And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. 8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. 9 Pray then like this:

*“Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name.  
10 Your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
11 Give us this day our daily bread,  
12 and forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors.  
13 And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.*

14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Matthew 7:7 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. 9 Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone?"

Matthew 18:19 Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.

John 14:13 And whatsoever you shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

John 15:16 You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

John 16:23 And in that day you shall ask me nothing. Truly, truly, I say unto you, Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. 24 Until now, you have asked nothing in my name: ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full.

Philippians 4:6 Be anxious for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

Philippians 4:19 But my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

James 4:2 You lust, and have not: you kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: you fight and war, yet you have not, because you ask not.

1 John 3:22 And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

1 John 5:14 And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he hears us: 15 And if we know that he hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we ask of him.

### **Books on prayer**

If God Already Knows, Why Pray?, Douglas Kelly

Praying with Your Eyes Open, Richard Pratt

Prayer, E.M Bounds

Intercessory Prayer, Dutch Sheets

Destined for the Throne, Paul Billheimer

Let the Nations be Glad, John Piper