

## Prayer: Week 1 Small Group Study

### Overview

- Bible Focus: 1 Timothy 2:1-2
- Paul's theology of prayer compresses the broad spectrum of prayer terms into three categories, plus a pervasive fourth. The heart of prayer is *communion* with God, essentially *worship*; and that extends to us the privilege of *petition* and the responsibility of *intercession* – all wrapped in *gratitude*. God has chosen prayer – He loves our company. He has incentivized prayer – tied to our communion with Him is blessing, the endowment of Christ, the promises of the covenant, and the forward movement of His kingdom in the earth. To be healthy, prayer cannot be about things, it must be about Him.

### Watch Video

- YouTube: <https://youtu.be/rHLgtESAGh8>

### Video Notes

- Unbroken communion with God is the essence of prayer.
- What is prayer?
- The heart of prayer is communion with God.
- Petition is making requests
- Intercession is praying for others.
- Thanksgiving is the environment of prayer.
- Biblical prayer calls us out of ourselves.
- Prayer and scripture go hand in hand.
- Prayer involves intentional, verbal speech.
- God governs by prayer.
- Prayer is about our relationship with God.

### Review

- Prayer can be summarized as: *communion* with God, *petition* and *intercession*, wrapped in *thanksgiving*.
- Communion with God is more than meditation, and Christian meditation is different from Eastern meditation.
- Prayer demands words, but praying is also beyond words; it is unity with the Father, unity with the Son by the indwelling of the Spirit.
- God loves company.
- Christian prayer is unique – an extraordinary privilege.
- God has bound prayer to blessing.
- He has determined that prayer taps heaven's bounty.
- Our appeal is inside the relationship, from the status of covenant, and prayer appeals to the promises of that covenant.

- The theme in the prayer Jesus taught was that the kingdom of God comes – to further His will and prove His name holy.
- Healthy prayer seeks to know and do the will of God, to further the rule (kingdom) of God and glorify the name of God.

### **Discuss**

1. How would you define prayer?
2. Name the three categories and the fourth in which the others are wrapped. Does this help you gain a more balanced perspective of prayer?
3. How is Christian meditation different?
4. Why do you think prayer demands words? Or do you?
5. Have you considered the difference in Christian prayer from prayer in other world religions?
6. Do you feel like you are praying or wishing?
7. What do you think about prayer over an open Bible?
8. Do you see the relationship between prayer and the idea of the estate of Christ?

### **Pray**

- Separate prayer's basic elements – communion, petition, intercession, wrapped in thanksgiving. Begin with thanksgiving. Verbally give God thanks for specific things. Don't hurry. If you spend a whole session here, you will be immeasurably enriched.
- Move from thanksgiving to communion. Put petition (prayer requests) and intercession on hold. Spend time just loving God. Making that love verbal and personal. Be still – letting God love you. Reading passages from Scripture, as if God were speaking directly regarding His love and care, His desire for a relationship with you.
- With a grateful heart and out of a season of thanksgiving and communion, now pray for one another (intercession) and then offer personal needs.
- Stop. Assess the experience – does putting gratitude and communion first change the atmosphere? Does it change the manner of prayer? Does it raise the faith level? Is prayer more satisfying – apart from any answers to prayer?
- Close your time with prayers of praise.