



Most of us pray at times for issues that directly affect us or people we love. Often these prayers focus on meeting needs, health issues or perhaps a friend turning his life toward God.

How often though, do we pray for the bigger picture such as the church, or in a way that impacts the Kingdom of God? The prayers in scripture often have this high altitude perspective and are valuable for us to consider in learning to pray strategically.

Praying Strategically 1:

John 17:20-26 (NIV)

"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: ²³ I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

²⁴ "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. ²⁵ "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. ²⁶ I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."

What is Jesus' primary prayer concern for us as his church?

STRATEGY 1: _____

What do you think the unity of Jesus and the Father might be like? How do they relate in perfect oneness? What must oneness in the trinity look like?

Discuss the implications of being invited to become one with Jesus and the Father, as they are one.

What is mind boggling about this invitation? How is this humbling?



How would our church look if we as a church took this prayer seriously?

What does Jesus say will be the impact of a unified church?

Why is the unity of the church the most important thing Jesus chooses to pray for above everything else?

If Jesus believed this was the most significant thing he could pray for the church, how frequently should we be praying for the same unity?

We may often experience tension with someone within the church, because of something they did or failed to do, that did not meet our expectations. In light of Jesus' prayer, how should we deal with that disunity?

What do you think are the main barriers that might keep people from being unified in the church?

If we are personally praying for this unity and representation for the church, what might be the results of our prayers?



PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCH

Ephesians 6:18 (NIV)

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

Do any of you consistently pray for the people of our church? If so, what do you pray for?

Colossians 1:9-14 (NIV)

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. ¹⁰ And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹ being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. ¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Underline everything that Paul desires for the church in the above passage.

Which phrase do you most long to see fulfilled in our church? Why?

Perhaps part of seeing this prayer for the church answered is to pray it yourself, for our church.

Praying Strategically 2:

Luke 10:2 (NIV)

He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

STRATEGY 2: Pray for the church's _____ in the world.

What does Jesus mean when he says the harvest is plentiful?



If the harvest isn't the problem, what does Jesus say is the problem?

How does Jesus say to deal with the problem?

Ephesians 6:19-20 (NIV)

Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Why did Paul want believers to pray this prayer on his behalf?

Have you ever held back sharing about Jesus out of fear? Share a situation.
How might having others praying have helped you?

2 Thessalonians 3:1-2 (NIV)

Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you. ² And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith.

Summarize what Paul is asking for in this request.

We encourage you to pray regularly for our church to experience:

a) _____

b) _____

We encourage you to create a list of people who you consistently want to pray into the kingdom of God. You may want to share these names with the Growth Group so they can pray with you each week as well.

As a group spend some time praying for our church on these points.



New Testament (27 books)				
History (5)	Paul's Letters to Churches (9)	Paul's Letters to Individuals (4)	Others' Letters (8)	Prophecy (1)
Matthew Mark Luke John Acts	Romans 1 Corinthians 2 Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians 1 Thessalonians 2 Thessalonians	1 Timothy 2 Timothy Titus Philemon	Hebrews James 1 Peter 2 Peter 1 John 2 John 3 John Jude	Revelation

ROMANS – 2 THESSALONIANS

- Romans:** The most systematic and comprehensive explanation about how we can become righteous before God.
- 1 Corinthians:** Paul addresses 1) concerns raised by a church member about divisions happening in the church, 2) reports he hears about sexual immorality in the church, and 3) a list of questions sent to him by the church regarding such things as marriage and divorce, the Lord's supper, eating at pagan feasts, spiritual gifts, the resurrection of the body, etc.
- 2 Corinthians:** Some false teachers have entered the Corinthian church and are trying to discredit Paul as an Apostle. Paul explains his understanding of ministry, encourages the Corinthians to make a financial contribution to help the suffering believers in Jerusalem, and sets up a defence for his Apostleship.
- Galatians:** Some "Christian" Jews are arguing that in order to be righteous before God you must keep all the Law of the Old Testament AND have faith in Jesus Christ: works plus faith. Paul writes arguing that the Law cannot save. It is solely through faith alone in Jesus Christ that you are justified and declared righteous.
- Ephesians:** This is a general letter, written by Paul to the churches, that emphasizes the church as the body of Christ. As such, there is now a unity that can exist among all its members, even Jew and Gentile. As his church, we have great blessing poured out on us and that should reflect in how we live in this world.
- Philippians:** Written to a church that is experiencing some infighting, Paul emphasizes what our focus should be in life. He uses examples that include himself,



Jesus, Timothy, and others to stress a servant heart attitude and a desire to be like Christ.

Colossians:

Paul sets out to show that Christ is supreme over all things. He is head over creation and head over the church. Therefore there is only one question is, "Is he head of your life?"

1 Thessalonians:

Paul writes to commend the Thessalonian church on their faithfulness, but to also encourage them to keep moving forward in morality and love, in anticipation of the future return of Christ.

2 Thessalonians:

Some believers stopped working at their jobs because they believed Christ would return within a very short time. As a result, they ended up having to live off other believers in the church. Paul writes to inform them Christ's return will not be immediate, but describes what the days will be like leading up to that point.



Meditation: Eastern meditation is the process of emptying your mind, quieting yourself and becoming detached from the problems around you. The original goal of this form of meditation was to become more aware of the internal self and discover your connectedness to God, which is you.

Biblical meditation is never about “detachment”, but “attachment”. The goal is not to become unaware of the problems of life and ignore them, but to bring them to God and see what he has to say about them in his Word. In other words, tackle the issues of life using God’s wisdom and trusting his provision.

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. James 1:22 (NIV)

PASSAGE	THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER	APPLY 1 POINT TODAY
<p>DAY 1</p> <p>Mark 12:41-44 (NIV) <i>Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. ⁴² But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. ⁴³ Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. ⁴⁴ They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything--all she had to live on."</i></p>	<p>Why did she do it?</p> <p>Why was Jesus impressed?</p> <p>Do I rely on my wealth to give me security and to meet my needs, or do I rely on God?</p> <p>Is Jesus impressed with how I use my wealth?</p>	<p>TEACH REFUTE CORRECT TRAIN</p> <p>What can you apply?</p>
<p>For fun, why not hop on your computer and see how rich you really are? Go to www.globalrichlist.com Select your currency and type in your annual income. You might be surprised about where you rate in the world.</p>		



In the space below write out the 9 New Testament letters Paul wrote to churches.

R _____

1C _____

2C _____

G _____

E _____

P _____

C _____

1T _____

2T _____

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. James 1:22 (NIV)

PASSAGE	THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER	APPLY 1 POINT TODAY
<p>DAY 2</p> <p>Matthew 19:16-24 (NIV) <i>Now a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?"</i> ¹⁷ <i>"Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments."</i> ¹⁸ <i>"Which ones?" the man inquired. Jesus replied, "'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony,</i> ¹⁹ <i>honor your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbor as yourself.'"</i> ²⁰ <i>"All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?"</i></p> <p>²¹ <i>Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."</i> ²² <i>When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.</i></p> <p>²³ <i>Then Jesus said to his disciples, "I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. ²⁴ Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."</i></p>	<p>What was this man's real problem?</p> <p>In what ways am I sometimes tempted to be like this rich man?</p> <p>If Jesus gave me that condition of following him, would I?</p> <p>Do I see my resources as things that safeguard me or as resources for the kingdom of God?</p> <p>Has my comfort become my god?</p>	<p>TEACH REFUTE CORRECT TRAIN</p> <p>What can you apply?</p>



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PASSAGE	THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER	APPLY 1 POINT TODAY
<p>DAY 3</p> <p>Matthew 19:27-30 (NIV) <i>Peter answered him, "We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?" 28 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. 30 But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.</i></p>	<p>If I surrender everything to Jesus, what waits for me in the future?</p> <p>In what ways do I tend to put my interests first when it comes to my resources?</p> <p>In what ways do I put the kingdom of God first with my resources?</p> <p>How can I make changes to utilize my resources in a manner pleasing to God?</p>	<p>TEACH REFUTE CORRECT TRAIN</p> <p>What can you apply?</p>



In the space below write out the 9 New Testament letters Paul wrote to churches.

R _____

1C _____

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E _____

P _____

C _____

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2T _____



Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. James 1:22 (NIV)

PASSAGE	THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER	APPLY 1 POINT TODAY
<p>DAY 4</p> <p>Matthew 6:25-34 (NIV) <i>Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? ²⁸ "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?</i></p> <p><i>³¹ So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'</i> ³² <i>For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.</i></p>	<p>Food and clothing are representative of the basics we need for living.</p> <p>In what ways do I sometimes not trust God to meet my every need?</p> <p>In what ways am I sometimes like an unbeliever in how I strive to meet my own needs?</p> <p>Am I seeking God's kingdom first in my life, or am I seeking my own needs first?</p> <p>What does my worrying ultimately say about how I trust God?</p>	<p>TEACH REFUTE CORRECT TRAIN</p> <p>What can you apply?</p>



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PASSAGE	THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER	APPLY 1 POINT TODAY
<p>DAY 5</p> <p>1 Corinthians 3:10-15 (NIV) <i>By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. ¹¹ For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³ his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. ¹⁴ If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. ¹⁵ If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.</i></p>	<p>What am I investing into my life that has eternal significance?</p> <p>Am I spending my resources and time on things that will be burned up in the fire?</p> <p>What could I spend my time and resources on that will have lasting impact in God's kingdom?</p> <p>How confident will I be when I stand before God and display what I have accomplished with the time and resources he has given me?</p> <p>What things need to take a lesser priority in my life?</p>	<p>TEACH REFUTE CORRECT TRAIN</p> <p>What can you apply?</p>



In the space below write out the 5 historical books and Paul's 9 letters to churches in the New Testament.

Historical Books

Paul's Letter to Churches
