

Week Two

Worship Scripture Reading Closeness Sacrifice Discovery-Prayer &
Fasting 2019
January 7-19

Theme: Partners in Prayer

Scripture: James 5:16 Therefore confess your sins to one another, and **pray for one another**, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.

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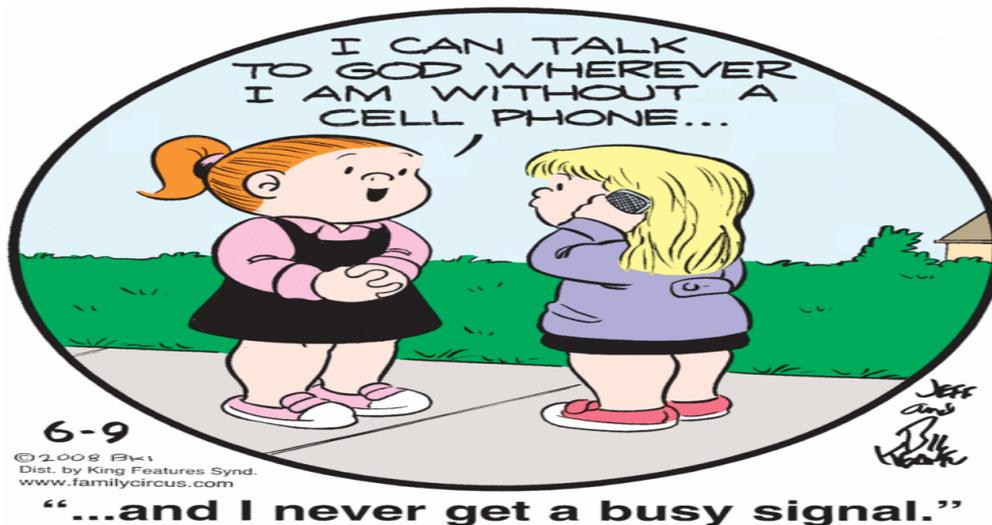
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How to use this guide

We don't have to follow a specific formula to talk with God, but practicing different ways to pray can help us find deeper purpose and connection to Him through our prayer time. This booklet is designed to bring joy into your time with God. The goal of using this guide is not to add pressure or overwhelm you. The goal is simply to get comfortable with models of prayer and for your prayer life to become more natural, intimate, effective, and enjoyable. To make your prayer time even more meaningful, you can write notes and prayer requests and play worship music. The important step is committing to regularly entering God's presence through prayer. The heart of this guide is to help you find a new level of purpose, effectiveness, and enjoyment in your prayer life. While prayer does take commitment and can require discipline to develop into a daily habit, we also want to remember that it's a "get to" not a "got to." It's a privilege to be able to come to God in prayer. When you discover the beauty of daily conversation with Him, you'll experience the presence of God that will change your life.



Once you commit to a prayer life that is “fervent and effectual, it can become a part of everyday life. And then...

Before the day begins —

Before you go to bed —

Before you go to work or school — Before you send that text —

Before you eat, drive or travel — When bad things happen —

Before bad things happen —

In every situation — **PRAY FIRST!**

Prayer changes everything!

CREATING A LIFESTYLE OF PRAYER

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

Prayer is most effective when it isn't something we do every now and then, but when it's a lifestyle we cultivate. To understand how to have a lifestyle of prayer, we can look at the example Jesus gave during His life on earth.

Speak God's Names out loud

When we proclaim who He is, we not only worship Him, but we also remind ourselves how powerful and great our God is.

The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe.
PROVERBS 18:10 ESV

PRAYER:

"God, I am in awe of You. Your Name is a strong tower, a place of protection and safety for me. I praise You as my Healer, my Shepherd, and my Banner of Victory. You are my Peace, my Provider, my Righteousness, and my Sanctifier. Your Name is great, and I worship You." In Jesus name. Amen

PRAY HIS AGENDA FIRST

Matthew 6:33 (AMP)-³³ But seek (aim at and strive after) first of all His kingdom and His righteousness (His way of doing and being right), and then all these things 'aken together will be given you besides.

PRAYER:

"God, I recognize there is no better plan on earth than Yours, and I pray for Your will to be done in my life (name the areas of your life where you need more of God's presence today) and in our world. This world is lost and needs You desperately, and I pray for every person to know You as their personal Lord and Savior. I pray for the leaders in my life (pray specifically over parents, spiritual leaders, government leaders, employers, and any other leaders in your life), that you would give them supernatural wisdom and discernment as they lead. Give them a revelation of Your will and Your purpose for them. And I give my life to You again today; have Your way in my life! Anything You want to do in me or through me, I will do. I ask today for wisdom and clarity as you show me my next steps." In Jesus name. Amen

DEPEND ON HIM FOR EVERYTHING

1 Peter 5:7 Amplified Bible-⁷ Casting the ^[a]whole of your care [all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, ^[b]once and for all] on Him, for He cares for you affectionately and cares about you ^[c]watchfully.

PRAYER:

“Father, I acknowledge that everything I need today will come from You. You made the heavens and the earth; You are more than capable of handling any situation I’m dealing with, so I give it to You completely (specifically talk to God about what is on your mind and heart right now and give it to Him). I want to experience Your presence and Your love in a fresh way today, Jesus. I thank you that Your mercies are new every day. I thank you for Who You are and all You have done for me I look to you to help me, sustain me, and give me Your peace. Remind me of Your hope and power today. Thank You in advance for taking care of my needs.” In Jesus name. Amen

Day 1-The Power of the Cross



Because of what Jesus did on the cross, we can confess our sins to Him and receive complete forgiveness and a fresh start. In prayer, humbly and sincerely turn away from your sins and allow God to cleanse and renew you. Then, surrender your life and every part of yourself to Him.

The cross provides us with five major benefits:

- Salvation - *God forgives all my sin*
- Healing - *God heals all my diseases*
- Redemption - *God rescues me and restores me*
- Transformation - *God changes me into His likeness*
- Blessing - *God provides everything I need*

Prayer:

“Thank You, God, for making a way for me through Your Son. Jesus, thank You for the sacrifice You made for me on the cross. Now I have the gift of eternal life when I die. You saved me, and You set me free. I praise You for being my Healer. You have power over all disease and harm in my life (list specific areas where you need to experience God’s healing power). Thank You for being my Redeemer. You rescue me and give my life purpose. Thank You for transforming my life with Your love, for making me new. I want to grow to be more like You (give Him access to every area of your life). Thank You for blessing me. I know You have good plans for me and all that I have comes from You (thank Him for specific blessings in your life).”

Supplemental Prayer/Confession:

“God, I confess my sins to You and turn away from them (tell God any sin you know is in your life and confess it to Him with a sincere heart. Ask Him to show you any other areas that need His cleansing). Thank You, God, for freely forgiving me. As I turn away from my sin, I turn toward You, and I offer myself to You: I present my body unto oh Lord because you are merciful. It is my act of reasonable service to you.

- I give You my tongue, to speak good and not evil*
 - I give You my eyes, to focus on You and the needs of others*
 - I give You my ears, to be sensitive to Your voice*
 - I give You my hands, to do good for others*
 - I give You my feet, to walk in Your ways and follow Your footsteps*
 - I give You my mind, to be transformed and used by You*
- I ask You, Lord, for the fruit of the Spirit found in Galatians 5:22-23, so that I can grow closer to You and make a difference in the lives of others. I ask for: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.”*

Day 2-Weapons of War



Psalm 144:1 Of David. Blessed be the LORD, my rock, who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle;

Psalm 18:34 He trains my hands for war, so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.

ENGAGE IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Spiritual warfare can seem difficult to understand, but the Bible makes it very clear that we have an enemy who is trying to steal from us, kill us, and destroy us. As we pray, we take our stand against the enemy and fight from a place of victory through Jesus as we're empowered by His Holy Spirit. There is power in God's Word, and every lie the enemy has told us can be replaced with God's truth.

I want to call your attention to this text in the Bible to help us understand, as Believers, we are also in a spiritual struggle! When we are born again into the family of God, we are enlisted in an army who is to fight against the evils of the devil. You have an enemy of your soul. He would love to conquer us any way he can. He doesn't fight fair. He never gives up. His weapons are carnal. His torture is cruel. He is waging war against us and spiritual struggles are his tools.

We all face our battles. To win the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, we must seek His help. He was well aware of the fact the Lord could guide his fingers in the art of spiritual warfare. The battle is real and the need for the help of the Lord is great.

EQUIPPING OF SKILLED WARRIORS

Worshipping is an act of declaring war. This word means to "reverence with high esteem for the sacred." Sincerely we are to revere God's house and His people. There is a big difference between "praise" and "worship." Praise is usually based on the direct result of receiving a particular blessing. For example, we need a new pair of shoes, a healing of our body or a bill paid. Worship, on the other hand, is a higher level than praise. It shows our love and thanks to the Lord whether we receive anything or not. Even if we don't have the shoes, the healing or the money, we go ahead and praise Him anyway! To "praise" means to express approval or "glorify." To "glorify" means to "rejoice with jubilation." Then "jubilation" refers to

“exaltation.” The word “exaltation” means to “praise.” Then it starts all over again. In other words, worship is a circle that never ends. No wonder the Lord inhabits the praise of His people. The bigger the circle gets the more He lives in it and fills us at the same time.

Calling all Warriors

Warriors are not born, they are made. They are trained. God is in the business of teaching our hands to war and our fingers to fight. These are days of fierce spiritual warfare and only the very skilled stand any chance of survival.

The casualties at the war front and the dead on the battlefield will be many because the devil knows that he has but a short time. The devil is engineering many new devices, implementing many new strategies and employing more sophisticated weapons to fight this end-time warfare. It takes those who have been taught of the Lord in spiritual warfare to win the victory every time.

Blessed be the Lord our strength indeed who has not abandoned us to fight alone but has been equipping us with the whole armor of God, giving us the weapons of warfare that are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds (Ephesians 6:12-17; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5).

However what use are armors and weapons if we are not skilled enough to make use of them? It is important to be **BOTH** armed and trained. Thank God because He still teaches our hands to war and our fingers to fight.

2 Corinthians 10:5-6 (MSG) ³⁻⁶ The world is unprincipled. It's dog-eat-dog out there! The world doesn't fight fair. But we don't live or fight our battles that way—never have and never will. The tools of our trade aren't for marketing or manipulation, but they are for demolishing that entire massively corrupt culture. We use our powerful God-tools for smashing warped philosophies, tearing down barriers erected against the truth of God, fitting every loose thought and emotion and impulse into the structure of life shaped by Christ. Our tools are ready at hand for clearing the ground of every obstruction and building lives of obedience into maturity.

2 Corinthians 10:5 Amplified Bible-⁵ [Inasmuch as we] refute arguments *and* theories *and* reasonings and every proud *and* lofty thing that sets itself up against the [true] knowledge of God; and we lead every thought *and* purpose away captive into the obedience of Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One)

Let's Pray:

“God, I recognize that my struggles today aren't against the people or circumstances around me, but against the enemy. Please help me to see how the enemy is lying to me. Help me to recognize his lies, take them captive, and make all of my thoughts obedient to the truth of Your Word (list out any specific areas God shows you where you have believed a lie that needs to be replaced with His truth). While the enemy wants to destroy me, I know that You came to give me life to the fullest. Thank you for leaving me tools to war against the Devil. I speak the name of Jesus over my life and declare that no weapon formed against me will prosper. I don't have to fear the enemy because the One who is in me is greater than the one who is in the world.” Amen

Day 3-Spiritual Tune-Up



Scripture:

“Let us take a good look at the way we’re living and reorder our lives under God.” Lamentations 3:40 MSG

John 16:13 KJV “When the spirit of truth has come, it will guide you into all truth.”

You’re driving along in your car or truck and suddenly a yellow light illuminates on your dash telling you to check or service your engine. If you’re like most car owners, you have little idea about what that light is trying to tell you or how you should react. Then my thoughts wandered to the warning signs and signals in my life and my journey of faith. Generally, much like the gas gauge, when I’m hungry – I eat. But what about when I’m feeling tired and I rush to a caffeine source rather than adjusting my schedule so I can get more sleep? Or I hurry past my Bible or skip exercising because my day is too busy? Or I fail to notice my soul’s weariness and the need to find some quiet with God to refresh my soul? Ignoring these warning signs can limit my ability to live life fully – and can have ripple effects beyond just me, to my family, my friends, to my community. I have found the Reviewing My Days map to be a wonderful tool and invitation to notice and pay attention to things I might otherwise miss. It walks me through a series of questions looking at the “dashboard” of my life. Asking these under the loving gaze of God helps me stay aware of the warning signs and signals. One way to accomplish that spiritual discipline is to regularly pray the words of Psalm 139.

Psalm 139:23-24 (MSG)

¹⁻⁶ GOD, investigate my life; get all the facts firsthand. I’m an open book to you; even from a distance, you know what I’m thinking. You know when I leave and when I get back; I’m never out of your sight.

You know everything I’m going to say before I start the first sentence. I look behind me and

you're there, then up ahead and you're there, too— your reassuring presence, coming and going. This is too much, too wonderful— I can't take it all in!

²³⁻²⁴ Investigate my life, O God, find out everything about me; Cross-examine and test me, get a clear picture of what I'm about; See for yourself whether I've done anything wrong— then guide me on the road to eternal life.

Maybe this week is a great time for each of us to give heed to those flashing impulses God has installed in our hearts. We probably need to crank up our sensitivity to His nudges and be ready to respond to the spiritual “check engine lights.”

Questions for Reflection:

Are there warnings or signals trying to get your attention?

How might God be alerting you to your need for Him? _____

What is one practical way you might choose to stay aware of the details of your walk with God?

**Tune up or overhaul?
Holy Spirit present or absent?
Indicator light on or off?**

No one wants to be stranded on the side of the road. Get moving again; maintain your spiritual engine as you journey. Pay attention to the check engine light for your soul.

Let's Pray:

Lord, I come to You in Jesus' mighty name, and I ask You to help me become more sensitive to Your voice, so that I may know your will for my life more clearly. Help me to lay aside everything that would hinder me from hearing Your voice more clearly. "Lord, help me pay attention to the warnings and signals in my life. For your Holy Spirit who guides us into all truth. I repent for times when I've ignored your warning and went my own way. I don't want to be a child You must discipline. Help me to respond to You intentionally so I may stay connected to you. Thank you for the ways you invite me into deeper relationship with You." Lord, let me hear Your call. Open my ears to hear Your voice. Sensitize my heart to Your Spirit's conviction. Make me compliant with Your will. You know me in and out, nothing in my life is hidden from You. Thank You, Lord. Amen

Day 4- Prayer and the God Who Hears



We've all gone through times when we believe God hasn't heard our prayers. But despite how you feel, God hasn't gone anywhere. Since God is so deeply committed to you, he's not going to walk away from you.

In fact, he's watching over you. Right here. Right now. You may not see him or hear him, but you're on his mind, and he loves you. Keep your eyes open, and watch for God's presence in your life. You may not see him all the time, but like the wind, you can see the effect he has. Maybe you see him in how he provides. Or comforts. Or the people he sends into your life.

God wants you to keep looking for him by praying, reading his Word and living out your faith. "Come and pray to me, and I will listen to you," God says. "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:12-13, NIV).

It's often been said that God answers our prayers in one of three ways: Yes, no, and wait. There is much truth in this, because God knows our needs far better than we do. Sometimes, for example, we want Him to do something for us, but our prayers are self-centered or thoughtless, and God says "No" because He knows our motives are wrong. Or sometimes God says, "Wait! Not yet!" — because He sees the whole picture, and He knows what's best for us, both now and in the future. And sometimes, of course, God says "Yes." And scriptures confirm that He hears our prayer.

Psalm 145:18, "The Lord is near to all who call upon Him."

Psalm 18:6, "In my distress I called upon the Lord, And cried to my God for help; **He heard my voice out of His temple, And my cry for help before Him came into His ears.**"

Psalm 65:2 says, "**O Thou that hearest prayer,** Unto Thee shall all flesh come."

Psalm 3:4 (KJV)-⁴I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and **he heard me** out of his holy hill. Selah.

Let's Pray: *Lord we commit to seek you with our whole heart, mind, and soul. Father, thank You for hearing and answering my prayers. Help me to praise You regardless of the answers. Calm my heart when You say, "Yes." Protect my heart when You say, "No." Give me a new measure of patience when You say, "Wait." In Jesus' name. Amen.*

Day 5-Stay Focused



**PRAY, AND
KEEP PRAYING!**

As our time of corporate fasting comes to an end, we pray you are encouraged to continue your journey through prayer and fasting. Remember, keeping the fire and zeal for God burning in your heart is what will keep your relationship with Him fresh and new. It will allow you to keep serving and obeying Him, and wanting to experience Him in a greater way. You will have joy of your salvation daily, no matter what life's circumstances may bring.

The principles you have practiced in these 14 days are very easy to sustain long-term. Prayer, fasting, and personal devotion are all quite simple to incorporate into your everyday life. Over these

last 14 days, we've intentionally sacrificed, created time and space for God. Be obedient to everything He spoke to you during this time. Also if you made a personal commitment, please follow through with your promise(s). This isn't about being legalistic but staying open to experience Him in new ways. We eagerly await this upcoming year and seeing the Lord accomplish great things in the lives of His people.

We trust God to answer our prayers.

“I cried out to him with my mouth;

his praise was on my tongue.

If I had cherished sin in my heart,

the Lord would not have listened;

but God has surely listened

and has heard my prayer.

Praise be to God,

who has not rejected my prayer

or withheld his love from me!”

Psalm 66:17-20

Closing Prayer: O righteous Father, thank you for my salvation and for revealing yourself to me during this time of prayer and fasting. Thank you Lord because the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and have stood in your presence these 14 days. Thank you for helping me and giving me strength for every battle I have fought, and for every enemy you have destroyed and removed from my life. I dedicate my victory to you in Jesus name. Righteous Father, king of the Universe, you are not interested in unrighteous sacrifice. LORD, you are nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and save such as be of a contrite spirit. Many have been my afflictions: but LORD you delivered me out of them all. You have kept my bones: not one of them will be broken throughout the year, thank you in Jesus name. I will walk in newness of life. Amen