

## About the Prayer Guide

This prayer guide is to help assist you over the next 21 days to understand why, when and how we pray. Drawing from scripture it is our desire that you find the “inner revival” needed to experience the power, miracles, and opportunities that come when you stand in the gap on behalf of others. One man said; “we handicap ourselves without prayer”. May this guide help you discover that prayer must be the foundation for how you approach every aspect of life.

## Week 1: [WHY]

### Day 1

***Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will. Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done." (Matthew 26:36-42)***

Jesus was approaching his final moments. He knew what was going to happen. He knew he would die. He knew that the fate of mankind was dependent on this. He knew this was part of the Father's plan. One might think that this would have not been difficult for Jesus because he knew the ending to the story. But it was. He needed strength, so he prayed to the Father. God is our source of life and strength. Praying to Him brings us before Him so He can give us that strength to endure what is in front of us.

### Day 2

***In her deep anguish Hannah prayed to the LORD, weeping bitterly. 11 And she made a vow, saying, "LORD Almighty, if you will only look on your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head."***

Hannah's womb was barren. In this time and culture that is a big deal because a woman was primarily responsible for keeping the bloodline going. Hanna desired a child, so she prayed. It was not a selfish desire, and God saw fit to answer her. All our desires should be brought to our Father. He may not always give us our desires, but His plan and His will is always what is best for us.

### Day 3

***While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 60 Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep. (Acts 7:59)***

Sometimes the most powerful prayer is not the longest. Stephen is being stoned to death for being a follower of Jesus. And at his moment of death, he prayed. It wasn't a frantic cry for protection, just the acceptance of his circumstance and realization of knowing where he stood in Jesus. Stephen's heart was so close to God, he even asked for God to forgive his murderers. How do we act in the face of opposition? Stephen did not react in fear, but rather prayed in faith.

#### Day 4

**After Nathan had gone home, the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife had borne to David, and he became ill. David pleaded with God for the child. He fasted and spent the nights lying in sackcloth [b] on the ground. (2 Samuel 12:15-16)**

David had been told by God that his son would die. Yet, David prayed and fasted for his son's healing for 7 days. God did not change his mind, and the child died. We don't know always know what God will and won't do, and here David asked despite what he'd been told earlier hoping his child might be saved. When the child died, David accepted his loss and God's will. Praying for something does not mean we will get what we want, but our faith will help us accept God's decisions for us and prayer build that faith.

#### Day 5

**The next day Moses said to the people, "You have committed a great sin. But now I will go up to the LORD; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin." So Moses went back to the LORD and said, "Oh, what a great sin these people have committed! They have made themselves gods of gold. 32 But now, please forgive their sin—but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written." (Exodus 32:30-32)**

While Moses was with God on Mt. Sinai receiving the law, Israel made the golden calf. In anger at their idolatry, God told Moses He would destroy them. Moses prayed to God asking Him to forgive and not destroy them. Praying on someone's behalf is one way to express love towards them without them even knowing it. In this case, God extended grace to the nation as a whole due to Moses' petition. You never know how your prayers for someone else will change their life.

#### Day 6

**Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: "Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish." (Esther 4:15&16)**

Fasting and praying go hand in hand. While the word "prayer" is not used in this text, fasting in itself is a physical type of prayer even if words are never uttered. Esther discovered a plot by the king's right hand man to exterminate the Jews. Her plan was to go before the king to expose this plan and beg him not to implement it. Now in this day and time, it was not legal for her to approach the king in this manner, even though she was his wife; However, she was willing to put herself in harm's way on behalf of her people, the Jews. Some times there are issues that people as a whole need to pray to God over together. What can you think of that your family, your church, your nation needs to approach God over?

#### Day 7

**He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. (Revelation 22:20)**

The last book of the Bible and the last prayer recorded is "Come, Lord Jesus." One who prays is intimate with the Father. As you become closer with Him, you long for Him and to be with Him more and more. John had just received a full vision about what the future would foretell for this world and just imagine how he felt after it was over. This is a very short prayer, but has huge meaning. Come Lord, bring your judgment to restore the world, do away with sin, take your people as your bride, and let us celebrate for an eternity your victory and God's presence. Can you pray that? Are you longing for His return? Are you preparing for His return?

### Week 2: [WHEN]

#### Day 1 Early

When said we should pray early, does it imply early in the day (morning), early in life, or early in our circumstances? The answer.....YES! When we seek God, can often display clearly on how we often we spend with Him. If we tend to pray to God when things go wrong, get scary and out of control, the question must be asked, why is God just now being sought? Consider Jesus' example in Mark 1:35: **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.** Jesus prayed before the day began. Should we not follow His example, not just in each day but in every circumstance and in every aspect of our life? Think of ways you can implement "praying early" in your life.

## **Day 2 Often**

***Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)***

It is an ancient Jewish understanding, still practiced today by some, "for everything a blessing." This tradition recognizes that God deserves praise and is involved in every aspect of life. The blessing would start with the phrase "Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu melek ha-olam..." which is Hebrew for "Blessed are You, LORD, our God, King of the universe..." A blessing applied to anything you could imagine: i.e. before and after a meal, holidays, waking up, donning a prayer shawl, surviving an illness, and even going to the bathroom. Some say that Paul, being brought up in a strong Hebrew tradition, was simply encouraging this tradition to the Thessalonians when he said "pray continually". Whether that is the case or not, giving God recognition for all things on a daily basis is a good tradition to follow.

## **Day 3 When In need**

***Blessed are all your saints, my God and King! Who have through travail and in peace of soul all traveled within the ship with you, the tempestuous sea of mortality, and have, at last, made the desired port of peace and of felicity! O, cast a gracious eye upon us who are in our dangerous voyage still! Remember, succor us in our distress: think of those who lie exposed to the rough storms of troubles and temptations! Strengthen our weakness in your strength, that valiantly we may do your will in this spiritual battle. Help us against our own negligence, our cowardice; defend us from the treachery of our unfaithful hearts. We are exceedingly frail, and indisposed to every virtuous and gallant undertaking. Grant, O Lord, that we may bring our vessel safe to shore, into our desired haven, Lord. Amen. (St. Augustine)***

## **Day 4 In Prosperity**

It is easy to be moved to pray to our Father in times of need. But we don't always recognize our need during times of abundance. It takes real focus during times of prosperity to realize that all we have comes from God. We tend to neglect thanking and praising Him for His provision like we should. In fact, many times we miss what our needs are during these times such as; focus, humility, thankfulness, etc. If you struggle to pray or recognize God as much in prosperity ask yourself. Do you tend to only pray when you need something, thus thinking less of Him when the need is not there? If so, getting in the habit of praying often during the day, every day, can help you recognize your need during the good times as well as the bad.

## **Day 5 Just Because**

***About noon the following day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. (Acts 10:9)***

This passage serves as a reminder that prayer should be a part of our everyday life.

## **Day 6 For The Big Stuff**

It may seem like a no brainer, but the big things in life need prayer. How often do we approach God in the big events that define us as a person? For example: In marriage, do we marry in obedience to God, or for other reasons? What role does the lack of prayer play in the divorce rate among Christians? If people would commit to praying for who they marry and continue to pray for the one they did marry, would there be divorce among followers of Christ? Other big things in life could be career, family, or any decision that alters one's life. The only one who can lead, guide, and direct us to and through life changing decisions is God, and again, the way to approach Him is through prayer.

## **Day 7**

***The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction. (Proverbs 1:7)***

This verse is often quoted by those who follow Jesus. Think on it for a moment. Knowledge is what we know: All knowledge! Here the word fear is used to depict awe, respect, and understanding. In other words, "fear of the Lord" is taking Him seriously in any aspect. Do you approach God in awe? Is prayer something you do with a sense of respect? This week we looked at "when" we should pray. Hopefully you have taken to heart the encouragements of this week to identify when prayer is lacking in your life. We need God literally in every aspect and everything we do. Take this time and ask our Father to reveal to you more understanding of when to pray, then commit and seek Him however He convicts you.

## Week 3: [HOW]

### Day 1

***"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 others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. 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. (Matt 6:5&6)***

Prayer is how we seek and communicate with our Father. When you pray, do you give Him your full attention or the leftovers of your day? If you don't already, find your "closet" where you can be alone with God with no distractions and give Him your full attention.

### Day 2

***So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes. (Daniel 9:3)***

How do you approach God? In pleading with God, Daniel not only prayed, but fasted in a sackcloth and ashes. This serves as an example of how Daniel completely submitted himself to God for his physical needs and comfort. It was a sacrificial act to give God his full attention. When we pray, should we not do the same? What can you do to give God your full attention as we approach Him on behalf of those we love?

### Day 3

***In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. (Romans 8:26&27)***

Sometimes our circumstances are so heavy that we come to God unable to articulate our prayers. We don't know what we want, need, or how to get through our struggles. But our Father hears us and knows exactly what our heart is saying even when our mind and tongue do not.

### Day 4

How often do you praise and thank God for what has done, as well as what He is going to do in your life? Your praise for Him can be an indication of how much you really appreciate Him. If this does not come naturally to you, try reading the Psalms. As you read them, use them to express your praise just as David and the other writers of this book did.

### Day 5

***"Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." (Psalms 46:10)***

You cannot experience intimacy without spending time with someone. You have to give them your undivided attention so they can give you theirs. God is no different. Especially in our culture, slowing down can be very difficult and being still can seem impossible with all the noise and distractions of life. But make the time to be still and allow God to make himself known to you.

### Day 6

Noah, Abraham, Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, (and all the other prophets) are among those who have one thing in common. God spoke to them. They listened and received His word and instruction. Then they responded and carried out the instruction they were given. What is God telling you? Have you stopped to listen and receive your instruction. What does He want you to do for the person you are praying for?

### Day 7

Perhaps you've read something this week that has stood out to you. Maybe it all has. Today, plan out how you can implement what God is speaking to your heart about how to pray. Write it down. Ask God for the strength and commitment to pursue Him with an effort like you never have before. Be specific about how you will do this. Remember that among everything else in life, you are praying for someone specific who needs to be loved. How will God tell you to love them?