

Praying with Authority in Jesus' Name

February 27, 2022

PREPARATION

▶ STUDY

Spend the week studying Matthew 28:18-20, 2 Corinthians 5:20-21, Colossians 2:13-15 and 1 John 5:14-15. Consult the commentary provided and any additional study tools to enhance your preparation.

▶ PRAY

Pray for our pastors and this week's message, the upcoming group time, your group members, and their openness to God's Word.

▶ LANDING POINT

I can pray powerfully with the authority Jesus has already given me.

GROUP DISCUSSION

▶ **CONFIDENTIALITY** | What's said in the group stays in the group.

▶ **NO CROSS-TALK** | Be considerate of others as they share. Refrain from side conversations and texting during group time.

▶ **NO FIXING** | We are not in the group to fix each other. Jesus does that part.

▶ **SHARING** | Be sensitive to the amount of time you share. Don't talk too much or too little. Every person brings something valuable to the group.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

CALLED TO FIGHT

We live in two realities in our day-to-day lives. One reality is physical and the other is spiritual. Within our spiritual reality, the forces of good and evil wage war against one another. Each of us has been called to fight in this spiritual war and our greatest weapon in the battle is prayer.

Today your group will discuss how you can pray with authority. In the beginning, God gave us authority; but it was taken away from us after the Fall. Jesus came to win back authority for us and return to us what we lost. You can pray powerfully with the authority that Jesus has already given you.

Q: *Share about a time when you saw God powerfully respond to your prayers.*

DEEPER DIVE

THE NOW AND THE NOT YET

Jesus came to this earth announcing the arrival of God's kingdom. We understand God's kingdom as life as it was meant to be lived. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus defeated all the evil powers and authorities that ruled over humanity. Now Jesus reigns as king over God's kingdom which has come but has not been fully established.

We live in between the now and the not yet. God has invited us to partner with Him to use the authority He has given us to expand His kingdom. Let's take a look at some passages that show us the authority Jesus has, the authority we have been given, and what difference that makes in our prayer lives.

Q: *Have a volunteer read Matthew 28:18-20. How do you understand the process of disciple-making? How does it look in practical terms?*

Q: *Have a volunteer read 2 Corinthians 5:20-21. In what ways would people view believers differently if they saw more of them living more like Jesus as His ambassadors?*

Q: *Have a volunteer read 1 John 5:14-15. What does it mean to pray according to God's will?*

REFLECTION AND NEXT STEPS

PRAYING WITH AUTHORITY

Praying with authority is key to seeing more of your prayers answered. You will see more of God's power released into your life and more opportunities to join God on His kingdom mission when you pray with authority.

If you want to pray with authority, you must remember you are all of the following:

- **On mission.** God invites you to partner with Him on His kingdom mission. This is a high calling because it comes from the highest possible authority: King Jesus. The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) shows us how it looks to carry out God's mission with authority and expand His kingdom here.
- **An ambassador.** You are God's kingdom representative. The way you live should be a reflection of Christ's authority and power at work in your life and relationships. The best way to be a kingdom ambassador is to live like Jesus every day and in every way.
- **In a war.** You're in a spiritual war and anyone who finds themselves in a war must adopt a wartime lifestyle. That means staying alert and being prepared for potential attack. It means focusing less on the trivial and more on the essential things of life. It means using the resources God has given you to keep fighting. It means living in the authority He has already given you. It means focusing less on the trivial and more on the essential things of life.
- **Growing.** God never wastes an opportunity to increase your faith. Whatever circumstance you find yourself in, you can believe that God uses them to grow and mature you. He is working in you and through you to expand His kingdom on earth, and He is changing you in the process.

Q: *What could you start doing to live on mission as a disciple-maker?*

Q: *What are the resources God has given you for spiritual war? How can you make the most of those resources?*

Q: *What's one thing you can do this week to pray with authority?*

Q: *How can the group be praying for you this week?*

COMMENTARY

Passing the Torch

"[In Matthew 28:18-20] Jesus is passing the torch to His disciples, even as He promises to be with them forever—spiritually, not physically—to empower them for future mission. Jesus can make the claim of v. 18 only if he is fully God, inasmuch as the whole universe is embraced in the authority delegated to Him."

A Message of Reconciliation

As ambassadors for Christ we call others to be reconciled to God but we also need reconciliation. "Reconciliation For Christians, reconciliation to God is in one sense renewed each day through repentance and faith (Matt. 6:12; 1 John 1:9). All who have rested in Christ alone for salvation enjoy a reconciliation with the Lord that cannot be lost. We cannot lose the grace of reconciliation or our peace with God if we have been justified, for if we have been justified, we will certainly be glorified (Rom. 8:28–30). Nevertheless, by our sin we grieve the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:30), and our fellowship with the Creator suffers. By our repentance, our experience of fellowship with God that is granted in our reconciliation is fully restored (1 John 1:8, 9)."

What God Wants

"Prayer must be viewed not as our attempt to get God to see things from our point of view but as our attempt to see things from God's point of view. When we grow, mature, study, and meditate on Scripture and seek the will of God, we try to ask ourselves not what we want, but what God wants. Then we make progress in prayer."

ENDNOTES:

1. Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, vol. 22, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 431.
2. R. C. Sproul, ed., *The Reformation Study Bible: English Standard Version (2015 Edition)* (Orlando, FL: Reformation Trust, 2015), 2057.
3. David Walls and Max Anders, *I & II Peter, I, II & III John, Jude*, vol. 11, *Holman New Testament Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 225.