



## **Week One: Praying like Jesus – Study Guide**

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Many want to know their purpose in life, but few want to put the effort into preparing for it. Often, when we face tough times in life, we make hasty decisions or we walk away from difficult paths simply because we haven't asked God for strength or direction. Our purpose gets cloudy and it's hard to see past our circumstances. The great news is that we don't have to live our lives this way. We all have a great opportunity to stay connected to God so He can help us make the right choices and live life with purpose.

### **Where Am I Today?**

- 1) How much is prayer a part of your life and in your process for making decisions?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2) When do you find yourself praying the most?

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### Into the Bible

The greatest example of finding out how prayer impacts our lives is by looking at Jesus' prayer life. Let's look at the beginning of the longest recorded prayer to find out how Jesus prays for Himself and see what we can learn from Him.

- 3) **Read John 17:1-5.** Jesus knew what it meant to go through difficult situations. The most difficult moments of His life came right after this prayer. Jesus was about to be betrayed and crucified. He knew the importance of being "prayed up" so He would have the strength He needed to make it through those tough times and do the difficult things He knew God had called Him to do. What is Jesus teaching us about His relationship with God the Father in these verses?
  
- 4) Jesus came to accomplish the work that the Father had given Him. His prayer acknowledges that. Read the following verses to get just a few glimpses of the work Jesus came to accomplish. **Read Matthew 11:27, Luke 4:18-19 and John 10:10.**

There was another time when Jesus needed to make an important decision. He took some time alone to gain some clarity before He made His final decision.

- 5) **Read Luke 6:12-16.** What major decision does Jesus make after He is done praying and why is prayer so important before making a decision?

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### How Does This Apply?

When we look back at Jesus' prayer, we realize a few things that prayer does for us. Prayer gives us a connection to the Father, clarity of mind, and strength in the midst of what God has called us to do, even when it means going through difficult times.

- 6) Instead of connecting with God through prayer, it's easy to run to other things for comfort when we are faced with problems. What are some things in your life you may turn to first before you pray? Why is it easy to view prayer as a last resort and not as our best option?

Sometimes we see our difficulties in life as obstacles that prohibit us from accomplishing the work God has called us to do, rather than using them as opportunities to glorify Christ. Our lives are not just a series of random events. Every circumstance, good or bad, happens for a reason (Romans 8:28). God wants to take our difficult circumstances and turn them into opportunities to glorify Him.

- 7) Prayer helps us gain clarity. God wants us to see our circumstances, not as obstacles, but as opportunities. How can you use your past and present circumstances and turn them into opportunities used to point others to Christ?
- 8) Prayer gives us the strength to accomplish the work God has called us to do. When was the last time you asked God to accomplish the work He has called you to do? What does He want you to accomplish in your day today?

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### Current Prayer Focus

What we're praying for together as a church:

- Neighborhood Campuses
- Building for the Statesville Campus
- 100 New Leaders at The Cove

### Digging Deeper: Going Further on Your Own

In John 17:2-3, Jesus clearly explains the definition of eternal life. When we understand eternal life as being much more than just fire insurance, it doesn't just simply become about us using Jesus as a means to get to heaven. Heaven becomes more about being at an eternal place where the eternal life, Jesus, is there. It's a place where God, once again, will dwell with man (Revelation 21:1-4). God is what makes heaven incredible.

- 9) Why is it so important to understand that eternal life is knowing Jesus, and not just a place?