



Week Two

Opening Prayer

God, thank you for being with us here today. Thank you for your desire to connect with us. Help us to be open to your presence and your movement in our life. Amen.

Talk It Over

This week we continued our series called 40 Days of Prayer. The goal of this series is to help us grow in our connection with God and to grow in our understanding of God's power through prayer. The hope is this series can help us find something fresh in our relationship and approach to God.

- Tell us about a small prayer you sometimes pray. For example, have you ever prayed for God to help you find a good parking spot? To not be late somewhere?
- Have you ever seen God answer a prayer or have you ever been changed by a prayer? Tell us about that experience. This can be a serious story or a light-hearted story.

This week we started things off by talking through some possible reasons we don't pray more:

1. We think we don't know how to pray.
 2. We get bored or distracted while trying to pray.
 3. We think our requests are too small for God. (This is a topic we covered in greater detail week one of this series.)
 4. We're not sure our prayers will make a difference.
- Which of these challenges resonate with you the most?
 - Is there a challenge that keeps you from praying that is not on this list? If so, share that challenge. (This other challenge can be something you have observed in others or from your own story.)

Read Ephesians 3:16-21 (NIV)

Each week of this series we are looking at a prayer Saint Paul prayed for people he knew and loved. In this specific prayer, we hear Paul call out who God, what God can do, and what is available to people through God. In short, we hear Paul is saying God has everything we need.

- What jumped out at you about today's prayer from Paul? (**A Note to the Group Leader:** Prior to answering this question, consider having someone read through the verse two more times slowly in order to give people a chance to connect with the words and God's spirit.)
- Tell us about a time you saw God provide everything you or someone else needed.
- Where do you want to see more of God's power in your life this week or season?

Reread Ephesians 3:20-21 (NIV)

This verse reminds us we are invited to pray big prayers. This verse, along with others in the Bible, also leads us to believe we can be praying very specific prayers. Too often some of us get stuck in praying prayers that are too small and our prayers are too general.

- How comfortable or uncomfortable are you praying big, specific prayers? Why is this the case?
- When do you find yourself most inclined to pray small general prayers?

(Content continued on the next page.)

- What big, specific prayers can you start praying this week?

Read Hebrews 4:16 (NLT)

- In what ways can you come to God in prayer more boldly this season?
- Looking at your life, tell us about a few ways you have recognized the mercy and grace of God through prayer.

A Note to the Group Leader: Today's closing prayer comes with two options, pick the option that you feel fits your group best.

Closing Prayer Option One

God, thank you for reminding us that you have all we need and we can come to you with boldness. Help us to come to you with big, specific prayers. Help us to see your power move in our life. God, we want to see you do immeasurably more than we can ask for or imagine. Amen.

Closing Prayer Option Two (Instructions for the Group Leader)

Close today's group by inviting anyone who wants to pray, to pray. Tell the group you will be transitioning to a moment of silence and anyone is welcome to jump in and pray a simple prayer about anything they want when they are ready. Encourage your group to use this prayer time to pray for big, specific prayers. Use this time to ask God to do immeasurably more than we can ask for or imagine. If there is silence between prayers, that is okay. Make sure the group knows this. The process does not need to be rushed or polished. Once it seems as if those who want to pray have prayed, be prepared to close the prayer time up by praying your own prayer or using the prayer listed under "Closing Prayer Option One".

How To Use this Discussion Guide

The guide is meant to serve you and your group as you intentionally create space to grow in friendship and faith. Use the guide as a tool to help your unique group.

With that in mind, consider reviewing the guide before your group to see if some content or questions might resonate more or less with your group. Don't feel pressure to read all the content or to hit all the questions. The guide is not meant to be something you power through for the sake of completing. Pick the content from the guide you feel will help foster friendship and faith in your specific group.

In addition, spend some time praying for your group each week, preparing your heart, and asking God for wisdom and guidance as you lead.