

SESSION SIX

PRAY



If we are on a mission to connect, serve, share, and grow, doesn't it make sense that we should stay in communication with the One who is sending us out? The One who knows far more than we do and is able to help us accomplish that mission? Prayer is how we stay connected to God, and is the source of our power and strength.

Finding God's heart for the world starts with prayer because it moves us from our perspective to His perspective. It allows us to invite God into our concerns, needs, and desires, but it also makes us realize that our compassion and care for our neighbors is only a hint of what God feels toward them.

Without God's help, which we access through prayer, our mission will surely fail. Instead of prayer being the last thing we do after we have exhausted all other means, let's put it front and center where it belongs. Prayer is a central, consistent means to bring God's power to bear on every life we touch.

We cannot live a *life on mission* without it.



MEMORY VERSE

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

Ephesians 6:18





HANGING OUT

Open your group with prayer. Be willing to be real and honest. Remind the group to respect confidentiality; commit to keeping prayer requests and current needs within the group.

1. What opportunity did God give you last week to help someone GROW in his or her faith?
2. Today we are going to focus on prayer. Have you ever prayed about the outcome of a sporting event? Discuss!
3. When you were growing up, how did you pray (if you prayed at all)? How has your understanding of prayer changed over the years?



WATCH AND LEARN



Watch the DVD teaching for this session, using this **Teaching Notes** section to fill in the blanks, and record key thoughts, questions, and statements you want to remember or look into further.

PRAY

I have to admit to you that ending up here is _____ and _____ at the same time.

God does want to _____ you, it's just not _____ you.

That's what prayer is, my friends. It's our _____ point to God's _____.

You have to take the _____ to God before you take _____ to the people.

But when I take the time to _____, I see them the way God sees them – as a lost child that the father can't wait to have _____.

FIGURING IT OUT



*If time is short, the questions marked with an * should be given priority.*

1. * **Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.** How can you begin to make prayer a habit or automatic reaction to times of both difficulty and joy?

2. Have you ever been mad at God for not saying yes to one of your prayers, only to realize later that God's plan was far better than what you wanted?

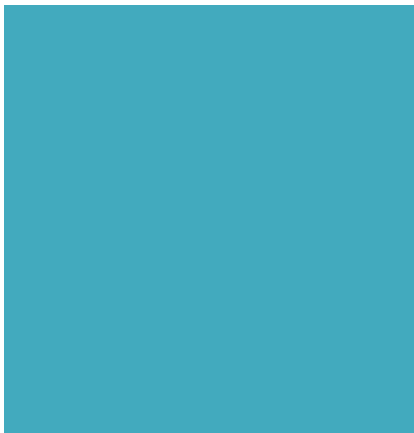
3. Tell the group about a time someone prayed for you in a moment of need and you felt God's presence more powerfully as a result.

FIGURING IT OUT

4. **Read Ephesians 3:20.** When you pray for someone who is far from God, or for someone whose spiritual condition you really don't know, what are you expecting God to do?

5. * Do you ever find yourself drifting away from communication with God? How does that impact your ability to live a life on mission?

6. * In what ways has your prayer life been challenged by this session's teaching?



LIVING IT OUT

IN THIS SECTION, TALK ABOUT HOW YOU WILL APPLY THE WISDOM YOU'VE LEARNED FROM THE TEACHING AND BIBLE STUDY. THEN THINK ABOUT PRACTICAL STEPS YOU CAN TAKE IN THE COMING WEEK TO LIVE OUT WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED.

As followers of Jesus, we are promised the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit empowers us to do more than we could on our own. What are you doing today that you could not do apart from the power of God?

Very few people would turn down the offer to be prayed for. Who can you offer to pray for this week? (And make sure you really pray!!)

Read Luke 10:02. Pastor Tim asked us all to set our alarms on our phones, or on our bedside tables, to 10:02 and pray specifically for the Lord of the Harvest to send workers. **It's exciting to think about the thousands of people who have done this study, all praying together at the same time for God to send more people who will be living LIFE ON MISSION!!**

Six months from now, what do you think you will be doing differently as a result of being a part of this group?

Congratulations! You've made it through this *Life on Mission* study! Maybe the next step that God has for you is to start your own small group and invite people who are far from God.

For more *Life on Mission* resources, visit www.lifeonmission.com.



If you feel God nudging you to go deeper, take some time between now and our next meeting to dig into His Word. Explore the Bible passages related to this session's theme on your own, jotting your reflections in a journal or in this study guide. A great way to gain insight on a passage is to read it in several different translations. You may want to use a Bible app or website to compare translations.

DIGGING DEEPER

READ LUKE 15:1-7.

This parable reveals the heart of God to seek and save the lost. In His teaching throughout the entire chapter, Jesus confronts the judgmental attitudes that were swirling around Him. He did not take lightly the lack of concern that was being shown for those who were considered to be “tax collectors (sell-outs) and sinners.”

1. How does Luke describe the setting in which Jesus told this and other parables in chapter 15? Why does the audience matter in this case?

2. How does this parable reveal the importance of being in tune, or in sync, with how God views people who are lost in the world?

3. How would you make a case for prayer from this parable?

4. As a result of prayer, when was the last time your church was able to join with the angels and celebrate the homecoming of a lost sheep? What conclusion might you draw from this?

5. In what ways are praying with others such a part of your life that people would notice if you stopped doing it?



DAILY QUIET TIME


Each day, read the daily verses and give prayerful consideration to what you learn about God, His Spirit, and His place in your life. Then record your thoughts, insights, or prayers on the lines below each verse.

DAY 1: "Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed." (Mark 1:35)

What do you think Jesus was praying about during those regular times alone with God? What would have to happen for your priorities to be closer to His?

DAY 2: "But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." (Matthew 6:6)

Why is it important for some of our praying to be done in secret?



DAY 3: "Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord." (James 5:13-14)

What is your typical response to times of trouble or happiness? What does this verse tell us it should be?

DAY 4: "Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should." (Colossians 4:2-4)

Paul encouraged prayer, and he also asked for prayer. Who prays regularly for you? Who is someone you could ask to pray for you?

DAY 5: "Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field" (Matthew 9:37-38).

Why do you think that instead of simply telling them to go be workers, Jesus said, "Ask the Lord of the harvest..."? What does this tell us about our first priority when living life on mission?
