

by J.R. Miller



# Praying in Community

STUDENT JOURNAL

GIVING VOICE TO THE  
HEART OF OUR FATHER

**Praying in Community  
Giving Voice to the Heart of Our Father**

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# Lesson 1: The Prayer of Jesus

Prayer does not come easy to us and learning to pray can be tough. Many times we feel alone in our struggle to experience meaningful prayer... we are not alone. According to a recent survey, the typical Christian spends three and a half minutes each day in prayer. A Christian who is in full-time ministry averages only seven minutes per day. Throughout this series we will learn the fundamentals that will help us experience joy and meaning in prayer. First, let's talk about what prayer is.

## I. Introduction: What is Prayer?

- Describe in your own words what defines the ideal prayer life?
- Describe how you feel about your own prayer life? Are you happy with it? Discouraged by it? Is your prayer life non-existent? Explain why you feel this way.
- If you struggle with knowing how to pray, why? Do you feel God is not listening? Do you feel like prayer has no purpose? Is prayer not important? Why is prayer hard?

### The Words of Children

“Prayer is the lisping of the believing infant, the shout of the fighting believer, the requiem of the dying saint falling asleep in Jesus. It is the breath, the watchword, the comfort, the strength, and the honor of a Christian.”

*Spurgeon*

## A. Prayer Defined

Over the course of our study we will seek to answer some of the above questions as to why prayer is so important. Throughout this series, we will explore various types of prayer to enhance our skills. As we begin, it might be helpful if we develop a simple definition of the term prayer.

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### KEY TERM - Prayer

Prayer is communing with your King and Father.

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## B. The Key Components

The above definition involves three key components.

1: \_\_\_\_\_

Communion means that we are interacting with God. We talk, He listens; He talks, we listen. We can not commune with God if we ignore Him. Do not fail to take time and listen for His voice and He will come to you.

2: \_\_\_\_\_

If we forget that God is King and ruler of our world and our life, then our prayer will lead to frustration. In the weeks ahead we will spend some time getting to know the God to whom we pray and learn how He is able to accomplish so much through our prayer.

3: \_\_\_\_\_

Our prayers are not to an angry God, but a loving Father. God's wants us to pray, He asks us to pray, He waits for your prayers as a father would wait to hear from any child. Prayer is speaking to your heavenly Dad and opening up your life to His work!

### **He Who is Without Prayer**

“He who lives without prayer, he who lives with little prayer, he who seldom reads the Word, and he who seldom looks up to heaven for a fresh influence from on high; he will be the man whose heart will become dry and barren. However, he who falls in secret on his God, who spends much time in holy retirement, who delights to meditate on the words of the Most High, and whose soul is given up to Christ; such a man must have an overflowing heart. As his heart is, such will his life be.”

*Spurgeon*

## **II. Breaking Down Barriers: Finding your Faith in Prayer**

To be without prayer in the Christian life, is like being a firefighter without water; we have a mission, we have the training, but we lack the power to do any real work. As we begin our adventure into prayer, here are some biblical reasons why we need to pray.

### **A. Pray Because God Wants you to Pray**

#### **Matthew 7:7-11**

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened for you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. 9 Is there anyone among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?

10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? 11 If you then, although you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

**The NET Bible**

### **B. Pray Because It Is a Christian's Duty**

#### **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**

Always rejoice, 17 constantly pray, 18 in everything give thanks. For this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

**The NET Bible**

### **C. Pray Because God Hears Your Prayers**

#### **Psalms 10:16-18**

The Lord rules forever! The nations are driven out of his land. 17 Lord, you have heard the request of the oppressed; you make them feel secure because you listen to their prayer. 18 You defend the fatherless and oppressed, so that mere mortals may no longer terrorize them.

**The NET Bible**

### **D. Pray Because It Will Change Your Life**

#### **Hebrews 4:14-16**

Therefore since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession.

15 For we do not have a high priest incapable of sympathizing with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way just as we are, yet without sin. 16 Therefore let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace whenever we need help.

**Prayer Bring Character**  
“Prayer governs conduct and conduct makes character. Conduct, is what we do; character, is what we are. Conduct is the outward life. Character is the life unseen, hidden within, yet evidenced by that which is seen.”  
**E.M. Bounds**

**The NET Bible**

### **III. A New Tool: The Prayer Journal**

We can begin to grow in our prayer life as we try new things, find new models, and practice new tools to help us grow. This week we are going to introduce the idea of a prayer journal and we will practice using this tool throughout the remaining weeks of our prayer experience.

Turn to the end of this chapter and you will find a section entitled "***My Weekly Prayer Journal***"

Work through the instructions this week and begin to practice your prayers using this method of journaling.

Come back each week with an openness to share what God is teaching you through your weekly prayer journal. Once you have spent some time discussing this tool, move on and talk about how we can pray together as the community of God's family.

### **IV. Practicing our Prayer: Praying in Community**

Church is the \_\_\_\_\_ NOT the \_\_\_\_\_!  
and

Prayer is about the \_\_\_\_\_ NOT the \_\_\_\_\_.

#### **A. Praying Together**

Finding time to pray together in groups is always a great blessing. Here are a few simple reasons why it is valuable to pray in groups.

#### **Ephesians 4:1-6**

I, therefore, the prisoner for the Lord, urge you to live worthily of the calling with which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you too were called to the one hope of your calling, 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

## My Prayer Journal

Each day you pray this week, spend time in prayer, then write a summary of your thoughts and experiences. At the end of your week, summarize your prayers and meditations by writing a simple prayer to God. Try practicing the **PRAYS** tool.

**KEY VERSE:** Scripture to transform my mind...

Write down the key passage that spoke most clearly to you today in your time of prayer. You can write just the verse reference, or even copy the entire passage.

Day 1.

Day 2.

Day 3.

Day 4.

Day 5.

Day 6.

Day 7.

**IMPLICATION:** The meaning applied by the Spirit of God...

What did God teach you today in your time of prayer? Was there something that came from your reflection upon the key passage? Was there something that God seemed to say to you during your time of listening? Allow the Holy Spirit to illuminate your mind and heart with the power of God's Word.

Day 1.

Day 2.

Day 3.

Day 4.

Day 5.

Day 6.

Day 7.

**APPLICATION:** Application for the daily walk with Jesus...

Throughout your day spend some more time in prayer. Find some time to pray with loved ones, your pastor, close friends. How will God change you in light of your prayer today? What life changes does God demand of you?

Day 1.

Day 2.

Day 3.

Day 4.

Day 5.

Day 6.

Day 7.



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**WEEKLY SUMMARY:** God's Spirit at work...

In a short paragraph or two, make a journal entry for your week by reflecting upon all that God has taught you through your time of prayer.