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Series: Week 4  
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## THE ESSENTIAL PRACTICE OF PRAYER

Tree analogy: We can't see a tree grow in real-time. If we stand in front of a sequoia tree for an hour, it looks exactly the same. Yet, over years, it becomes massive. A tree grows from the inside out; it is alive! Roots absorb nutrients . . . branches stretch upward for sunlight . . . leaves and cones develop. Likewise, regular engagement in prayer strengthens you, bringing vitality to body, mind, & spirit—and oxygen to others.

“Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on His law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.” – *Psalms 1:1-3, NIV*

### **A WORKING DEFINITION OF PRAYER**

Prayer = “unceasingly engaging with our ever-present God”; “two-way communication with our Creator”

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### **EXAMPLES OF JESUS’ PRAYER PATTERNS & TEACHINGS ON PRAYER**

References: Matt. 15:16; Luke 24:30; Mark 1:35; Luke 5:15-16; Mark 14:36; Matt. 6:9-13; Mark 11:22-24; Luke 18:1-8

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### **INSIGHTS ON PRAYER BEYOND THE FOUR GOSPELS**

References: Acts 2:42; Romans 8:26-27; Philippians 2:13, 4:6-7; I Thess: 5:16-18; James 1:5-6, 5:16; I Peter 3:12, 5:6-7

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### **POSTURES OF PRAYER and THE A.C.T.S. PRAYER MODEL**

References: Mark 11:25; Psalm 95:6; Matt. 26:39; Joshua 6:3-5; I Timothy 2:8; 1 Chronicles 17:16; Psalm 85, 51, 138, 6

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Adoration      Confession      Thanksgiving      Supplication\*

\*Supplication: “to ask with earnestness, with intensity” – *Richard Foster*

### **INTERCESSORY PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL WARFARE**

Intercessory Prayer is a form of “outward prayer—an active, other-centered approach where we bring the needs, struggles, and well-being of other people before God.” – *Timothy Keller*

**\*\*We are the priesthood of believers; it’s our privilege and our responsibility to intercede for others.**

### A Sample Intercessory Prayer over a Child or Loved One:

**C = Cover** "Lord, shield \_\_\_\_\_ physically, emotionally, and spiritually. . ."

References: Psalm 91:4; 2 Thessalonians 3:3; Numbers 6:24

**A = Anchor** "Lord, ground \_\_\_\_\_ in truth, unshakable when life's storms hit. . ."

References: Hebrews 6:19; Colossians 2:7; Psalm 62:6

**G = Guide** "Lord, direct his/her steps, thoughts and actions as he/she grows. . ."

References: Proverbs 3:5-6; Psalm 32:8; Isaiah 30:21; Philippians 2:13

**E = Equip** "Lord, give \_\_\_\_\_ gifts, grit, and armor to fulfill his/her calling. . ."

References: Hebrews 13:20-21; Ephesians 6:11; 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Some examples of spiritual forces of evil: 1. forces that seek to devalue life; 2. those that seek to rob the believer's joy; 3. forces that seek to polarize our country, our churches & neighborhoods . . . marriages; 4. forces of addiction; 5. spirits of pride, greed, fear, despair.

"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." – *Eph. 6:12*

**\*Let's plead with God to heal our land; pray corporately, fervently, and humbly yet boldly, knowing that the battle belongs to the Lord, and it has already been won!**

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"We begin praying for others by first quieting our fleshly activity and listening to the silent thunder of the Lord of host. . . Listening to the Lord is the first thing, the second thing, and the third thing necessary for successful intercession." – *Richard Foster, on intercession*

"When every person in a congregation prays intensely while the pastor is preaching, a miracle happens. Saturate the services of worship with your prayers. See the Lord high and lifted up filling the sanctuary with His presence." – *Richard Foster, on corporate prayer during worship*

"In the morning, prayer is the key that opens to us the treasures of God's mercies and blessings; in the evening, it is the key that shuts us up under His protection and safeguard." – *Billy Graham, on prayer all day*

"A concentrated mind and a sitting body make for better prayer than a kneeling body and a mind half asleep!" – *C.S. Lewis, on postures of prayer*

"Never underestimate the power of a unified community in prayer." – Frank *Peretti, This Present Darkness*

"The wonderful thing about praying is that you leave a world of not being able to do something, and enter God's realm where everything is possible . . . A man is powerful on his knees." - *Corrie Ten Boom*

"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 Lord's people." – *Ephesians 6:18*

"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful." – *Colossians 4:2*

"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 will heal their land."  
– *2 Chronicles 7:14*