

The Power of Prayer

 **Precept®**

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Precept® Bible Studies

The Power of Prayer

A Collection on Prayer, Volume Three

CONTENTS //

WEEK 1

- 6 // Lesson One:** *Introduction*
- 18 // Opening Group Discussion Questions**
- 20 // Lesson Two:** *A Habit of Prayer*
Daniel 6
- 26 // Lesson Three:** *The Power to Transform*
Daniel 6
- 32 // Lesson Four:** *Whatever the Cost*
Daniel 6
- 40 // Lesson Five:** *Prayer at a Glance*
Daniel 6
- 42 // Week One:** *Group Discussion Questions*

WEEK 2

- 46 // Lesson Six:** *An Honest Prayer*
1 Samuel 1
- 54 // Lesson Seven:** *The Power to Transform Hearts*
1 Samuel 1

- 60 // Lesson Eight:** *All Honor to God*
1 Samuel 1
- 66 // Lesson Nine:** *Prayer Turned to Praise*
1 Samuel 2
- 72 // Lesson Ten:** *Prayer at a Glance*
1 Samuel 1-2
- 74 // Week Two:** *Group Discussion Questions*

WEEK 3

- 78 // Lesson Eleven:** *Help My Unbelief*
Mark 9
- 86 // Lesson Twelve:** *The Power of God*
Mark 9
- 92 // Lesson Thirteen:** *The Power to Transform Circumstances*
Acts 16
- 98 // Lesson Fourteen:** *The Power to Transform Lives*
Acts 16
- 104 // Lesson Fifteen:** *Prayer at a Glance*
Mark 9; Acts 16

106 // Week Three: *Group Discussion Questions*

WEEK 4

110 // Lesson Sixteen: *Patience and Perseverance*
James 5

116 // Lesson Seventeen: *In All Things*
James 5

122 // Lesson Eighteen: *The Power of Confession*
James 5

128 // Lesson Nineteen: *The Power of Prayer*
James 5

134 // Lesson Twenty: *Prayer at a Glance*
James 5

136 // Week Four: *Group Discussion Questions*

CONCLUSION

144 // Closing Group Discussion Questions

APPENDIX

146 // Scripture Observation Sheets

Daniel 6

Samuel 1–2

Mark 9

Acts 16

James 5

162 // Prayer at a Glance

WEEK



Lesson One: Introduction



A man, cast into the heart of a lions' den, rests safely through the night, untouched and unharmed.

A woman, whose heart has carried the ache of unanswered prayers and empty arms through years of infertility, cradles the child she once only dared to dream of.

A young boy, tormented for years by a violent, evil spirit, finds peace at last when he is set free.

A prison full of inmates, their chains heavy and the doors bolted tight, is shaken by a mighty earthquake.

These are just a few examples of prayers powerfully answered throughout Scripture. When we read the stories that fill the Bible, it is undeniable that prayer is effective and powerful. We see this on page after page of God's Word. But many of us have yet to experience this kind of power in our own prayer lives.

How can we bridge the gap between what we read in Scripture and our actual experience of prayer?

PAUSE AND REFLECT

Before we begin Bible study, let's reflect on your current thoughts and feelings surrounding prayer and the power it holds.

Take some time to consider the following questions and statements. Remember, we are not looking for a "correct" answer but an honest and authentic one. Take time to pause, reflect, and ponder any questions you might have, and pray through each question or statement. Note your reflections in the space provided or in your own journal.

1 // Reflect on the kinds of prayers you pray. How do you present your requests to God? *For example: timidly, casually, full of faith and expectancy, etc.*

2 // How do you expect God to answer your prayers?

3 // How does the way you pray reflect your beliefs about God?

4 // Circle the phrase that most closely describes your belief about the following statement:

I believe that God's miraculous answers to bold prayers, as seen throughout Scripture, are still possible today.

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Agree

Reflection:

5 // Circle the phrase that most closely describes your belief about the following statement:

I believe that God's miraculous answers to bold prayers, as seen throughout Scripture, are still possible, *even for me.*

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Agree

Reflection:

6 // How does your prayer life reflect the beliefs you considered in questions 4 and 5?

PRAY

Bring your reflections to God in prayer. Be honest with Him about your thoughts and feelings, remembering that He knows you intimately and loves you unconditionally. Share with Him what you are struggling with and what you hope to talk to Him about during your time in this study. Bring your questions, doubts, and hopes to Him.

We encourage you to write out your prayers to keep your mind focused on God and to be able to look back and see all that He has done. You can use the space provided below or your own journal.

When you are finished, leave time for silence to allow God to speak to your heart, remembering that prayer is a two-way conversation.

OPENING GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

While studying God’s Word is personal and individual, we have seen that life change and personal growth often involve other people. We encourage you to study alongside a group of believers. This study provides discussion questions along the way. As you begin your group this week, discuss your reflections from the “Pause and Reflect” section on pages 15–16 of your study.

Opening Questions: What are your hopes as you begin this study? What questions do you have for God about prayer and the power it can hold?

- 1 //** What kinds of prayers do you pray? How do you present your requests to God?
- 2 //** How do you expect God to answer your prayers?
- 3 //** How does the way you pray reflect your beliefs about God?
- 4 //** Do you believe God’s miraculous answers to bold prayers, as seen throughout Scripture, are still possible today? Why or why not?
- 5 //** Do you believe God’s miraculous answers to bold prayers, as seen throughout Scripture, are still possible, *even for you*? Why or why not?
- 6 //** How does your prayer life reflect the beliefs you considered in questions 4 and 5?

Closing: End your time together by asking each member of your group to share their personal prayer requests. Then, spend time praying for one another. Commit to praying for each other throughout the week.



LEADING GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Scan the QR code to learn more about facilitating group discussions during your time in this Bible study.

Lesson Two: A Habit of Prayer



DANIEL 6

Life's circumstances have a way of drawing us to God in prayer. A major decision, a tragic diagnosis, or an unfathomable loss quickly brings us to our knees. But what if we turned to prayer outside of life's most devastating or significant moments? What if it was a consistent cadence in our days, as natural and instinctive as breathing? What if it wasn't our last resort but our first response to everything that comes our way?

In Volume One of our Prayer Collection, we dove into the first three chapters of the book of Daniel, where we observed Daniel's faithfulness and devotion to God as an exile in Babylon, along with his friends Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. As we begin our journey into the power of prayer, we pick up Daniel's story in chapter 6.

Read Daniel 6.

In the Appendix, you will find an Observation Sheet with the text of Daniel 6.

As you read, mark each of the following:

- 1 //** references to *God* (including pronouns such as *him, he, and his*) with a purple triangle
- 2 //** references to *Daniel* (including pronouns such as *him, he, his, you, my, I, and others*) with an orange circle
- 3 //** the words *petition/prayed/plea* with a blue arrow pointing up

It may help to read through the passage multiple times, marking each reference or word one at a time. Or, if you prefer, you can mark them all during a single reading.

 **Let's begin with observation.**

1 // Looking at where you marked *Daniel* throughout this passage, how does the text describe him? Make a list, including his actions and words.

2 // Looking at your list, summarize what kind of person Daniel was. How would you describe his heart and character? What set him apart from others?

3 // Because Daniel became distinguished above the other officials, what did King Darius have planned for him?

4 // Contrarily, what was the initial plan of the other officials and satraps against Daniel? Why were they unsuccessful in carrying it out?

5 // After their initial plan was unsuccessful, what plan did the officials and satraps come up with instead? What did their plan reveal about their hearts and motives?

6 // When Daniel knew the king had signed the ordinance, what was his first response?

7 // Where and how did Daniel pray? What changed about his prayer life after King Darius' ordinance?

8 // How did God deliver Daniel from the lions' den? And why?

9 // Knowing Daniel's habit of prayer, what can we infer Daniel was doing all night in the lions' den? How do you imagine he felt?

10 // We often wait for an extraordinary occasion to begin or resume praying. How does Daniel's example differ from this tendency?

11 // What does Daniel's rhythm of prayer reveal about his heart for God?

 **Reflect and Apply.**

12 // In Volume One, *The Purpose of Prayer*, we discovered that our reason for praying is to grow in loving relationship and communion with the Father. How would developing a rhythm or consistent practice of prayer help you move toward this purpose?

13 // What does your current rhythm or practice of prayer look like? In what ways would you like to grow in your practice?

14 // What would it look like for you to develop your habit of prayer further? Daniel showed us the benefit of a specific plan for prayer. Make a detailed plan for yourself below. Think about *when* and *where* in your day you might pray. Also, reflect on your *why*—why do you desire to pray and cultivate a habit of prayer?

PRAY

Thank God for drawing your heart toward Him today. Invite Him into your plans, and ask Him to continue increasing your desire to grow in your rhythm of prayer. Offer your prayer to Him in the space provided or in your own journal.