



ELEMENTS

Week 6: Prayer

RECALL

DISCUSS YOUR EXPERIENCE:

After reading through the various passages of Scripture on the tenants of prayer (Praise, Submission, Provision, Confession, Direction/Protection) what aspect spoke most directly to you? Did God **Reveal** to you any areas of your prayer life where you are lacking focus? How can you gain more balance in your prayer life within these five tenants?

ICEBREAKER:

Have one volunteer from your group agree to take their weight on a scale. Then, have that person do 60 seconds of physical activity (20 push-ups, or run in place, or play Dance Revolution...come on, you can do it!). After the 60 seconds, re-weigh the individual to see if they have lost any weight. What were the results? Physical activity over time will promote weight loss, however, results do not occur immediately. The same principle is true for prayer. It takes time and practice to develop your relationship with the Lord through prayer. How often are you practicing to improve your prayer life?

FOCUS:

Last week we discussed the components of prayer as they were modeled for us through the Lord's Prayer. Jesus instructed His disciples to pray "like this", including all of the aspects, rather than to simply pray the exact words. Praying, according to this model, means we must pray with purpose.

In this session, we will examine several passages of scripture to help us understand how our actions and attitudes affect our relationship with the Lord and ultimately how He responds to us through prayer. Use the **Respond** section as your guide and quickly walk through the **Reflect**, **Recognize**, and **Respond** steps for each passage listed under **Reveal**.

REVEAL

PRAY FOR GUIDANCE:

Now take a few moments and ask God to help you understand, grasp and apply the spiritual truths of this week's selected Bible passages.

Daniel 9:2-3 (HCSB)

² "In the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the books according to the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet that the number of years for the desolation of Jerusalem would be 70. ³ So I turned my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and petitions, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes."

John 15:7 (HCSB)

⁷ "If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you want and it will be done for you."

Mark 11:22-24 (HCSB)

²² Jesus replied to them "Have faith in God. ²³ I assure you: If anyone says to this mountain, 'Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. ²⁴ Therefore I tell



you, all the things you pray and ask for—believe that you have received them, and you will have them.”

1 John 5:14-15 (HCSB)

¹⁴ “Now this is the confidence we have before Him: Whenever we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. ¹⁵ And if we know that He hears whatever we ask, we know that we have what we have asked Him for.”

Luke 18:1-8 (HCSB)

¹ He then told them a parable on the need for them to pray always and not become discouraged: ² “There was a judge in a certain town who didn’t fear God or respect man. ³ And a widow in that town kept coming to him, saying, ‘Give me justice against my adversary.’ ⁴ “For a while he was unwilling, but later he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or respect man, ⁵ yet because this widow keeps pestering me, I will give her justice, so she doesn’t wear me out by her persistent coming.’” ⁶ Then the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷ Will not God grant justice to His elect who cry out to Him day and night? Will He delay [to help] them? ⁸ I tell you that He will swiftly grant them justice. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find that faith on earth?”

REFLECT

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT:

As a group, utilize your study bibles or on-line resources to help you answer as many of the following questions about the selected passages as you can. Keep in mind, these questions are intended to be a guide and you may not be able to find all of the answers or have time to address each one in the group.

1. Who? Who wrote the book and/or passage? Who was the intended audience? Who are the main characters in the story?
2. What? What are some of the key words and their meanings in the passage?
3. When? When was the book or passage written? What was historically occurring at the time?
4. Where? In what geographic location did the story take place? What was the setting?
5. Why? Why was this book or passage written? What was the main purpose?

RECOGNIZE

KNOW THE TRUTH(S):

Keeping in mind the context of the selected passage (see **Reflect**), read the Scripture as a group and carefully take note of the truth(s) and/or promises God provides. Look for God’s promises, plans, provisions and purposes.

1. What did it mean? Read each verse individually, pausing at the end to note any truth(s) and/or promises that were intended for the original audience.
2. What does it mean? What are the universal truth(s) and/or promises and how do they apply today?
3. What meaning is unclear? Discuss, if any, problems you have encountered with the passage (i.e. what you don’t understand, possible contradictions, or difficulties in applying the passage today).



RESPOND

TAKE ACTION:

You've now prayed asking God to **R**eveal Himself and help you understand the selected passage; you've **R**elected on the context in which the passage was written; you've **R**ecognized God's timeless truths; and now you must **R**espond. To help determine your response, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. In Daniel 9:2 we see Daniel seeking God's promises for Israel, through the words of Jeremiah, and then praying earnestly for God to fulfill them. Why is seeking to understand God's promises first so important to prayer? In what ways does knowing the Word of God transform our prayer life?
2. Jesus tells us in John 15:7 that answers to our prayers are conditional upon His Word being in our hearts and transforming our thinking. Spend a moment thinking about something you are currently asking God to do in your life. What specific scripture(s) are you leaning on to support your request? Can we expect God to answer our prayers if they are not founded in His Word? Why?
3. Read Mark 11:22-24. Jesus tells us to believe that we have received an answer to our prayer not that we will receive an answer. What does this require from us? The following passages of scripture support the teachings of Jesus: James 1: 6-8, Hebrews 11:6, and Romans 4: 20-21. When we pray, do we already believe that God has answered our request? Why or why not?
4. 1 John 5:14-15 says that if we pray to God according to His will He will hear us. Why must our prayers be aligned with God's will in order for them to be answered? [God answers our prayers with a yes (in His will), a no (not aligned with His will), or a wait (I have something for you to learn).] How can you increasingly yield to God so that His will replaces your own?
5. Read the story of the persistent widow in Luke 18:1-8. In this parable, Jesus teaches us that when you truly need something, you should pray to God without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Give an example of a situation in your life where you have stopped praying for something because you have not sensed God's answer. What should your response be according to Jesus' instructions in this parable?
6. When you assess your prayer habits do they align with those modeled for us in the following bible passages: Daniel 6:10, Mark 1:35, Psalm 55:16-17? In what ways can you adjust your prayer habits to draw closer to God?

THIS WEEK:

Your assignment is to spend time each day praying through one of the components of prayer:

Monday - Praise

Tuesday - Submission

Wednesday - Provision

Thursday - Confession

Friday - Direction/Protection.

Each day concentrate on praying fervently within the target aspect. You may even want to try journaling your prayers each day so that you can reflect back on them later.

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