

THEME: How to Pray

LOOKING BACK

- What was the most important thing you did or heard from the last session?

CONNECT

Praying Powerful Prayers in Difficult Times

Resources

Bibles, slips of paper with verses and highlighted words/phrases, pen, big pot/bowl

Icebreaker Activity - Recipe for POWERful Prayer?

Things to Prepare: Bibles, a big pot or bowl, slips of paper with Bible verses about prayer written/typed out in full with key words highlighted:

- James 5:16 (KJV), with “**fervent**” highlighted
- Colossians 4:2 (NIV), with “**being watchful**” highlighted
- James 5:16 (KJV), with “**righteous**” highlighted
- Romans 8:26 (NIV), with “**the Spirit himself intercedes for us**” highlighted
- Ephesians 1:17-18 (NIV), with “**Spirit of wisdom and revelation**” highlighted
- Ephesians 3:14-21 (NIV), with “**filled to the measure of all the fullness of God**” highlighted

Activity: Take turns choosing a slip of paper with a prepared Bible verse on it (you may want to let them take it from their Bibles).

Discuss with each other what that “ingredient” for powerful prayer is. Put the paper into the big pot/bowl. This is how you will build a recipe for powerful prayer.

TRUTH TO KNOW

Faith Focus: We Must Know How to Pray

Introduction

We want to help you know the Truth and will do our best to tell you what is true, but you don’t just need to take our word. You need to read it in the Bible for yourself. So we will open the Bible and read the Truth each time we meet. This week’s “Truth to Know” is found in **1 Timothy 2:1-4**.

Background to This Bible Passage

The Apostle Paul had a spiritual son named Timothy, a young man whose mother was Jewish and whose father was a Gentile. A close relationship developed between Paul and Timothy, and eventually, Paul decided to place Timothy in charge of the church in the city of Ephesus. The book of 1 Timothy is a letter written by Paul to Timothy to encourage him in his pastoral and leadership role in the church.

The Unfolding Story (Your Interactive Teaching)

Read **1 Timothy 2:1-4**.

- What kinds of prayers did Paul encourage Timothy to pray for everybody? Offer up supplications (asking for things), prayers (speaking with God – He is the one we bring our requests to and focus on), intercessions (praying for others – standing in the gap), and thanksgivings (thanking God) for *all people*.
- Why did Paul “urge” Timothy to pray like this? It was pleasing to God.
- Who are we meant to pray for, according to Paul? We are meant to pray for all peoples, but especially for kings and leaders and those in high positions.
- What did Paul say will be the result of our prayers? It would lead to us living a peaceful, quiet, godly, and holy life.
- What are we to be praying for as we pray for people? We are to be praying for their salvation and wisdom, working for and not against God’s purpose.
- What connections can we make with the **James 5:16** passage (in our Icebreaker Activity) to this passage in **1 Timothy 2:1-4**? In both passages, we are urged to pray for people with fervency. Our prayers are powerful and should be from our hearts, not just empty words.
- **John 15:7** (NIV) says, “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.” Does this mean we can get anything we want from God? We must have our hearts aligned with His (this is what righteousness in **James 5:16** means). Abiding with God and having His Spirit and words in us changes our thoughts and emotions to be more like His. Then, we will ask what is already on His heart, and He will answer it.
- What is another way of ensuring that we are praying God’s will? If we pray the Scriptures back to God, we will surely be praying His will. We will practice doing this in the next activity.

Activity Suggestion - Praying the Word

Aim: To practice praying the Scriptures to intercede for specific global situations and/or world leaders.

Things to Prepare: On small slips of paper, prepare several world events and leaders who need prayer right now (e.g., an area of war, famine, leaders of your nation, etc.). Make one for each member of your group.

On letter size (A4) paper, write out Scripture verses, one per sheet, at the top. Leave space at the bottom of each page for children to write out their personalized Scripture prayers. Scriptures may include the following: **Ephesians 1:17-19; Ephesians 3:16-19; Colossians 1:9-11; Romans 15:5-6, 13; 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5; Acts 4:29-31; Isaiah 64:1-2** (*type the obstacles instead of “mountains” and the specific “adversaries,” e.g., sin, sickness, satan, etc.*); **Colossians 4:3-4; Matthew 9:37-38; 2 Corinthians 13:7**.

(Note: You may wish to match up the global situations/world leaders with the Scriptures for the children so they will only need to personalize the prayers.)

Provide an example for your group members to model their Scriptures and prayers after. For EXAMPLE, **Praying Philippians 1:9-11 (NASB) for a world leader:** “*And this I pray, that _____’s love may overflow still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that _____ may discover the things that are excellent, that _____ may be sincere and blameless for the day of Christ; having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, for the glory and praise of God.*”

Activity – Global Prayer:

You will work individually to prepare an intercessory prayer for a global situation or world leader. You may choose which situation or leader to pray for and will then be given a selection of Scriptures to pray from. Choose one.

There are four steps in praying the Scriptures in intercession:

1. First, pray and ask the Holy Spirit to guide you.
2. Second, find the appropriate Scripture for the person/situation you are praying for.
3. Third, personalize the Scripture (for the person or event you are praying for) and turn it into an intercessory prayer.
4. Lastly, write down your prayer on paper and pray it out loud.

Once you finish writing out your prayer, we will take turns reading out our Scripture prayers and praying together for these events and/or leaders.

Discuss

We know Jesus is coming back. Jesus said there would be signs that would tell us His return is soon. As we watch for and recognize the signs, God wants us to pray for all people, especially those in authority. He wants us to partner with Him in intercessory prayer and to enact His will on the earth.

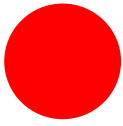
- Why do we need to pray powerful prayers in difficult times? These may be times of trial, tribulation, shifts in governments, etc. Jesus said that these times are coming on the earth. Through prayer, we are strengthened to stand and are empowered to live fully for God in these times (**Ephesians 6:11-13 & 18**).
- As we see things unfolding, we can choose to pray, or we can choose other responses. What might be some opposite responses to prayer? Being fearful, anxious, ignoring God, or running away.
- Our prayers can be powerful and effective, especially as we pray according to God's will. We can do this with confidence as we pray the Scriptures back to God. We can fill the bowls of intercession in Heaven with a pleasing aroma.
- **Revelation 5:8** says that our prayers are rising collectively like incense and are filling bowls of prayer in Heaven. Let's read **Revelation 5** in its entirety. (Read **Revelation 5** out loud). The elders around the throne of God are holding golden bowls of prayers, but what else are they holding? They are holding harps and singing worship unto the King.
- Worship God as you intercede for global situations and world leaders. This is a powerful duo.
- Some people call this type of intercessory worship/prayer "harp and bowl." Can you explain why? The bowl is the prayers mentioned in **Revelation 5**, and the harps were instruments used in worship in the Bible.
- Whether we worship and pray together or do them separately, they are both very important aspects of how we respond in these days and the coming days of tribulation before Jesus returns to the earth.

READY TO GO

Thinking about how this affects our lives and our response to the signs we see.

Think about what you can do to pray powerful prayers for global events and world leaders.

TIME FOR ACTION



1. **“STOP & THINK” Action Point**

Take two minutes to think about your own life. **1 Timothy 2:1-4** and **Colossians 4:2** say that we are to pray with thanksgiving. What are two things that you are thankful for as you pray today?



2. **“PAUSE TO PRAY” Action Point**

Have a conversation with God about today’s lesson. Ask Him for His thoughts concerning that situation, and then pray for His will to be done.



3. **“GO & DO” Action Point**

What is one sign of the times that you see happening in the world that needs prayer? Take time each day to pray for the church, leaders, and world events around you. Remember, you can pray God’s word over these people and situations, and you can pray with others, too.

SPRINGBOARD

Discuss what topic you would like to do together next time. After this session, you may wish to follow up next time with one of the following sessions:

- Stand Firm
- How to Listen to the News
- The Eternal Perspective

DEEPER STUDY

For those who would like to study further the themes raised in this session.

For Study

1. Look into **Revelation 5:8-14**, **Psalm 8:1-2**, and **Psalm 145:1**. What do these Scriptures tell you about the power of praising God?
2. Read **1 Chronicles 6:31-33, 15:1, 15:16-22, 16:1, and 25:1,7**. King David set up a special tent (the Tabernacle of David) in Jerusalem to house the Ark of the Covenant. Unlike the Tabernacle of Moses, there was no veil or curtain to hide the Ark. It was in open view. What did David put in his Tabernacle in place of the veil that Moses used? From the Scripture readings, what have you learned about David's Tabernacle?
3. Read **Revelation 4-5**. What is happening around the throne of God in Heaven? What are the most interesting aspects to you? The Lord's prayer states, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." How might we partner with God to bring the atmosphere of Heaven to Earth?

For Memorizing

1. **James 5:16b** (NIV): "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective."
2. **John 15:7** (NIV): "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you."

For Observation

Watch [this video](https://youtu.be/aFdm_dEPHBg) about worship: (https://youtu.be/aFdm_dEPHBg) How does worship fuel prayer?

For Action

Worship is a powerful way of preparing our hearts to come before God in prayer, especially as we will be praying intercessory prayers for global events and world leaders. Set aside 5-10 minutes daily to worship before you pray.

Before the Next IN:Tribe

Choose one global issue, nation, or world leader you will commit to praying for every day for the next month. Choose a Scripture that you will use to pray. At the next IN:Tribe, come ready to share what/who you prayed for.