

Bible Study Summer Series July 1,8,15,22,29, 2026

Week 1: The Basics of Prayer (July 1, 2026)

Purpose: This Bible study is designed to help participants understand what prayer is, why Jesus taught His followers to pray, and how to begin building a consistent daily prayer rhythm.

Key Scriptures:

- Matthew 6:5-15 — Jesus teaches the right heart and pattern for prayer.
- Luke 11:1-13 — Jesus responds to the disciples' request, "Lord, teach us to pray."
- Luke 5:16 — Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

Opening Prayer and Welcome - Begin by welcoming everyone and asking God to open hearts, remove distractions, and teach the group how to pray with sincerity, faith, and consistency.

Icebreaker - Ask: When you hear the word "prayer," what is the first thought, feeling, or question that comes to mind?

Scripture Reading - Read Matthew 6:5-15 aloud. If time allows, also read Luke 11:1-13. Invite participants to listen for what Jesus says prayer is, what prayer is not, and what attitudes should shape our prayers.

Teaching Summary - Prayer is personal communication with God. Jesus teaches that prayer is not meant to impress people, repeat empty words, or perform religion for attention. Prayer grows out of relationship with the Father. In Matthew 6, Jesus gives His followers a pattern that includes worship, surrender, dependence, forgiveness, guidance, and deliverance. In Luke 11, Jesus also teaches persistence and confidence, reminding believers that the Father hears and responds to His children.

Discussion Questions with Answers

1. **Question:** According to Matthew 6:5-6, what kind of prayer does Jesus warn against?
2. **Question:** Why does Jesus say to pray in secret?
3. **Question:** What does Matthew 6:7-8 teach about repeating words in prayer?
4. **Question:** What does "Our Father in heaven" teach us about God?
5. **Question:** What does "Your kingdom come, Your will be done" mean for daily life?
6. **Question:** Why does Jesus teach us to ask for "daily bread"?
7. **Question:** Why is forgiveness included in Jesus' pattern for prayer?
8. **Question:** What does Luke 11:9-10 teach about persistence in prayer?

Personal Application

- Choose one consistent time each day this week to pray.

- Choose one quiet place where you can meet with God without distractions.
- Use the Lord's Prayer as a guide: praise God, surrender to His will, ask for daily needs, confess sin, forgive others, and ask for guidance.
- Write down one prayer request and one thing you are thankful for each day.

Reflection Question: What is one step you will take this week to grow in prayer?

Closing Prayer: Father, thank You for inviting us to come to You in prayer. Teach us to pray with honest hearts, humble spirits, and steady faith. Help us seek Your kingdom, trust You for our daily needs, forgive others, and follow Your will. Build in us a consistent rhythm of prayer that draws us closer to You each day. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Week 2: Prayer in Times of Anxiety and Fear. (July 8, 2026)

Learn how to surrender your worries and cast your cares on God.

- *Key Readings:* Philippians 4:6-7, Psalm 23.

Purpose: This Bible study is designed to help participants bring anxiety, fear, and worry to God through prayer, thanksgiving, trust, and surrender. The goal is to learn how God's peace guards the heart and mind when life feels uncertain.

Key Scriptures

- Philippians 4:6-7 — Pray instead of being ruled by anxiety, and receive God's peace.
- Psalm 23 — The Lord is our Shepherd who provides, restores, guides, comforts, and protects.
- 1 Peter 5:7 — Cast your cares on God because He cares for you.
- Matthew 6:34 — Trust God one day at a time instead of being consumed by tomorrow.

Opening Prayer and Welcome - Welcome the group and open in prayer. Ask God to quiet anxious thoughts, strengthen faith, and help each person receive His comfort, wisdom, and peace.

Icebreaker - Ask: What is one common situation that can cause people to feel worried or afraid, and how do people usually respond to it?

Scripture Reading - Read Philippians 4:6-7 aloud, then read Psalm 23. Invite participants to listen for what God tells us to do with anxiety and what He promises to provide as our Shepherd.

Teaching Summary: Philippians 4:6-7 teaches believers to respond to anxiety with prayer, petition, and thanksgiving. God does not invite us to ignore our concerns; He invites us to bring them to Him. Prayer turns worry into surrender. Thanksgiving shifts our focus from what is missing to the faithfulness of God. Psalm 23 reminds us that the Lord is our Shepherd. He provides what we need, restores our souls, leads us in the right path, stays with us in dark valleys, and comforts us with His presence. In times of fear, God's peace may not always remove the situation immediately, but it guards the heart and mind in Christ Jesus.

Discussion Questions with Answers

1. **Question:** What does Philippians 4:6 tell believers not to do?
2. **Question:** What does Philippians 4:6 tell believers to do instead of worrying?.
3. **Question:** Why is thanksgiving important when we pray during anxious times?
4. **Question:** What does Psalm 23:1 teach us about God?
5. **Question:** How does Psalm 23 bring comfort in times of fear?
6. **Question:** What does it mean to "cast your cares" on God according to 1 Peter 5:7?
7. **Question:** How can believers practice trusting God one day at a time?

Personal Application

- Write down one worry or fear you are carrying right now.
- Turn that worry into a prayer request and give it to God.
- Write down three things you can thank God for, even before the situation changes.
- Read Psalm 23 each day this week and underline one phrase that brings comfort.
- When anxious thoughts return, pause and pray: "Lord, I give this care to You because You care for me."

Reflection Question: What is one worry you need to surrender to God this week, and what truth from Scripture will you hold onto when fear rises?

Closing Prayer: Father, thank You for caring for us as our Shepherd. When anxiety and fear rise in our hearts, teach us to bring every concern to You in prayer. Help us trust Your provision, rest in Your presence, and remember Your faithfulness. Guard our hearts and minds with Your peace, and lead us one day at a time. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Week 3: Bible Study: Prayer in Sorrow and Lament (July 17, 2026)

Purpose: This Bible study is designed to help participants understand that God welcomes honest prayer in seasons of grief, sorrow, disappointment, and hardship. Lament is not a lack of faith; it is a faithful way to bring pain before God while still looking to Him for help and hope.

Key Scriptures

- Psalm 42 — The psalmist longs for God while wrestling with a downcast soul.
- Psalm 88 — A prayer of deep sorrow that shows God can receive our pain even when answers are not yet clear.
- Lamentations 3:21-24 — Hope is renewed by remembering God's mercy and faithfulness.

Opening Prayer and Welcome - Welcome the group and invite God to create a safe, compassionate space. Ask Him to help each person bring sorrow honestly before Him and receive comfort through His Word and presence.

Icebreaker - Ask: Why do you think some people find it difficult to be honest with God about sadness, grief, disappointment, or unanswered questions?

Scripture Reading - Read Psalm 42 aloud. If time allows, read selected verses from Psalm 88. Invite participants to listen for words of sorrow, questions to God, memories of worship, and statements of hope.

Teaching Summary - Lament is prayer that brings sorrow, questions, and pain to God. Psalm 42 shows a believer who is spiritually thirsty and emotionally downcast, yet still speaks hope to the soul: "Hope in God." Psalm 88 shows that even prayers without quick resolution belong in Scripture, reminding us that God can handle honest grief. Lament teaches believers not to hide pain, deny sorrow, or suffer in silence. Instead, we turn toward God with our whole heart, trusting that He hears us even when the situation has not changed.

Discussion Questions with Answers

1. **Question:** What does Psalm 42 reveal about the psalmist's spiritual condition?
2. **Question:** What does the repeated question, "Why are you downcast, O my soul?" teach us?
3. **Question:** How does remembering past worship help the psalmist?
4. **Question:** Why is Psalm 88 important even though it does not end with an obvious answer?
5. **Question:** What is the difference between complaining about God and lamenting to God?
6. **Question:** How can lament strengthen faith during hardship?
7. **Question:** What hope does Lamentations 3:21-24 offer in sorrow?

8. **Question:** How can the church support people who are grieving or struggling?

Personal Application

- Write a short, honest prayer to God about one sorrow, disappointment, or burden you are carrying.
- Include three parts: what hurts, what you are asking God to do, and one truth about God you will hold onto.
- Read Psalm 42 during the week and repeat: "Hope in God; I will yet praise Him."
- Reach out to one trusted believer if you need prayer or encouragement.

Reflection Question: What sorrow or question do you need to bring honestly before God this week?

Closing Prayer: Father, thank You that we do not have to hide our sorrow from You. Teach us to pray honestly when our hearts are heavy. Meet us in grief, strengthen our hope, and remind us that Your mercy is new every morning. Help us comfort others with patience and love. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Week 4: Bible Study: The Power of Persistent Prayer (July 22, 2026)

Purpose: This Bible study is designed to encourage participants to keep praying with faith, patience, and humility when answers do not come immediately. The goal is to understand that persistence in prayer deepens trust in God's character and timing.

Key Scriptures

- Luke 18:1-8 — Jesus teaches that believers should always pray and not lose heart.
- James 1:5-8 — God gives wisdom generously to those who ask in faith.
- Romans 12:12 — Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer.

Opening Prayer and Welcome: Welcome the group and ask God to renew faith, patience, and perseverance. Pray that each person will be encouraged to continue seeking God without losing heart.

Icebreaker - Ask: What makes it hard to keep praying about something when the answer seems delayed?

Scripture Reading: Read Luke 18:1-8 aloud. Then read James 1:5-8. Invite participants to listen for what Jesus teaches about persistence and what James teaches about asking God with faith.

Teaching Summary: In Luke 18, Jesus tells the parable of the persistent widow so His disciples would always pray and not lose heart. The widow keeps coming to an unjust judge until he responds. Jesus is not saying God is like the unjust judge; He is showing a contrast. If even an unjust judge responds, how much more will a just and loving God hear His people? Persistent prayer is not about forcing God to act. It is about trusting His heart, seeking His will, and refusing to give up when the answer is delayed. James 1 reminds believers to ask God for wisdom with faith, trusting that He gives generously.

Discussion Questions with Answers

1. **Question:** According to Luke 18:1, why did Jesus tell this parable?
2. **Question:** What does the widow's persistence teach us?
3. **Question:** How is God different from the unjust judge in the parable?
4. **Question:** Does persistent prayer mean repeating words until God gives us what we want?
5. **Question:** What are some ways God may answer prayer?
6. **Question:** What does James 1:5 teach us to ask God for?
7. **Question:** Why is faith important when we pray?
8. **Question:** How can delayed answers strengthen a believer's prayer life?

Personal Application: Identify one prayer request you have been tempted to stop praying about.

- Ask God for wisdom, patience, and faith concerning that request.
- Write down one truth about God's character that helps you keep praying.
- Commit to praying about this request each day this week without losing heart.

Reflection Question: Where do you need God to help you keep praying and not lose heart?

Closing Prayer: Father, thank You for hearing us when we pray. Strengthen us when answers seem delayed. Teach us to ask with faith, wait with patience, and trust Your wisdom. Help us keep praying and not lose heart. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Week 5: Bible Study: Intercession and Thanksgiving (July 29, 2026)

Purpose: This Bible study is designed to help participants grow in praying for others and giving thanks to God. The goal is to move beyond only praying for personal needs and develop a prayer life that includes intercession, gratitude, watchfulness, and concern for all people.

Key Scriptures

- 1 Timothy 2:1-4 — Pray with requests, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving for all people.
- Colossians 4:2 — Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.
- Ephesians 6:18 — Pray in the Spirit on all occasions and keep praying for all the Lord's people.

Opening Prayer and Welcome - Welcome the group and ask God to expand everyone's prayer focus beyond personal concerns. Pray for grateful hearts and compassion for the needs of others.

Icebreaker — Ask: Who is someone who prayed for you or encouraged you spiritually, and how did it affect you?

Scripture Reading: Read 1 Timothy 2:1-4, Colossians 4:2, and Ephesians 6:18 aloud. Invite participants to listen for who we are called to pray for, how we are called to pray, and the role thanksgiving plays in prayer.

Teaching Summary: Intercession means praying on behalf of others. In 1 Timothy 2, Paul urges believers to pray for all people, including leaders and those in authority, because God desires people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Colossians 4:2 teaches believers to be devoted to prayer, watchful, and thankful. Ephesians 6:18 calls believers to pray on all occasions and to keep praying for the Lord's people. Intercession turns our focus outward, while thanksgiving keeps our hearts aware of God's goodness. Together, they help form a prayer life that is compassionate, alert, grateful, and faithful.

Discussion Questions with Answers

1. **Question:** What kinds of prayer are mentioned in 1 Timothy 2:1?
2. **Question:** Who are believers called to pray for according to 1 Timothy 2:1-2?
3. **Question:** Why should we pray for leaders and people in authority?
4. **Question:** What does intercession mean?
5. **Question:** What does Colossians 4:2 teach about prayer?

6. **Question:** Why is thanksgiving important when praying for others?

7. **Question:** What does Ephesians 6:18 mean by praying “on all occasions”?

8. **Question:** How can intercession change the heart of the person praying?

Personal Application

- Make a prayer list with four categories: family, church, community, and leaders.
- Choose one person from each category to pray for daily this week.
- For each person, write one specific request and one reason to thank God.
- Ask God to show you one practical way to encourage someone you are praying for.

Reflection Question: Who is God placing on your heart to pray for consistently this week?

Closing Prayer: Father, thank You for the privilege of praying for others. Give us compassionate hearts, thankful spirits, and faithful commitment to intercede. Help us pray for our families, church, community, leaders, and those who need to know You. Make us watchful, grateful, and faithful in prayer. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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