

# Study Group

## May 2021 Listening Guide



Life has always been about quality relationships, whether with family, friends, colleagues, or clients. Communication, both listening and speaking, is the key to those relationships. Since prayer is our means of communicating with God, we are wise to develop our prayer lives to the greatest extent possible. While many Christians find themselves with an unsatisfying or shallow prayer life, we can take steps to maximize and develop our prayer life to its fullest potential, and to encourage our clients to do the same.

### Enhancing Our Prayer Life

Prayer is cultivating an intimate relationship with God. Integrating Scripture and prayer increases our sensitivity to God's direction and desires in our lives, and is the foundation for all effective ministry. It eliminates the barrier between the sacred and the secular.

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### Why Should We Pray?

1. Prayer enhances our fellowship with God and our appetite for God and his righteousness.

Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

I Thessalonians 5:16-18

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2. We are called to pray to receive confidence, mercy, and grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:14-16)

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3. We are called to pray because it matters. (Matthew 7:7-8)

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**How Should We Pray?**

1. Begin and end the day with prayer.

- Submit and depend on him.
- Commit and obey.

2. Adopt a long-term perspective on life.  
(Psalm 37:3-7) Four positive commands:

- Trust
- Delight
- Commit
- Wait

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**Prayer Gives Us a Perspective**

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7

Prayer transmutes anxiety and fear into peace. It helps us understand God’s purposes for our lives.

**Paul’s Four Life-changing Prayers**

**1. Ephesians 1:15-19**

For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and your love for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.

**2. Ephesians 3:16-19**

...that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

**3. Philippians 1:9-11**

And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

**4. Colossians 1:9-10**

We have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God...

Prayer changes our attitudes and desires. It isn’t a matter of trying to get God to do what we want. True prayer is to align my will with his, not his with mine.

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**Matthew 6:9-13 – The Lord’s Prayer**

Our Father who is in heaven,  
Hallowed be Your name.  
Your kingdom come.  
Your will be done,  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.  
And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.  
Amen.

True prayer is the dethronement of self and the enthronement of Christ.

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**Elements of Prayer**

The example of the Lord’s Prayer:

- Adoration – Praise for who God is
- Thanksgiving – Praise for what he’s done
- Affirmation – Your kingdom come.
- Supplication – Give us this day our daily bread.
- Confession –Forgive us our debts.
- Renewal – Don’t lead us into temptation.
- Closing Prayer – Yours is the kingdom.

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**Biblical Pattern of Prayer**

- Adoration
- Confession
- Renewal
- Petition
- Intercession
- Affirmation
- Thanksgiving
- Closing Prayer

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Principles for Supplication

- Ask, but in God’s will, in faith, specifically, with gratitude and thanksgiving, in the Spirit.
- If prayer isn’t answered
  - It can be a matter of timing and circumstances.
  - Answer may be “wait.”
  - I might not understand his ways.
  - He may test my faith.
  - We don’t always learn the reason.
  - We need to trust the one we cannot understand.

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Hindrances to Answered Prayer

- Asking with the wrong motives
- Unconfessed sin
- Unforgiving spirit
- Concern with public appearance
- Lack of belief
- Disobedience to God
- Ignoring the poor
- Improper treatment of spouse
- Not abiding in Christ

Consistency is a key to prayer. It is possible to do all things in a mindset of prayer.  
 Select a Scripture verse to think about all day, including when you are going to sleep.  
 The key is not trying; it is training.

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