

Pray like It Matters: Intimacy and Power Through Prayer

by Steve Gaines

Leader Guide

Non-disposable Curriculum

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About the Leader Guide Author

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Introduction to the Study

Purpose: *Pray like It Matters: Intimacy and Power Through Prayer by Steve Gaines*

Pray like It Matters is a resource in the Auxano Press curriculum series: Nondisposable Curriculum. This series will produce new twelve-session curriculum books each year. Saving these books will create for you a library of biblical studies. Watch Auxano's Web site for series titles and release dates: <http://www.auxanopress.com>.

This and all books in this series will benefit readers as they study individually. But learners will benefit more from group discussion and study. This leader guide will equip leaders to teach *Pray like It Matters*.

The author of *Pray like It Matters* is Steve Gaines. Steve is pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova (a suburb of Memphis), Tennessee.

To supplement your study of *Pray like It Matters*, you may want to use Ken Hemphill's *The Prayer of Jesus: The Promise and Power of Living in the Lord's Prayer* (B&H Publishing Group), available from Amazon.com.

Bible study is valuable on many levels. Nondisposable Curriculum offers these benefits for study: (1) personal discipleship and devotion, (2) obedience to study and know God's Word, (3) group fellowship and helping one another learn and grow, and (4) personal and/or group prayer and worship. Thank you for learning a group to grow together as they study God's Word.

Time Frame

In *Pray like It Matters* author Steve Gaines provides twelve short chapters to immerse learners in studying what the Bible says about prayer and in reflecting on their own prayer practices as they seek a growing relationship with God through prayer.

Your Sunday School class, Bible study group, discipleship group, home Bible study group, or other group can study this book in twelve or thirteen sessions, a typical quarter. For the thirteenth session, you can begin with a general introduction or end with a session that offers a summary, reflecting on the study, and fellowship. Or you might plan to begin or end with a session devoted entirely to a prayer service. The format of the prayer service could be determined by the needs of your church and community.

This leader guide will assist you in teaching the book. It is designed for one-hour sessions. Adapt the study to meet the needs of your group. A large group may require more lecture or more small-group discussions during each session. Small groups may allow more group discussion and participation. You'll find more than you need, so select items that fit your teaching style and learners' learning styles. You'll find some pages available for you to print for small groups. You can modify these to meet your group's needs. Purchasing copies of *Pray like It Matters* for your group gives you permission to print and photocopy these pages.

Every learner will need a copy of *Pray like It Matters*. You may want to provide extra copies for members who join throughout the study and for guests. You'll find quantity discounts when you order, so make sure you order enough copies. Any extra copies are great for sharing with members who may not be able to attend, giving guests, or making available for interested family and friends.

Encourage all learners to bring their Bibles. Every session will include reading Scripture together. Provide extra Bibles as needed.

Although this is a book study, each chapter/session stands alone. Encourage people who cannot attend every week to participate. Invite guests throughout the study. Use this group study to grow your group.

Testimonies

This book explores what the Bible says about prayer and how Christians can apply biblical truths about prayer into their own lives. To enhance this study, consider enlisting people to give testimonies. Almost every church has people who are known to be prayer warriors. Use this opportunity to share these

people's stories: How did they begin having a passionate prayer life? What obstacles have they faced? How has prayer changed their lives?

Here are some ideas for a testimony for each of the twelve chapters:

1. The discipline of having a daily quiet time
2. When prayer made a difference in the life of the church
3. When daily needs were met
4. Avoiding temptation or evil
5. Obstacles to a passionate prayer life
6. Ways to enrich prayer time
7. Favorite Scripture passages to pray
8. Prayer partners or groups
9. Prayer guides and resources
10. Answered prayer
11. Healing
12. A new believer

You probably immediately thought of some people who would provide a dynamic testimony about some of these topics. Use those. You don't necessarily want to use a testimony every week. Choose those you know will be powerful.

You may also know testimonies you'd like to provide, but you have some hesitation. A senior adult may be physically unable to attend. A college student or someone in military service may be far away. Some people can't give a brief testimony, and some are just too bashful to speak in front of a group. For situations like these, consider creative approaches like these:

- Videotape the interview and get someone to edit it to the appropriate length. Then you can also use it to promote this study.
- Instead of a simple testimony, interview the person. Provide questions in advance. Rehearse. Encourage brevity.
- Set up a Skype interview. If possible, conduct it live, but if necessary, record it in advance.

Keep the testimonies interesting, using a variety of types of people—young and old, new and longtime believers—and different styles of interviews. You'll add a lot to your lessons by letting your own people enrich the study.

Pray like It Matters: Intimacy and Power Through Prayer

Week 1

The Priority of Prayer: The Prayer Life of Jesus

Before the Session

1. Make a name tag for yourself. Provide pens or felt-tip markers and name tags for participants.
2. Read or scan all of *Pray like It Matters: Intimacy and Power Through Prayer* so that you understand the direction the book is going and how your study will flow over the next twelve or thirteen weeks. Some topics are mentioned in more than one chapter. Study in advance so you will know where you want to mention a topic and where you want to spend more time on it.
3. Read all the Scripture mentioned in each chapter as you study it. Some Scripture passages will be included in specific instructions. When you read all the passages mentioned, you'll be ready to add comments to discussions based on Scripture.
4. In advance order copies of *Pray like It Matters: Intimacy and Power Through Prayer* for all participants. If possible, get books to learners in advance of the first session and tell them to read the first chapter, week 1, "The Priority of Prayer: The Prayer Life of Jesus."
5. Provide a whiteboard or flipchart and markers or chalkboard and chalk. Provide paper and pens or pencils. Provide extra Bibles. Provide these every week. The main Bible translation used in *Pray like It Matters* is the New American Standard Bible (NASB). You may want to ensure that you have a variety of translations on hand.
6. Contact participants in advance and tell them about this exciting new study. Tell them they will gain a greater understanding of what the Bible says about prayer and how to have a passionate prayer life. Remind them to bring their Bibles to every session.
7. Make five large posters, each with one of these words: *See, Hear, Taste, Smell, Touch*. Provide felt-tip markers in a variety of colors.
8. Consider providing prayer journals for all participants.

During This Session

1. As participants arrive, introduce yourself and ask each participant to make a name tag. If they do not already have a copy of the book, give each a copy of *Pray like It Matters*.
2. Hand each person a felt-tip marker and instruct them to write something on each poster they have sensed today—something they have seen, heard, smelled, tasted, and touched.
3. When everyone has arrived and had opportunity to add to the posters, welcome them. Introduce the book study and the author. If Nondisposable Curriculum is new to this group, explain that they will have opportunity to build a library using these resources. They should take notes in the book to add to its value for them as they study. Introduce the writer, Steve Gaines, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church, near Memphis. To learn more about Steve to help with your introduction, go to <http://www.bellevue.org/drstevegaines>.
4. Ask, How are our sensory experiences today related to a study of passionate prayer? Invite responses. Explain that we worship God our Creator, Christ our Savior, and the Holy Spirit our Guide. In creating us and the world, God gave us five senses to experience His creation. Each day we can thank Him for the sights, smells, sounds, tastes, and contacts we enjoy. Suggest that this is one creative way to pray. Invite participants to think about their sensory experiences at the end of the day before saying good-night to God. Ending the day by thanking Him for His gifts is a wonderful way to end a day of prayerful communication with Him. This type prayer will also lead believers to become more aware of experiencing God's presence and gifts every day.
5. Invite a volunteer to read Mark 1:35. Ask for responses on what we can learn from Jesus' prayer practices. Write responses on the board. Respond by adding additional information from this chapter. Ask questions like these for discussion as you move through the lesson:

- When should you pray?
 - What are some benefits of having a quiet time with God each morning?
 - When did Jesus pray?
 - What types of prayer did Jesus pray?
6. As you lead the discussion, emphasize these points from chapter 1:
 - Jesus is our example in prayer.
 - He prayed all types of prayer—thanksgiving, petition, and praise. (He had no need to pray prayers of confession as we do.)
 - Jesus prayed before making decisions (see Luke 6:12).
 - Jesus prayed when He was tempted (Matt. 4:1–11; Luke 4:1–13).
 - Jesus prayed in the midst of suffering (Luke 23:34; Matt. 27:46).
 - Jesus prays for His followers (Heb. 7:25).
 7. Explain that Jesus’ prayer life should not only be an example but also an encouragement to us. Prayer was important to Jesus, and it should be important to us as well. Encourage participants to pay particular attention to their prayer life during the study, perhaps to begin the discipline of a daily quiet time, to focus on a type of prayer they have neglected (such as thanksgiving or confession), or to pray with faith, trusting God for results. Suggest that participants keep a prayer journal throughout this study to record written prayers, petitions and answered prayers, and thoughts about the study. If you are providing journals, distribute them now.
 8. If you have enlisted someone to provide a testimony for this lesson, you may want to do that now.
 9. Invite group members to look and read together this session’s “For Memory and Meditation” verse. Tell participants that spending time memorizing a verse each week will help them think about the lesson. At the end of the study, they will have committed twelve verses to memory—a worthy goal.
 10. Pray, thanking God for His great creation and for giving us the gifts to appreciate and enjoy the world in which we live. Pray that learners in this group will be engaged in prayer that makes a difference.

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Week 2

The Priority of Prayer: The Early Church

Before the Session

1. Unless everyone in the group knows one another, continue to wear a name tag and to provide name tags for participants.
2. Read again chapter 2 of *Pray like It Matters*. Read “During This Session” to prepare for this week’s session. Read the Scriptures referenced in this chapter.
3. Make sure you have enough copies of the book for all participants, including any new people who will come for this session.
4. Provide a whiteboard or flipchart and markers or chalkboard and chalk. Provide paper and pens or pencils. Provide extra Bibles. Provide these every week.
5. Provide colorful paper clips for each participant.

During This Session

1. As participants arrive, remind them to pick up a name tag. If they are new this week, provide a copy of *Pray like It Matters* and make sure they have a Bible.
2. As people arrive, give each one a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Direct them to list at least ten objects they regularly use. The objects can be expensive (a car) or inexpensive (a rubber band). Once they have written ten objects, tell them to join a small group of four or five to share what they have written.
3. When all have arrived and had opportunity to participate, invite each group to share a funny item someone in their group included. After a fun time of sharing, explain that God is our provider. Small and large items that make life more enjoyable are a result of His provision. They were made by people created in His image—people who are creative and came up with things to make life more efficient or enjoyable. And we should thank God for all of these things. Suggest that group members place the list in their Bibles. When they see it at some future date and try to recall the strange list of items, they will be reminded to thank God for all the ways He provides for them.
4. Transition to the lesson by saying that prayer was important to members of the early church, and God provided for their needs.
5. If you have enlisted someone to give a testimony about a time in your church when God responded to the prayers of the people and met a particular need in the church, call for that testimony now.
6. Direct participants to form four small groups. Give each group an assignment using the instructions at the end of this session.
7. Allow groups time for discussion. As they report, emphasize these points:

Group 1

- Jesus’ believers had grown to be dependent on Him. They continued their reliance on Him through prayer and with the promised presence of the Holy Spirit.
- Prayer was a significant part of their time together.
- The results of Pentecost and the unity of those early believers was directly tied to their time in prayer.

Group 2

- Prayer did not mean everyone who heard believed. It did not mean the disciples were spared from persecution. But it did mean they received God's presence and the ability to speak clearly and boldly about the good news of Jesus Christ.
- Their prayer included praise, Scripture quotations, expression of trust, petition for boldness and good deeds performed in Jesus' name. It did not include any selfish or self-centered prayers such as safety.
- God granted their petition.

Group 3

- Prayer opened Peter's heart and mind to welcome Gentiles to become believers. He later had to convince the other disciples.
- Prayer led Cornelius to invite Peter into his home. Both men risked their reputation through this action.
- Because both men prayed and responded to God, a household became believers; and the door was opened for all nations to believe in Christ.

Group 4

- Each of the people mentioned in these verses represented a different nationality, ethnic group, or background: Barnabas, a Jew; Simeon, from North Africa; Lucius, a Greek; Manaen, a Roman; and Paul, a new believer, both a Jew and a Roman.
 - Barnabas is listed first; Paul, last. Soon that will change.
 - Before commissioning these first missionaries, the gathered church worshipped, fasted, and prayed.
8. End with the challenge, encouraging participants to pray regularly for their church.
 9. Invite participants to voice prayer requests for your church. Write these on the board. In a time of guided prayer, call for participants to pray silently as you read each concern.
 10. As participants leave, give each a colorful paper clip to remind them of God's provision in ways both great and small.

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Chapter 2 Group Assignments

Group 1

1. Read Matthew 28:19–20; Acts 1:8, 12–14; Acts 2.
2. Using these Scripture verses and chapter 2 of *Pray like It Matters*, discuss these questions and prepare to share highlights with the large group:
 - What significant event ends the Gospels and begins the book of Acts?
 - How did Jesus' followers respond?
 - Why do you think they gathered together?
 - What happened following their time together?
 - What do you think prayer had to do with what happened on the day of Pentecost?

Group 2

1. Read Acts 4:1–32.
2. Using Acts 4 and chapter 2 of *Pray like It Matters*, discuss these questions and prepare to share highlights with the large group:
 - What circumstances led to the prayer in Acts 4:24–30?
 - What do you observe about elements of the prayer they prayed?
 - What happened following this prayer?

Group 3

1. Read Acts 10.
2. Using Acts 10 and chapter 2 of *Pray like It Matters*, discuss these questions and prepare to share highlights with the large group:
 - Who prayed in this chapter?
 - What did Peter overcome through prayer?
 - Are there people you think God doesn't hear their prayers? Who are they? Why doesn't God hear their prayers?
 - Who was changed as a result of prayer in Acts 10?

Group 4

1. Read Acts 13:1–3.
2. Using Acts 4 and chapter 2 of *Pray like It Matters*, discuss these questions and prepare to share highlights with the large group:
 - What was the purpose of prayer in these verses?
 - Who was involved?
 - What happened following this prayer?

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Week 3

The Lord's Prayer—a Pattern for Prayer, Part 1

Before the Session

1. If needed, continue to wear a name tag and to provide name tags for participants.
2. Read chapter 3 of *Pray like It Matters*. Read “During This Session” to prepare for this week’s session. Read Scriptures referenced in this chapter.
3. Make sure you have enough copies of *Pray like It Matters* for all participants, including any new people who will come for this session. Some participants may already want to purchase copies for friends and family members. You may want to find out how many more copies are desired since the church gets a discount with a quantity purchase.
4. Provide a whiteboard or flipchart and markers or chalkboard and chalk. Provide paper and pens or pencils. Provide extra Bibles. Provide these every week.
5. Display Ken Hemphill’s book, *The Prayer of Jesus: The Promise and Power of Living in the Lord’s Prayer* (B&H Publishing Group), available from Amazon.com. If possible, read this short book and use it for supplemental material during this session and the next one.
6. Make copies of the names of God and names of Jesus from chapter 3. You may want to use the printable attachment at the end of this lesson. Cut the two sections apart for the two small groups.
7. Prepare to sing some praise choruses that are addressed to (rather than simply about) God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit (prayers). Or play a recording of praise choruses as people arrive.

During This Session

1. As participants arrive, remind them to pick up a name tag. If they are new this week, provide a copy of *Pray like It Matters* and make sure they have a Bible.
2. As group members arrive, direct them to form two groups. Give one group the handout, Names of God, and the other group the handout, Names of Jesus. Tell groups to talk about which name on the list (or another) is most meaningful to them and why. Ask them to think of praise choruses that address God or Jesus and to consider which name is given or implied in the chorus.
3. When everyone has arrived, invite a few people to talk about their chosen name for God or Jesus and a suggested praise chorus.
4. If you’ve enlisted someone to give a testimony, call for it now.
5. Lead a discussion on the privilege of believers to call God “Father.” Call on volunteers to read Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:11–12; and Philippians 4:19.
6. Tell the group this story: In Jan Karon’s Mitford Series novels, the main character is Father Tim, an Episcopal rector. He prays for people in his community though he doesn’t always know what to pray. When he finds himself at a loss for words, he prays “the prayer that never fails”: “Thy will be done.” When asked about Father Tim’s faith, the author said: “In my books I try to depict not a glorious faith with celestial fireworks, but a daily faith, a routine faith, a seven-days-a-week faith. Father Tim’s faith is part of his everyday life. He has simple prayers, not polished, pious prayers. He follows the Apostle Paul’s command that we pray without ceasing. I try to depict how our faith may be woven into our daily life. . . . I believe that spirituality needs to be basic, common, everyday.” For more about this series of books, go to:
http://www.us.penguin.com/static/rguides/us/mitford_years_series.html.
7. Lead a discussion about these two phrases of the Lord’s Prayer: “Your kingdom come,” and “Your will be done.” Make these points:
 - This prayer means submitting to God’s will over our own.
 - It means a daily sacrifice of self to God.
 - Mary, Jesus’ mother, is a good example of someone who yielded to God’s will.

- Jesus also, knowing what He was facing, yielded to God's will and accept the pain and humiliation of the cross.

8. Summarize the challenge for your group.

9. Lead the group in saying together Psalm 9:10, the verse for memory and meditation.

10. Close by singing one or more of the group's favorite praise choruses.

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Chapter 3 Group Assignments

Names of God

- Jehovah-Jireh—The Lord My Provider (Gen. 22:14)
- Jehovah-Rapha—The Lord Who Heals (Exod. 15:26)
- Jehovah-Nissi—The Lord My Banner (Exod. 17:15–16)
- Jehovah-Makadesh—The Lord Who Sanctifies (Lev. 20:7–18)
- Jehovah-Shalom—The Lord My Peace (Judg. 6:24)
- Jehovah-Rohi—The Lord My Shepherd (Ps. 23:1)
- Jehovah-Tsidkenu—The Lord My Righteousness (Jer. 23:5–6)
- Jehovah-Shammah—The Lord Who Is Present (Ezek. 48:35)

Names of Jesus

- The Bread of Life (John 6:35)
- The Light of the World (John 8:12)
- The Door of the Sheep (John 10:7)
- The Good Shepherd (John 10:11, 14)
- The Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25)
- The Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6)
- The True Vine (John 15:1)

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Week 4

The Lord's Prayer—a Pattern for Prayer, Part 2

Before the Session

1. If needed, continue to wear a name tag and to provide name tags for participants.
2. Read chapter 4 of *Pray like It Matters*. Read “During This Session” to prepare for this week’s session. Read the Lord’s Prayer in several translations and and other Scriptures referenced in this chapter.
3. Make sure you have enough copies of *Pray like It Matters* for all participants.
4. Provide a whiteboard or flipchart and markers or chalkboard and chalk. Provide paper and pens or pencils. Provide extra Bibles. Provide these every week.
5. If your meeting room has Wi-Fi, set up three computers/laptops/notebooks in advance for small groups to search Scripture. If your meeting room does not have Wi-Fi, provide three concordances for small-group Scripture searches. Or use the printed list of Scriptures on the handout following this lesson.
6. In advance enlist someone to give a brief lecture (no more than five minutes) on “Do Not Lead Us into Temptation,” using the content from chapter 4 and personal Bible study. Or prepare this lecture yourself.

During This Session

1. As participants arrive, remind them to pick up a name tag. If they are new this week, provide a copy of *Pray like It Matters* and make sure they have a Bible.
2. Direct participants to form three small groups. If they are using computers, group members may also want to use their smart phones for a Scripture search. Make these assignments:
 - Group 1 is to search for Scripture about confessing sin.
 - Group 2 is to search for Scripture about confessing Christ.
 - Group 3 is to search for Scripture about seeking forgiveness and forgiving others.
3. When everyone has arrived and had opportunity to participate, invite group 1 to share a few verses and a summary of what they learned about confession sin. After their report, invite the large group to add additional Scriptures or comments.
4. Transition to group 2 by saying: We often think of confessing sin, but confessing is what we say, what we claim. As believers, we confess Christ. Invite group 2 to share a few Scriptures and a summary of verses they found about confessing Christ.
5. Remind the group that you are in the middle of studying the Lord’s Prayer. It includes a statement about seeking forgiveness—confession of sin—and forgiving others. Ask group 3 to share some verses about forgiveness and to summarize what they read.
6. Ask these questions for a general discussion:
 - Who has a right to judge anyone’s actions? Why? (*God alone can judge. He alone is righteous.*)
 - How many times should a person forgive another?
 - Does forgiving mean trust is fully restored? Why or why not?
 - Is there ever a time a person is not expected to forgive another? If so, what is it? (*Jesus didn’t offer any exceptions.*)
 - Do we have a right to place conditions on forgiving someone? If so, what are they?
7. Call for the brief lecture on “Do Not Lead Us into Temptation.”
8. If you have enlisted someone to give a testimony about being delivered from evil, call for that testimony at this time.
9. As appropriate, follow the testimony with comments on this section from the chapter and from your own Bible study.

10. Wrap up the session by talking about the last phrase of the Lord's Prayer, "For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever." Include the challenge.
11. Invite participants to say the Lord's Prayer together.

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Chapter 4 Group Assignments

Group 1—Confessing Sin

- Leviticus 26:40–42
- Ezra 9:5–7, 10
- Nehemiah 1:6–7
- Psalm 32:1–7
- Psalm 51:1–12
- Proverbs 28:13
- Daniel 9:4–19
- Mark 1:4–5
- James 5:16
- 1 John 1:5–10

Group 2—Confessing Christ

- Matthew 10:32–33
- Matthew 16:13–16
- Romans 10:9–10
- Philippians 2:9–11
- 1 John 2:23
- 1 John 4:15

Group 3—Forgiving One Another

- 2 Chronicles 77:14
- Psalm 25:18
- Matthew 9:2
- Matthew 18:21–35

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Week 5

What Hinders Our Prayers

Before the Session

1. If needed, continue to wear a name tag and to provide name tags for participants.
2. Read chapter 5 of *Pray like It Matters*. Read “During This Session” to prepare for this week’s session. Read Scriptures referenced in this chapter.
3. Make sure you have enough copies of *Pray like It Matters* for all participants.
4. Provide a whiteboard or flipchart and markers or chalkboard and chalk. Provide paper and pens or pencils. Provide extra Bibles. Provide these every week.
5. Gather at least eight large boxes. On each box write one of the subheads for chapter 5: *Busyness, Disobedience, Laziness, Idolatry, Unforgiveness, Unconfessed Sin, Family Strife, and Lack of Faith*. Cover the words with a piece of paper, taped in place so the words are not visible. Before people arrive, scatter the boxes in the meeting room so that it is difficult for people to get in and to take their usual places. Have some additional boxes without anything written on them. Provide felt-tip markers. Be prepared to talk about each obstacle and to call for Scriptures for each.

During This Session

1. As participants arrive, let them react to the boxes in their way. After enough people have arrived, invite some people to stack up the boxes with the paper covering the words showing. Say to the group: Just as these boxes were obstacles to getting into the room and getting started on our lesson, we all face obstacles in having the kind of prayer life we’d like to have. Direct participants to form small groups to brainstorm obstacles to a passionate prayer life. Tell them they can review chapter 5 of *Pray like It Matters*, and they should add obstacles they have encountered in trying to have a daily time with Christ.
2. As each of the obstacles listed in the lesson is given, call for a volunteer to read the following verses:
 - Busyness—Matthew 6:33
 - Disobedience—1 John 3:22
 - Laziness—1 Peter 4:7b
 - Idolatry—1 John 5:21
 - Unforgiveness—Matthew 6:14-15
 - Unconfessed Sin—Psalm 66:18
 - Family Strife—1 Peter 3:7
 - Lack of Faith—Hebrews 12:6Lead a discussion of each obstacle using points from the book.
3. Remove the paper covering the words on the boxes so people can see the obstacles.
4. Invite participants to add obstacles they have experienced. Invite them to write these obstacles on additional boxes.
5. If you enlisted a testimony for this session, introduce the person now.
6. Lead the group in saying together Psalm 66:18.
7. End with the challenge for this week.
8. Pray for God’s help in overcoming obstacles that prevent us from having a passionate prayer life.

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Week 6

What Helps Our Prayers

Before the Session

1. If needed, continue to wear a name tag and to provide name tags for participants.
2. Read chapter 6 of *Pray like It Matters*. Read “During This Session” to prepare for this week’s session. Read all Scriptures referenced in this chapter.
3. Make sure you have enough copies of *Pray like It Matters* for all participants.
4. Provide a whiteboard or flipchart and markers or chalkboard and chalk. Provide paper and pens or pencils. Provide extra Bibles. Provide these every week.
5. Make four large posters. Write these words on the posters: *My Prayer Desire*, *Hungry*, *Holy*, *Humble*. Place the one with *My Prayer Desire* on a wall where everyone can get to it. Hold the others for later in the session.
6. Provide a small pad of self-adhesive notes and a pen for each participant.

During This Session

1. As participants arrive, remind them to pick up a name tag. If they are new this week, provide a copy of *Pray like It Matters* and make sure they have a Bible.
2. Give each participant a small pad of self-adhesive notes and a pen. Call their attention to the poster with the words *My Prayer Desire*. Explain that they are nearly halfway through their study about prayer. Perhaps they have been thinking about goals, qualities, or characteristics they desire for their prayer life. Tell them to write one each on the self-adhesive notepaper and stick each one on the poster. They may write as many as they like, but everyone should write at least one thing. It may be a word, a phrase, or a sentence.
3. If you have enlisted someone to share a testimony about enriching prayer life, call for the testimony now.
4. Briefly lecture on the content from the subheads “The Holy Spirit,” “Praying Scripture” (or save this one for the next chapter), and “Praying in Jesus’ Name.” Make these points:
 - Discuss the role of the Holy Spirit in helping believers pray.
 - Call for volunteers to read John 14:16 and Romans 8:26–27.
 - Tell the story of the author’s experience of memorizing Scripture and the impact it had on his prayer life.
 - Ask, What do you think the author means by “Scripture rightly interpreted”?
 - Ask, How does a person pray “according to His will”?
 - Call on a volunteer to read John 14:13.
 - Ask, What does it mean to pray in Jesus’ name?
 - Tell the author’s story about purchasing a sound system.
5. Direct participants to form three groups. Make these assignments: Group 1, A Holy Heart; Group 2, A Hungry Heart; Group 3, A Humble Heart. Tell them to read all the Scripture in their assigned section of chapter 6 and to discuss and prepare to report on the questions given to them. (See Group Assignments at the end of this lesson.)
6. While groups are working, place the remaining three posters on a wall near the first poster and with easy access for participants.
7. Call for reports from the three small groups. Affirm and add comments from your own study as reports are given. At the end of each report, invite the large group to respond.
8. As you end with the challenge, invite learners to go to the first poster, select any note, and move it to one of the other three posters where they think it best fits. When all the notes have been moved, point out that participants have many desires and goals for their prayer life. Having a holy,

hungry, and humble heart will help them move toward having the passionate prayer life they desire.

9. Invite participants to join you in saying John 14:13.
10. Pray, thanking God for His giving participants the desire to grow, through prayer, in their relationship with Him. Pray that participants will have holy, hungry, and humble hearts.

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Chapter 6 Group Assignments

Group 1—A Holy Heart

- What do you think it means to have a holy heart?
- What prevents believers from having a holy heart?
- How can believers have a holy heart?

Group 2—A Hungry Heart

- What is the significance of the life verses the author has chosen?
- What kinds of prayers does God love? Why?
- What kinds of prayer does the author say Jesus prayed?
- What unusual characteristics of prayer does the author describe? Under what circumstances do you think someone might pray in this way?

Group 3—A Humble Heart

- Why do those who pray need an attitude of humility?
- How did Isaiah respond to God's presence?
- How did the apostle John respond when he saw Jesus?
- Put in your own words a description of our God that calls us to be humble in His presence.

Pray like It Matters: Intimacy and Power Through Prayer

Week 7

Praying the Word of God

Before the Session

1. If needed, continue to wear a name tag and to provide name tags for participants.
2. Read chapter 7 of *Pray like It Matters*. Read “During This Session” to prepare for this week’s session. Read all Scriptures referenced in this chapter.
3. Make sure you have enough copies of *Pray like It Matters* for all participants.
4. Provide a whiteboard or flipchart and markers or chalkboard and chalk. Provide paper and pens or pencils. Provide extra Bibles. Provide these every week.
5. Set up the chairs in five groups for this session. Provide a Bible with a list of Scriptures (following this lesson) for each one. Make multiple copies.
6. Bring a bell to use to end the prayer time.
7. Prepare to play instrumental music while people pray.

During This Session

1. As participants arrive, remind them to pick up a name tag. If they are new this week, provide a copy of *Pray like It Matters* and make sure they have a Bible.
2. As people arrive, direct them to go to one of the five groups of chairs. Invite them to share Scriptures they use when they pray. These may include verses used to praise God, to confess sin, to offer thanksgiving, to seek God’s help. Encourage them not to worry about having the exact words or the Scripture reference. Explain that part of praying Scripture is making it their own, meditating on God’s Word until it becomes a part of their thoughts rather than simple words they have memorized.
3. When everyone has arrived, call for groups to voice Scriptures they have shared. You may want to call for them in the categories listed: to praise God, to confess sin, to offer thanksgiving, to seek God’s help. Be ready to share your own Scriptures in each of these areas. Some examples include: (1) to praise God: Psalm 8:1; (2) to confess sin: Psalm 51:1–3; (3) to offer thanksgiving: Psalm 100; to seek God’s help: Psalm 102:1–2. Add comments from the beginning of this chapter. Make these points:
 - Explain why we can and should use the Bible as a prayer resource. It is the Word of God. It is inspired and infallible. It is eternal and authoritative. It is true. It is perfect. It points to Jesus Christ.
 - Jesus quoted the Bible when He prayed.
 - Ask God to lead you to Scriptures that will speak to you and that you can use to speak to Him.
4. If you enlisted a testimony for this session, call for it now.
5. Place one of the prepared lists of Scripture in each group. Explain that the author suggested using Scripture to pray for children, your spouse, your church, salvation of lost people, and revival in your nation. Invite participants to remain where they are or to move to another group. Tell them they may move quietly from group to group or remain in one group the entire time. Tell them you will play soft music and when the time is drawing to an end you will ring a bell. Invite them to take the prepared sheet for that area and read Scripture and pray for that person or persons.
6. About a minute before your time is up, ring the bell and give participants a minute or so to complete their thoughts.
7. Invite the group to join you in saying John 15:7.
8. Encourage the group to continue to use Scriptures in their prayers this week.
9. Close with a biblical benediction such as the one found in Ephesians 3:20–21, NASB: “Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the

power that works within us, to Him *be* the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.”

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Chapter 7 Group Assignments

Praying for Children

- Luke 2:52
- John 16:8
- Acts 3:19
- Romans 10:13
- Luke 11:13
- Ephesians 5:18
- Galatians 5:22–23
- 2 Timothy 2:22
- Psalm 32:8
- Proverbs 3:5–6
- James 1:5
- Proverbs 18:24
- Deuteronomy 6:6–9
- Ephesians 6:4
- Ephesians 6:1–3
- Isaiah 59:21

Praying for Your Spouse

- Ephesians 5:22–25, 33
- 1 Peter 3:7
- Psalm 91:10–11
- Psalm 127:1
- Malachi 3:10
- Romans 8:32
- Philippians 4:19
- Psalm 16:11
- 3 John 2
- Psalm 133:1
- Psalm 128
- Psalm 32:8
- Isaiah 30:21

Praying for Your Church

- Acts 9:31
- Isaiah 56:7
- Matthew 21:13
- Acts 4:31
- Acts 6:4
- 1 Timothy 5:17
- 2 Timothy 2:15
- 1 Corinthians 12:11
- Matthew 9:37–38
- Malachi 3:8–12
- Matthew 23:23
- 2 Peter 3:18

Praying for the Salvation of Lost People

- Romans 10:11
- Romans 1:9
- John 16:7
- Isaiah 64:6
- Philippians 3:9
- Romans 14:10
- Hebrews 9:27
- 1 Corinthians 15:3–4
- Romans 10:14

Praying for Revival in Your Nation

- 2 Chronicles 7:14
- Proverbs 14:34
- Habakkuk 3:2
- Psalm 85:6
- Acts 3:19
- 2 Chronicles 7:1

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Week 8

The Power of Praying Together

Before the Session

1. If needed, continue to wear a name tag and to provide name tags for participants.
2. Read chapter 8 of *Pray like It Matters*. Read “During This Session” to prepare for this week’s session. Read all Scriptures referenced in this chapter.
3. Make sure you have enough copies of *Pray like It Matters* for all participants.
4. Provide a whiteboard or flipchart and markers or chalkboard and chalk. Provide paper and pens or pencils. Provide extra Bibles. Provide these every week.
5. Prepare to play instrumental music during group prayer time at the beginning of the session.
6. Prepare a list of prayer concerns. Contact the church office for a current list. Make a copy for each participant. Also write the concerns on the board at the front of the room.
7. Bring a bell to ring to end the prayer time.
8. Bring a magnifying glass.

During This Session

1. As participants arrive, remind them to pick up a name tag. If they are new this week, provide a copy of *Pray like It Matters* and make sure they have a Bible.
2. As participants arrive, invite them to add any prayer concerns to the list posted. Give each person a prepared sheet of the church’s known prayer concerns. When everyone has arrived, direct participants to form small groups of three to five. Suggest that they share any additional personal prayer concerns, each person sharing at least one personal request. Allow time for small groups to pray about the concerns listed and for one another’s concerns. Suggest that each person pray aloud. Tell them that you will be playing background music and will ring a bell when it is time to bring the prayer session to a close.
3. Gently move into the discussion time, asking the group, What is your experience of hearing people pray in a group about needs that matter to you?
4. Briefly lecture, lead a discussion, and call for volunteers to read Scriptures from this chapter. Make these points:
 - Tell the author’s story about having a prayer partner.
 - Ask, Have any of you had prayer partners? What was that experience like for you?
 - Show the magnifying glass. Talk about its power to make clear or visible something that was difficult or impossible to see otherwise. Compare this to the power of people praying together.
 - Tell the story of Jehoshaphat from 2 Chronicles 20 or tell the story of Queen Esther.
 - Choose a story of prayer in the early church from the book of Acts to share with the group.
 - Tell the author’s story from his experience in 1995.
5. If you have enlisted someone to share a testimony, call for it now.
6. Invite participants to consider having a prayer partner. The partner may be a spouse or another group participant. Suggest these guidelines: Partners will pray together in person or on the phone at least three times a week for the next month. Then they can decide on their own whether to continue, change how and when they are praying, or discontinue praying together. If participants have been keeping a prayer journal, suggest that they add

the concerns voiced during this session and to make notes about their experience of praying with another person. Don't compel the people to form prayer partnerships, but give them time to choose partners if they are willing to do this.

7. Lead the group in saying Matthew 18:19.
8. Offer the challenge to multiply the power of prayer by praying together.
9. Voice a prayer for your church and the concerns raised during this session.

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Week 9

Resources for Enhancing Our Prayer Time

Before the Session

1. If needed, continue to wear a name tag and to provide name tags for participants.
2. Read chapter 9 of *Pray like It Matters*. Read “During This Session” to prepare for this week’s session. Read all Scriptures referenced in this chapter.
3. Make sure you have enough copies of *Pray like It Matters* for all participants.
4. Provide a whiteboard or flipchart and markers or chalkboard and chalk. Provide paper and pens or pencils. Provide extra Bibles. Provide these every week.
5. Collect samples of resources used regularly in your church for daily quiet times. These may be periodicals, books, Internet guides, or other resources. Display these before participants arrive. If your room has Wi-Fi, plan to show some websites that offer daily devotional guides. You may want to e-mail participants to ask for their recommendations for resources, or check with the church staff, those who have given testimonies, or other church leaders.
6. If your meeting room has Wi-Fi, plan for participants to work in groups to research what Paul says in his letters about praying for people. Contact several people to bring laptops, notebooks, or other handheld electronic devices. If your room does not have Wi-Fi, enlist someone to do this research and to bring a brief report to the group during the session.

During This Session

1. As participants arrive, remind them to pick up a name tag. If they are new this week, provide a copy of *Pray like It Matters* and make sure they have a Bible.
2. Then direct them to form small groups of three. Tell them to work together in their small groups to list ten places you can pray. Tell them to have fun with this. Explain that it is a contest. Each group will read their list. As each place is called, any other group that has that same place will say so, and everyone who has that place will mark it off their list. After the first group is finished, the second group will read only places not already named, and groups will continue to mark off their list any place already named. The group with the greatest number of places not named by any other group wins. You may want to have a Bible bookmark or another small prize for groups with the best score.
3. Either introduce Paul as one who prays and let participants search his letters electronically—making a list of people and circumstances he prays about—or call for the report you have enlisted.
4. Direct participants to form three groups and make these assignments: group 1, prayer cards; group 2, prayer book/journal; group 3, computer or another electronic prayer resource. Tell groups 1 and 2 they are to use the content of chapter 9 and their own thoughts to explain what their assignment (cards or book/journal) is the best personal guide for enhancing their prayer time. Tell group 3 that they must generate their own ideas because the book does not talk about this. Allow time for the teams to work and call for reports.
5. Ask the group for testimonies from anyone who has used any of these tools, or call on the person you enlisted to give a testimony during this week’s session.
6. Use the challenge. Thank the group for their faithfulness in this study. Tell them they are about three-quarters of the way on this journey to a more passionate prayer life.
7. Invite participants to join you in saying 1 Thessalonians 1:2.

8. Close by praying Paul's prayer from Philippians 1:9–11, NASB: "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."

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Week 10

The Power of Praying Ferently

Before the Session

1. If needed, continue to wear a name tag and to provide name tags for participants.
2. Read chapter 10 of *Pray like It Matters*. Read “During This Session” to prepare for this week’s session. Read all Scriptures referenced in this chapter.
3. Make sure you have enough copies of *Pray like It Matters* for all participants.
4. Provide a whiteboard or flipchart and markers or chalkboard and chalk. Provide paper and pens or pencils. Provide extra Bibles. Provide these every week.
5. On a large sheet of paper, write the word *PEACE* vertically along the left side of the paper. Provide felt-tip markers.

During This Session

1. As participants arrive, remind them to pick up a name tag. If they are new this week, provide a copy of *Pray like It Matters* and make sure they have a Bible.
2. Ask participants to think about the results of prayer and to add words beginning with *P, E, A, C, E* on the large sheet of paper.
3. Using Acts 12 and the introduction to this chapter, briefly introduce this week’s study.
 - Ask the questions in the first paragraph. Invite comments, opinions.
 - Ask, What is *fervent* prayer? Write responses on the board. Tell the group you will add to the definition throughout the session.
 - Tell about Jesus as an example of praying fervently.
 - Give an overview of Acts 12, and explain that through this study the results of fervent prayer are given.
4. Direct participants to form four groups to look at the results of fervent prayer. Make these assignments:
 - Group 1, God Provides His Peace (Acts 12:1–6)
 - Group 2, God Activates His Angels (Acts 12:7–11)
 - Group 3, God Surprises His Servants (Acts 12:12–17)
 - Group 4, God Vindicates His People (Acts 12:18–25)Invited them to read the assigned Scripture, look for the results suggested in the title, answer discussion questions, and prepare to report to the large group. Give each group a copy of the discussion questions following this lesson.
5. After groups have completed their work, call for reports. Affirm their work, add comments from your own study, and invite additional comments from the entire group.
6. Call for the testimony if you have enlisted one for this session.
7. Use the challenge.
8. Lead the group in saying Acts 12:5.
9. Close by asking for prayer requests. List these on the board. Invite sentence prayers about these concerns. Encourage everyone to continue to pray about these needs throughout the coming week.

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Chapter 10 Group Assignments

Group 1, God Provides His Peace (Acts 12:1–6)

- How was Peter able to sleep in the circumstances described?
- What did Jesus say about giving peace to His followers (John 14:27)?
- How did Jesus model having the peace of God (Matt. 8:24)?
- What did Paul write about having the peace of God (Phil. 4:6–7)?

Group 2, God Activates His Angels (Acts 12:7–11)

- Who freed Peter from his chains?
- What happened to Daniel (Dan. 6:22; Heb. 11:33)?
- When did angels minister to Jesus (Matt. 4:11)?
- What does Hebrews say about the ministry of angels (Heb. 1:14)?

Group 3, God Surprises His Servants (Acts 12:12–17)

- Why do you think the people praying for Peter were surprised at this release?
- Have you ever prayed and been surprised when God answered your prayer?
- Has God ever answered a prayer in a completely different way from the possibilities you had considered? Tell about it.
- How would you describe “abundance”? Give an example. Read Ephesians 3:20–21.

Group 4, God Vindicates His People (Acts 12:18–25)

- How did God vindicate His people in Acts 12?
- What did the angel do?
- In Acts 12, who was punished? Who was rescued? Who was vindicated? What lessons does Acts 12 offer believers today about fervent prayer?

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Week 11 Praying for the Sick

Before the Session

1. If needed, continue to wear a name tag and to provide name tags for participants.
2. Read chapter 11 of *Pray like It Matters*. Read “During This Session” to prepare for this week’s session. Read all Scriptures referenced in this chapter.
3. Make sure you have enough copies of *Pray like It Matters* for all participants.
4. Provide a whiteboard or flipchart and markers or chalkboard and chalk. Provide paper and pens or pencils. Provide extra Bibles. Provide these every week.
5. In advance, invite someone to tell the author’s story about his personal thoughts about praying for healing.

During This Session

1. As participants arrive, remind them to pick up a name tag. If they are new this week, provide a copy of *Pray like It Matters* and make sure they have a Bible.
2. Ask participants to form small groups of four or five. Suggest that they talk about people they have prayed for who were healed and people they prayed for who were not healed.
3. Following small-group discussions, ask these questions for discussion:
 - Should Christians pray for people to be healed? Why or why not?
 - Does God’s healing come with or without medical care?
4. Call for the report about the author’s thoughts on praying for healing.
5. If you’ve enlisted a testimony for this session, call for it now.
6. Call on a volunteer to read James 5:16.
7. Ask:
 - Explain what the author means that this verse can be interpreted differently by a Catholic, a charismatic, and a Baptist.
 - How would you explain the healing of the author’s mother?
 - Invite participants to share stories from small groups about people who were healed and people who were not—both having received the prayers of the church.
8. Direct participants to form three groups. Make these assignments:
 - Group 1, Reasons for Physical Sickness
 - Group 2, Some Principles Regarding Healing
 - Group 3, God Wants to Heal Our Entire BeingInstruct groups to read the Scriptures referenced in their assignments, discuss the questions at the end of this lesson, and prepare to report to the large group.
9. Offer the challenge.
10. Invite participants to join you in saying James 5:16.
11. Call for participants to name people who are physically sick. Invite sentence prayers to pray for them. Urge participants to continue to pray for those who are sick.

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Chapter 11 Group Assignments

Group 1, Reasons for Physical Sickness

- How did sickness begin?
- Can sickness today be a result of sin? Explain.
- What other causes or reasons for sickness?

Group 2, Some Principles Regarding Healing

- Does God want us to pray for people to be healed? Explain.
- What happened to Paul when he prayed for healing? Why do you think this was God's answer?
- What biblical rationale is there for using medical resources?

Group 3, God Wants to Heal Our Entire Being

- What is God's desire for our well-being?
- What happens if we are not healed on earth?

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Week 12

The Sinner's Prayer—Asking Jesus into Your Heart

Before the Session

1. If needed, continue to wear a name tag and to provide name tags for participants.
2. Read chapter 11 of *Pray like It Matters*. Read “During This Session” to prepare for this week’s session. Read all Scriptures referenced in this chapter.
3. Make sure you have enough copies of *Pray like It Matters* for all participants. Take orders for additional copies for friends and family members.
4. Provide a whiteboard or flipchart and markers or chalkboard and chalk. Provide paper and pens or pencils. Provide extra Bibles. Provide these every week.
5. If your meeting room has Wi-Fi, invite members to bring portable electronic devices or plan to set up several laptops in advance. If your room does not have Wi-Fi, enlist several people to use an Internet search engine such as Bible Gateway (www.biblegateway.com) search for uses of the word “heart.” You might enlist someone to look at Psalms, another to look at Jesus’ words, another to look at other Old Testament passages, and another to look at other New Testament passages.
6. Set up a large bowl on a table with at least one towel. If your group is large, you may want to set up several tables.

During This Session

1. As participants arrive, remind them to pick up a name tag. If they are new this week, provide a copy of *Pray like It Matters* and make sure they have a Bible.
2. Ask participants to form small groups of four or five. Suggest that they share their personal salvation experience.
3. When everyone has arrived and had opportunity to participate, ask a few volunteers to share their testimony.
4. Assign small groups portions of Scripture to search for the word “heart.” Or ask for the reports you’ve enlisted. Explain the author’s use of the word.
5. If you have enlisted a testimony for this week, call for it now.
6. Direct participants to form three groups:
 - Group 1, God Desires to Transform Our Sinful Hearts
 - Group 2, God Desires to Indwell Individuals with His Holy Spirit
 - Group 3, God Desires for People to Be SavedTell groups to review their assigned portion of chapter 12, to read the Scriptures referenced, and to answer the questions at the end of this lesson and prepare to give a report to the larger group.
7. Call for reports. As they are given, invite the larger group to respond. Add your own personal comments as well as comments based on your study. Share your own salvation experience as well as your experiences of leading others to Christ or with new believers.
8. Issue the challenge in your own words.
9. Invite the group to name people for whom they are praying who need to receive Christ. Pray for these people and ask the group to continue to pray for them.
10. Tell the group about your plans for next week if you plan to have an additional session.
11. Invite participants, as they leave, to come to the basin you have set up and to prayerfully dip their hands in the water as a reminder of giving their hearts to Jesus.

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Chapter 12 Group Assignments

Group 1, God Desires to Transform Our Sinful Hearts

- How is the New Covenant superior to the Old Covenant?
- According to Jeremiah, what is the relationship between the Law and the human heart?
- What did Ezekiel promise?
- How did Paul's comments connect to the Old Testament examples?
- How did God fulfill His promise to change hearts?

Group 2, God Desires to Indwell Individuals with His Holy Spirit

- What is the role of the Holy Spirit in changing hearts?
- What happens today when a person is saved regarding the Holy Spirit? Compare the new believer's experience to Mary's experience.
- How did Paul's writings confirm the role of the Holy Spirit in changing hearts and lives?

Group 3, God Desires for People to Be Saved

- What are the steps a person must take to be saved?
- What does it mean to "call on the name of the Lord"? Give some biblical examples.
- How would you explain "invite Jesus into your heart" to a nonbeliever?

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Week 13 Prayer Service

Before the Session

1. Set up the room for a silent prayer service. Set up four sections with more than a fourth of the chairs needed in each area, perhaps having each group face a corner.
2. The four sections will be Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication (Intercession). Place several Bibles in each area marked with Scriptures related to that area. Use Scriptures you select or use some referenced earlier in this book, such as those in chapters 1 and 7.
3. Use the prayer lists for intercession based on prayer requests voiced in recent weeks. Provide a pen for people to write additional requests.
4. Prepare to have instrumental music playing.
5. If it is in line with your church policies, have a candle burning in each of the four areas.
6. Enlist people to help prepare light refreshments to be served in a room near your meeting room where you will have the prayer gathering.
7. Provide a poster with these written instructions:
 - This is a silent prayer gathering.
 - In the four areas you'll find Bibles with Scriptures marked relating to adoration/praise, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication/intercession.
 - Move freely from place to place at your own pace.
 - When it is time for the gathering to conclude, the music will end.
 - Come to _____ (add place) for a time of fellowship to celebrate our study of this book.

During This Session

1. At the fellowship, thank people for their participation and faithfulness.
2. Invite anyone who chooses to voice insights they have received through this study.

We pray like it is inconvenient or inconsequential. Prayer was their priority. It is our postscript. All of this is why I have written this 12-week Bible study entitled Pray Like It Matters. I want to demonstrate from Scripture that every prayer we pray is significant. Through our prayers, God changes things. One life dedicated to prayer can do more good than any life dedicated to other so-called "noble," worldly causes. An individual follower of Jesus who is committed to prayer is a fountain of life in a world of death. Likewise, the local church that becomes a house of prayer will be a spiritual powerhouse from which God's mighty miracles will flow exponentially. Prayer is wh Power through Prayer has been called "one of the truly great masterpieces on the theme of prayer." The term classic can appropriately be applied to this outstanding book. In twenty provocative and inspiring chapters, each prefaced with quotations from spiritual giants, Edward M. Bounds stresses the imperative of vital prayer in the life of a pastor. Be much in retirement and prayer. Study the honor and glory of your Master.--Richard Cecil. Power Through Prayer: E. M. Bounds 4. 1 People of Prayer Needed. Study universal holiness of life. 343 quotes from Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God: Our bad things will turn out for good (Rom 8:28), Our good things can never be taken awa... We must not decide how to pray based on what types of prayer are the most effective for producing the experiences and feelings we want. We pray in response to God himself. God's Word to us contains this range of discourseand only if we respond to his Word will our own prayer life be as rich and varied. Prayerthough it is often draining, even an agonyis in the long term the greatest source of power that is possible. Timothy Keller, Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God. 0 likes.