DEVELOPING YOUR PRAYER LIFE
DISCIPLESHIP FOR CHAMPIONS

Topic objective: One of the tremendous benefits of being a Christian is the privilege of being able to pray. With this topic we want to help you develop a more vibrant prayer life.

To help you in the development of your prayer life, let’s look first at some Scriptures that invite us to pray.

- Heb. 4:16, “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”
- Matthew 7:7-8, “Ask and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find. Knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened”.
- Phil. 4:6, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayers and supplication, with thanksgiving let your request be made known to God;”

As a group name at least 5 more verses that invite us to pray.

James 5:16b lets us know that there is power in prayer. Pastor James, who was known for being a mighty prayer warrior wrote, “the effective, fervent prayer of the righteous man avails much.” Pastor James then gives an illustration of Elijah and how he did something about the weather by praying. See Eph. 3:20 also.

As a group, name other Biblical characters who experienced the power of prayer at work.

“Prayer is the key that unlocks all the storehouse of God’s infinite grace and power. All that God is and all that God has is at the disposal of prayer. But we must use the key.”  
R. A. Torrey

While it is clear we have an invitation to pray we should also understand that God expects us to pray.

Several Scriptures speak firmly that we are pray.

- I Thess. 5:17, “Pray without ceasing.”
- Col. 4:2, “Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving.”
- I Peter 4:7, “But the end of all things is at hand; you therefore be sober, and watchful in your prayers.”
- I Sam. 12:23, “Moreover as for me,(Samuel is speaking) God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you…”
- Eph. 6:18, “Praying always with all prayer and supplication.”

With the point well stated that we should pray, let’s turn our attention to things we should be praying about when we do pray. Looking at the prayer the Lord taught His disciples when they asked for help in this area (Luke 11: 1-4 and searching through the Word, we have found a prayer time should include the following:
1. Have a time of Adoration – Lk. 11:2; Ps. 113.
   See also Rev. 4 and 5 as well as Isa. 6.

Begin by praising God for who He is: Think about His names as His names reveal His character. Think about his attributes: holy, merciful, just, righteous, pure, gracious.

   I begin my day with Ps. 118:24 and Ps. 113:3  This is the day the Lord has made, I will rejoice and be glad in it (this is His present to me) and From the rising of the sun until the going down of the same, the name of the Lord is to be praised.

Adding to your time of adoration read Rev. 4 and Rev. 5
4:13 you are worthy O Lord to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things and by Your will they exist and were created.

5:9 They sang a new song saying You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals; For you were slain and have redeemed us to God by your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation and have made us kings and priests to our God and we shall reign on the earth.

5:12 Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing!”

5:13 Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever. Amen.

Isa. 6 “In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings; with two he covered his face; with two he covered his feet and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of host; the whole earth is full of His glory. And the post of the doors were shaken by the voice of him who cried out and the house was filled with smoke.”


I move from adoration to a time of confession because of what I see in Isa. 6. As I worship and stand before a holy, awesome, almighty God I see that I am unclean. Isaiah said Woe is me because I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips. For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of host.

☐ Spiritual principle: The closer one gets to God the more evident their sin becomes.

What do I do when my sin is revealed? Because of this thing called prayer and I am able to confess my sin - I am able to say “I am sorry.” I John 1:9 says that If I confess my sin He is faithful and just to ? kill me, destroy me, condemn me, banish me - NO He is faithful and just to forgive me and cleanse me of all unrighteousness.

Now I am worshipping before a Holy God and my sin begins to stand out like red paint on white snow. I confess and he cleanse me. I can now stand in His presence.
Now this is very important as failure to confess means that our prayers will be hindered. You do know what Ps. 66:18 says:
If I regard sin in my life God will not hear my prayers.

Discussion: Can your prayers be hindered?
I Peter 3:7 If I do not love and honor and respect my wife as a husband God says He will not hear my prayers.
Pr. 15:29 The Lord is far from the wicked but He hears the prayer of the righteous.
and 28:9. One who turns away his ear from hearing the law even his prayer is an abomination.

3. Have a time of Thanksgiving that thanks God for past blessings and your present situation  
Ps. 103:1-2; I Thess. 5:18 and Phil. 4:6.

We are not to be spoiled rotten children - always making request, never saying thank you.

We thank Him for His past blessings. We thank Him for the present situation we are in.

4. Have a time of Making Personal Requests -
Luke 11:3, “Give us day by day our daily bread.”
Phil. 4:6, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.”

What are our main requests: We need in our lives
◆ His Will as we Need Direction Prov. 3:5-6
◆ His Wisdom as we Need Understanding James 1:5
◆ His Provision  He counted the number of hairs on your head. He is our father, we are His children. He loves us so much He does something every day that we have never done once - he counts the hairs on our head.
We need finances - Where He guides, He provides.
You need a spouse - pray (story of Amy praying all night for her husband to be.)
◆ His Protection I Cor. 10:13 the reason we fall in to sin is we put ourselves in places where we are prone to fail. Lead me away. (my story of L and M market)
◆ His Hand of blessing (I Chron. 4:9-10) be a blessing to others.

*(The first four requests, Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication, spells “ACTS.”

5. Pray for the Sick and the Suffering -

6. Pray for your enemies - Matt. 5:44.
43-44 “You have heard that it was said “you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.” But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.”

“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; may they prosper who love you.”
8. Pray for the Lost to be saved – Rom. 10:1.
"Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved.
Who is on your “most wanted list” Develop a list with your prayer group – Our most wanted list.

How to pray for the lost to be saved
- Pray for a Witness to go to them – Romans 10:14.
  “How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in
  Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?
- Pray for Eyes To Be Open – 2 Cor. 4:4.
  “whose mind the god of this world has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of
  the glory of Christ, who is the image of Christ, should shine on them.”

9. Pray for Laborers for the Field –
Matthew 9:35-38
“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray
the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.” v. 37-38

10. Pray for Our National Leaders and for revival –
1 Tim 2:1-2 “Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and
  giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority that we may lead a
  quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.”
(II Chron. 7:14) If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves
and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear
from heaven and I will forgive their sin and heal their land.”
Pray for the president, the vice-president, your two Senators, your congressman,
the 9 Supreme Court members, and your governor.

11. Pray for Christian Ministries –
Col. 4:2-4; “Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; Meanwhile praying also
for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ for which I am
also in chains, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.”
Rom. 15:30; “Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ and through the
love of the Spirit, that you strive together for me in prayers to God for me that
I may be delivered from those in Judea who do not believe and that my service
for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints.”
I Th. 5:25; “Brethren, pray for us.”
2 Th. 3:1-2 “Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be
glorified, just as it is with you and that we may be delivered from unreasonable
and wicked men; for not all have faith.”

Pray for Pastors and for Missionaries.
On your prayer list should be the names of your home pastors, your campus pastors, Dr. Falwell
You should have the names of at least one missionary and praying for a country.
12. Pray for Other Believers to Grow - Js. 5:16.

   Be an intercessor for family, friends and members of your fellowship.

   ☐ Follow the example of Epaphras.

   "Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." (NKJV) Col. 4:12

   A. He prayed constantly (always).
   B. He prayed fervently (laboring fervently).
   C. He prayed personally (for you).
   D. He prayed definitely (for maturity: stand perfect).
   E. He prayed sacrificially (great zeal). v. 13

   ☐ Incorporate Paul’s prayer from Col. 1:9-11 into yours

   “For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy.” NKJV Col. 1:9-11

   ▪ Pray that they will know the Will of God for their life.
   ▪ Pray that their walk (lifestyle) before God will be pleasing.
   ▪ Pray that their work for God will be productive.
   ▪ Pray that they will increase in their wisdom about God.
   ▪ Pray that they will utilize the power they have from the Holy Spirit to withstand trials and temptations.

The Greatest thing a person can do for another person is pray for them!

Closing Discussion: have group share methods they have used to enhance their prayer life, such as the use of a prayer journal.

Make this a year of developing a strong prayer life.
REASONS FOR PRAYING

The IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER is clearly taught in the SCRIPTURE.

We are Invited to Pray:

Heb. 4:16, "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

Matthew 7:7-8 "Ask and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find. Knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened".

Phil. 4:6 "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayers and supplication, with thanksgiving let your request be made know to God;"

We are Instructed to Pray:

Luke 18:1, "Men ought to always pray."
I Thess. 5:18, "Pray without ceasing."
Col. 4:2, "Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving."

I Peter 4:7, "But the end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer."
I Sam. 12:23, "Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you..."

We are Instructed to Pray for certain things:

Matt. 9:38, "Therefore Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."
James 5:16, "Pray for one another."
I Tim. 2:1, "Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority,..."
Col. 4:3, "Meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ,..."
Matt. 5:44, "...Pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."
Ps. 122:6, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee."

Scripture teaches us Five key Ingredients to a prayer life:

There should be a time of Adoration: Rev. 4:8-11
There should be a time of Confession: I John 1:9
There should be a time of Petition: Matt. 6:11
There should be a time of Intercession: I Tim. 2:1, James 5:16
There should be a time of Thanksgiving: I Thess. 5:18, Ps. 103:2

Jesus gave us Insight into how to Pray:

Matt. 6:5-15, "And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you they have their rewards. But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place: and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. But when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them. For you Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. In this manner there-fore pray, 'Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be your name, Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.'"
We have Illustrations in the Bible of people Praying:

Abraham prayed for Sodom and Gomorrah, Gen. 18
Jacob prayed when he wrestled with God, Gen. 32
The children of Israel prayed for deliverance from Egypt, Ex. 2:23-25
Moses prayed for God to forgive the Israelites, Ex. 32:30-33
Joshua prayed for the sun to stand still during a battle, Josh. 10:12-14
Hannah prayed for a son; I Sam. 1:10
David prayed before battling the Philistines, II Sam. 5:17-25
Solomon prayed for wisdom to lead God's people when he became king; I Kings 3
Elijah prayed for the rain to stop and to begin again; I Kings 17:1 & 18:42-45
Elisha prayed to bring a child back to life; II Kings 4:33-34
Nehemiah prayed for the walls of Jerusalem to be rebuilt; Neh. 1:4
David said, "evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray..."; Ps. 55:17
Hezekiah prayed for deliverance from the Assyrians; Isa. 37
Daniel prayed a prayer of national repentance; Dan. 9:3-19
Jonah prayed when he was in the belly of the fish; Jonah 2:1
Jesus prayed early in the morning; Mark 1:35
Jesus prayed into the night before walking on the water; Matt. 14:23
Jesus prayed all night before he called His 12 disciples; Luke 6:12-16
Jesus prayed before facing the cross; Luke 22:41, 44
The church prayed for Peter; Acts 12:5
The church prayed to send Paul and Barnabas on a missionary trip; Acts 13:3
Peter prayed before raising Dorcas from the dead; Acts 9:40
Paul prayed for Israel to be saved; Rom. 10:1
Paul prayed for the believers of many local churches; Col. 1, Phil. 1, II Thess. 1
Paul prayed specifically for Timothy night and day; II Tim. 1:3
Epaphras labored fervently in prayer for those in Colosse; Col. 4:12

From the Scriptures we learn prayer is very important.

We can also learn the IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER by what other Christians have said about PRAYER.

"What the church needs today is not more machinery or better, nor new organizations or more and novel methods, but men whom the Holy Ghost can use - men of prayer, men mighty in prayer. The Holy Spirit does not flow through methods, but through men. He does not come on machinery, but on men. He does not anoint plans, but men - men of PRAYER." E. M. Bounds

"Prayer is the most important thing in my life. If I should neglect prayer for a single day, I should lose a great deal of the fire of faith." Martin Luther

"Nothing lies beyond the reach of Prayer, except that which lies outside the will of God." R. A. Torrey

"I have so much to do that I must spend several hours in prayer before I am able to do it." John Wesley

"As every day demands its bread, so every day demands its prayer." E. M. Bounds

"The one concern of the devil is to keep Christians from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, and prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when we Pray." Samuel Chadwick

"Prayer is the key that unlocks all the storehouse of God's infinite grace and power. All that God is and all that God has is at the disposal of prayer. But we must use the key." R. A. Torrey
"Prayer must have priority. Prayer must be our bolt to lock up at night and our key to open the day. Prayer is power, prayer is wealth, and prayer is the health of the soul."  Leonard Ravenhill

"A young boy is trying to move a large rock. He strains as he lifts but to no avail. His father, who had been watching, comes over to his son. He questions the boy if he is using all of his strength. The son replies that he is. The father ask him if he is using all of his resources to which the son answers, 'yes.' 'Son', the father asked again, 'Are you using all of your resources to move that large rock?' The son again says, 'YES, I am.' The father gentle says, 'No son, you are not, for you have not ask me to help you.'"  Anonymous

John Starkey was convicted of killing his wife. After he was executed, William Booth preached his funeral. The people wondered what could be said about this man. Booth said one sentence: "This man did not have a praying mother."

Daniel was found praying. How will people find you?