



EQUIP

study guide



JUST | ASK

J . D . G R E E A R

Main Objective:

For people to establish and enjoy a faithful and consistent practice of biblical prayer.

Areas of Growth:

- **Conviction:** growth in the assurance that God uses our prayers as a means to accomplish his purposes in our lives and in the world
- **Competence:** growth in patterning the practice of our prayer according to the teaching of Scripture
- **Character:** growth in our commitment to engage faithfully in the spiritual discipline of prayer as a means of communing with God, being conformed to his will, and interceding for ourselves and others

INTRODUCTION

1. How would you describe your current practice of personal prayer? Is it weak, strong, regressing, improving?
2. Would it change your perspective of prayer by thinking of it not as preparation or empowerment for ministry but as a form of ministry itself?
3. If you are at “ground zero” in the discipline of personal prayer, will you commit to begin with praying 5 minutes a day (p. 9)? If you are not at “ground zero,” what are some things you have personally found most helpful in developing the spiritual discipline of prayer?

Memory Work:

The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. ~ Psalm 145:18

CHAPTER 1: HONESTLY, DOES PRAYER REALLY DO ANY GOOD?

1. What thing(s) stood out to you the most in Chapter One and why? Was there something you found particularly encouraging or challenging? Was there anything you questioned or disagreed with?
2. In your opinion, what are some of the things that make regular, faithful prayer difficult? Do you sometimes wonder if prayer makes a difference?
3. Would you describe your prayers as desperate, bold, and persistent (p. 28)? What are some truths to believe that can help us grow in praying this way?

Memory Work:

Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. ~ Colossians 2:4

CHAPTER 2: BUT SERIOUSLY, WHY ISN'T GOD ANSWERING ME?

1. What thing(s) stood out to you the most in Chapter Two and why? Was there something you found particularly encouraging or challenging? Was there anything you questioned or disagreed with?
2. Of the various reasons why God might not grant our requests, which one(s) do you find most encouraging? Most challenging?
3. What is something you prayed for that God did not grant for which you are now thankful that his wisdom was greater than yours? What is something you prayed for that God did not grant that is still hard for you to understand or causes pain?

Memory Work

If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him! ~ Matthew 7:11

CHAPTER 3: DO MY PRAYERS CHANGE GOD'S MIND?

1. What thing(s) stood out to you the most in Chapter Three and why? Was there something you found particularly encouraging or challenging? Was there anything you questioned or disagreed with?
2. How would you answer someone who asked you the question, "If God already has a fixed plan, why should I pray?"
3. How should the realization that God uses our prayers to bring about his purposes serve as an incentive to cultivate a stronger prayer life?

Memory Work

I sought the Lord, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him and saved him out of all his troubles. ~ Psalm 34:4-6

CHAPTER 4: HOW NOT TO PRAY

1. What thing(s) stood out to you the most in Chapter Four and why? Was there something you found particularly encouraging or challenging? Was there anything you questioned or disagreed with?
2. What are some ways Christians (including ourselves) are tempted to pray like Pharisees today? How can we combat this temptation?
3. What are some ways Christians (including ourselves) are tempted to pray like pagans today? How can we combat this temptation?

Memory Work

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

~ Philippians 4:6-7

CHAPTER 5: AMAZED BY GOD & CHAPTER 6: ASK YOUR FATHER

1. What thing(s) stood out to you the most in Chapters Five and Six and why? Was there something you found particularly encouraging or challenging? Was there anything you questioned or disagreed with?
2. Do your prayers typically begin with adoration of God and concerns for the advancement of his kingdom? Why or why not? What are some things that might help us adopt this mindset and incorporate this practice more often?
3. What are some ways we can use the Lord's Prayer to guide and structure our own prayers? What do the last three petitions of the Lord Prayer teach us about the care of our Heavenly Father (and the ways good earthly fathers care for their children)?

Memory Work

What is prayer? Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies. ~ Westminster Shorter Catechism Q. 98.

CHAPTER 7: ON PRAYING FOR GUIDANCE & CONCLUSION

1. What thing(s) stood out to you the most in Chapter Seven and why? Was there something you found particularly encouraging or challenging? Was there anything you questioned or disagreed with?
2. What is your typical decision-making process (particularly with harder or weightier decisions that feel life-altering)? How do you think God ordinarily leads and directs people in his paths?
3. Which of the 10 suggestions in the conclusion will you incorporate to become more faithful and consistent in praying? What are some ways others in your group can help hold you accountable in praying?

Memory Work

*Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long.
~ Psalm 25:4-5*

