

SMALL GROUP GUIDELINES

It's a good idea for every group to put words to their shared values, expectations, and commitments. You are encouraged to discuss and agree to the following values with your small group.

We agree to the following values:

CLEAR PURPOSE

To grow healthy spiritual lives by building a healthy small group community.

GROUP ATTENDANCE

To give priority to the group meeting (call if I am absent or late).

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

To create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved (no quick answers, snap judgments, or simple fixes).

CONFIDENTIALITY

To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential and within the group.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

To avoid gossip and to immediately resolve any concerns by following the principles of Matthew 18:15-17.

SPIRITUAL HEALTH

To give group members permission to speak into my life and help me live a healthy, balanced spiritual life that is pleasing to God.

LIMIT OUR FREEDOM

To limit our freedom by not serving or consuming alcohol during small group meetings or events so as to avoid causing another brother or sister to stumble (1 Corinthians 8:1-13; Romans 14:19-21).

WELCOME NEWCOMERS

To invite friends who might benefit from this study, and warmly welcome newcomers.

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

To get to know the other members of the group and pray for them regularly.

Session One

"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you." John 15:7 (NIV)

THE PURPOSE OF PRAYER

Prayer is God's idea. If he didn't want to hear from you, he wouldn't invite you to pray. God wants to hear from you because he loves you. He cares about every detail of your life. There is nothing too big or too small for his attention.

4 primary purposes for prayer

Prayer is an act of _____.

"I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without me. If anyone does not remain in me, he is thrown aside like a branch and he withers. They gather them, throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you want and it will be done for you." (John 15:5-7, CSB)

Prayer is an act of _____.

"I do not call you servants anymore, because a servant doesn't know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me, but I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce fruit and that your fruit should remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he will give you." (John 15:15-16, CSB)

Prayer is an act of _____.

"Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7, CSB)

"In that day you will not ask me anything. Truly I tell you, anything you ask the Father in my name, he will give you. Until now you have asked for nothing in my name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete."
(John 16:23–24, CSB)

"You desire and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and wage war. You do not have because you do not ask."
(James 4:2, CSB)

"He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry for help and saves them." (Psalm 145:19, CSB)

"Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you your heart's desires."
(Psalm 37:4, CSB)

"Who among you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him." (Matthew 7:9–11, CSB)

Prayer is an act of _____.

Prayer is God's way of letting us partner with him to accomplish his purposes here on earth.

"Truly I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do. And he will do even greater works than these, because I am going to the Father." (John 14:12, CSB)

"Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it."
(John 14:13–14, CSB)

Your prayers invite the power of God into the most hopeless situations. They can penetrate places where no man or woman can go, whether that's a closed, international border, or the hardened heart of skeptic. Prayer makes the impossible possible.

"A king's heart is like channeled water in the LORD's hand: He directs it wherever he chooses." (Proverbs 21:1, CSB)

Discovery Questions

Please don't feel pressured to discuss every discovery question. It's okay to choose the questions that are right for your group. The point is not to race through the session; the point is to take time to let God work in your lives.

1. What role has prayer played in shaping your relationship with God?
2. Based on today's lesson about the purpose of prayer, what can you do to depend your conversation with God?
3. What are you hoping to get out of this study in the next 40 days?

Putting It Into Practice

We don't just want to be hearers of the Word, we also want to be doers of the Word (James 1:22). This section contains suggestions for you and your group to apply the things you are learning.

In Your Group:
PRAY TOGETHER

Praying together is one of the great privileges of small group life. If praying in a group is uncomfortable for you, we encourage you to start by praying single-sentence prayers full of honesty and simplicity. Talk to God like you would a respected friend. Challenge everyone in your group to take the time to pray, but don't force anyone. Make it your goal that by the end of the 40 Days of Prayer everyone in your group will pray out loud together.

In Your Life: DAILY PRAYER

Set a daily alarm as a reminder to pause and pray this week. This idea usually works best if you pick the same time every day, preferably a time where you are at your most alert and best. Be consistent in spending as much time as you are able but focus more on consistency than quantity.

Use the Praying Scripture guide from Sunday's Service to help you find a starting place for each day's prayer time.

Session One NOTES

Session Two

*Cast all your cares upon him, for he cares for you.
1 Peter 5:7 (NKJV)*

HOW TO PRAY WITH CONFIDENCE

Jesus taught us to pray, "Our Father in heaven" One of the words in the Bible for "father" is Abba, which simply means "daddy" or "papa". Abba is a term of endearment, love, intimacy, and security. Jesus was telling us that when you pray to God, you're talking to your Dad.

When you truly know and understand your heavenly Father, it will radically change your prayer life. It will enable you to pray with more confidence than ever before.

God is a _____ Father.

"Can a woman forget her nursing child, or lack compassion for the child of her womb? Even if these forget, yet I will not forget you." (Isaiah 49:15, CSB)

"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38–39, CSB)

"casting all your cares on him, because he cares about you." (1 Peter 5:7, CSB)

God is a _____ Father.

"There is nothing deceitful in God, nothing two-faced, nothing fickle." (James 1:17c, The Message)

"Because I, the LORD, have not changed, you descendants of Jacob have not been destroyed." (Malachi 3:6, CSB)

"if we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself." (2 Timothy 2:13, CSB)

"In his unfailing love, my God will stand with me." (Psalm 59:10a, NLT)

God is a _____ Father.

"Be satisfied with what you have, for he himself has said, I will never leave you or abandon you." (Hebrews 13:5b, CSB)

"God, how precious your thoughts are to me; how vast their sum is! If I counted them, they would outnumber the grains of sand; when I wake up, I am still with you." (Psalm 139:17-18, CSB)

God is never _____.

"Even if my father and mother abandon me, the LORD cares for me." (Psalm 27:10, CSB)

God loves to _____.

"If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him." (Matthew 7:11, CSB)

God is _____.

"The LORD is near the brokenhearted; he saves those crushed in spirit." (Psalm 34:18, CSB)

"God is our refuge and strength, a helper who is always found in times of trouble." (Psalm 46:1, CSB)

God is a _____ Father.

"For nothing will be impossible with God." (Luke 1:37, CSB)

"Now to him who is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us—" (Ephesians 3:20, CSB)

"But as it is written, What no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no human heart has conceived— God has prepared these things for those who love him." (1 Corinthians 2:9, CSB)

Are you certain that God is your Father?

"But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in his name," (John 1:12, CSB)

When you place your faith in Jesus Christ, then God becomes your caring, consistent, close, competent Father, and you can pray with confidence the way Jesus taught us to pray: "My Father in heaven, hallowed be your name."

"for through faith you are all sons of God in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:26, CSB)

Discovery Questions

1. Did anyone pray the Salvation Prayer? If so, take the time as a group to congratulate and pray for that person.
2. In this session, we learned that God is a caring, consistent, close and competent Father. Which of these characteristics has the greater meaning to you, and why?
3. Read Ephesians 3:20. What are you asking God to do? Is there something you're afraid to ask for or dream of? God can handle it all.
4. Psalm 34:18 says, "The LORD is near the brokenhearted; he saves those crushed in spirit" (CSB). Has this been true for you? If so, share your experience with the group.

Putting It Into Practice

In Your Group:

PRAY TOGETHER

Challenge everyone in your group to take the time to pray, but don't force anyone. Make it your goal that by the end of the 40 Days of Prayer everyone in your group will pray out loud together.

In Your Life:

EPHESIANS 3:20 CHALLENGE

Take a few moments to soak in the truth of Ephesians 3:20 and then answer the questions from the Praying Scripture guide. Take time to share your responses at next week's meeting.

Use the Praying Scripture guide from Sunday's Service to help you find a starting place for each day's prayer time.

Session Two NOTES

Session Three

Give Thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men. Psalm 107:15 (NIV)

THE PATTERN FOR PRAYER (PART ONE)

"This, then, is how you should pray." (Matthew 6:9a, NIV)

Jesus didn't say, "This is what you should pray." He said, "This is how you should pray." The Lord's prayer is not a magic spell or incantation. Instead, the Lord's prayer is a pattern for prayer.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer can serve as a ten-step pathway that will lead you to a deeper, closer relationship with God.

Step 1: I remember _____.

The Prayer of Connection - "Our Father in heaven"

"and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. I pray that you, being rooted and firmly established in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the length and width, height and depth of God's love, and to know Christ's love that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God." (Ephesians 3:17-19, CSB)

God's love is long enough to last forever, wide enough to embrace everything about you, deep enough to pull you out of your deepest despair, and high enough to overlook every offense.

Step 2: I tell God _____.

The Prayer of Refocusing - "Hallowed be your name."

God's names tell us who he is. He is your Creator who made you, your Father who loves you, and your Savior who forgives you. He is your Shepard who guides you, and your Shield who hides you. He is your Counselor who gives you wisdom, and your Comforter who gives you strength, He is the best Friend you will ever have.

"Let them give thanks to the LORD for his faithful love and his wondrous works for all humanity." (Psalm 107:15, CSB)

Step 3: I offer my life _____.

The Prayer of Cooperation - "Your kingdom come."

Even When you can't make sense of the troubles you're going through, you can be confident that God is watching out for you and is working everything out for your good.

"We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters." (Romans 8:28-29, CSB)

Living for God's purposes isn't a one-time decision. It must be a daily attitude of your heart.

"So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him." (Romans 12:1, The Message)

Step 4: I give God _____.

The Prayer of Surrender
"Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

"And he said, "Abba, Father! All things are possible for you. Take this cup away from me. Nevertheless, not what I will, but what you will. "" (Mark 14:36, CSB)

That's the prayer Jesus prayed on his way to the cross. In his hour of deepest suffering, he prayed the Prayer of Surrender. He gave God his pain and sorrow, and he surrendered to the will of God.

Step 5: I trust God _____.

The Prayer of Dependence - "Give us this day our daily bread."

Now that you have told your heavenly Father you love him, and you have surrendered to his will, bring him your prayer requests. He cares about everything that's on your mind. Tell him about the challenges are you facing today, the needs that you have, and the fears and worries that are nagging you.

"And my God will supply all your needs according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19, CSB)

Jesus teaches us to ask you for daily bread because God wants you to depend on him one day at a time.

"Therefore don't worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." (Matthew 6:34, CSB)

Discovery Questions

1. Prayer starts with who God is; it doesn't start with what you need. Why do you think Jesus taught us to praise God and to surrender to God before we make our requests to God?
2. Some names of God: Creator, Father, Savior, Shepard, Shield, Counselor, Comforter, and Friend. Which name reminds you most of God's presence in your life or resonates with you in the current circumstance?
3. The Lord's Prayer teaches us to ask God for our daily bread. Share a story of how God has provided for you.

Putting It Into Practice

Be doers of the Word by applying the things you are learning.

In Your Group:

PRAY TOGETHER

In Your Life:

GRATITUDE LIST

This week start your daily prayer time with praise and worship. Notice what happens in your prayer life. To help you be both creative and thorough in your gratitude, use the Alphabet from A-Z as a starter for your list of things for which you are grateful. You don't need to fill up the whole Alphabet in one sitting, instead take time to be thoughtful and deliberate in your gratitude as you go fill the list throughout the week.

Use the Praying Scripture guide from Sunday's Service to help you find a starting place for each day's prayer time.

Session Three NOTES

Session Four

Not to us, O Lord, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness. Psalm 115:1 (NIV)

THE PATTERN FOR PRAYER (PART TWO)

Step 6: I admit _____.

The Prayer of Cleansing - "Forgive us our sins."

God promises that if you will confess your sins to him, he will forgive you instantly, freely, completely, and permanently.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9, CSB)

"How joyful is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered! How joyful is a person whom the LORD does not charge with iniquity and in whose spirit is no deceit! When I kept silent, my bones became brittle from my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was drained as in the summer's heat. Selah Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not conceal my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah" (Psalm 32:1-5, CSB)

Step 7: I release _____.

The Prayer of Release

"... as we forgive those who sin against us."

Forgiveness isn't about fairness. Forgiveness is about grace. The first key to learning how to forgive others is to remember how much you have been forgiven.

"And be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you in Christ." (Ephesians 4:32, CSB)

You will never have to forgive anyone more than God has already forgiven you.

"For if you forgive others their offenses, your heavenly Father will forgive you as well. But if you don't forgive others, your Father will not forgive your offenses." (Matthew 6:14-15, CSB)

When you are hurt, you have only two options: You can either relive it or release it. Reliving the hurt only perpetuates the pain. But releasing the hurt is the path to inner peace.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy." (Matthew 5:7, CSB)

Step 8: I ask God _____.

The Prayer of Protection - "Lead us not into temptation."

Temptation is not always about doing the wrong thing. Temptation is also about not doing the right thing.

"Whatever you do, do it from the heart, as something done for the Lord and not for people, knowing that you will receive the reward of an inheritance from the Lord. You serve the Lord Christ." (Colossians 3:23-24, CSB)

Step 9: I depend _____.

The Prayer of Deliverance - "Deliver us from evil."

*"Yet when Michael the archangel was disputing with the devil in an argument about Moses's body, he did not dare utter a slanderous condemnation against him but said, **'The Lord rebuke you!'**" (Jude 9, CSB)*

Step 10: I praise God _____.

The Prayer of Victory

"Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.
Amen."

The Lord's Prayer ends where it begins — with the glory of God. Jesus is teaching us that the ultimate aim of your prayers is that God will be glorified, no matter the outcome. The purpose for prayer is not to conform God to my way of seeing things; the purpose for prayer is to conform me to the kingdom, power, and glory to God.

"Not to us, LORD, not to us, but to your name give glory because of your faithful love, because of your truth." (Psalm 115:1, CSB)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Discovery Questions

1. Read the verses under step six above. Why does God want us to confess our sins to him?
2. Where would you be without God's grace? How does this truth encourage you to be more forgiving?
3. The goal of our prayers is to glorify God. Share some of the ways you can do this in your daily prayer life.

Putting It Into Practice

Be doers of the Word by applying the things you are learning.

In Your Group:

PRAY TOGETHER

In Your Life:

PRAYER OF FORGIVENESS

Use this prayer as a model to help you let go of unforgiveness. If the memory comes back and you struggle with unforgiveness again, repeat this prayer as often as necessary. Trust God every day to give you his power to forgive.

Use the Praying Scripture guide from Sunday's Service to help you find a starting place for each day's prayer time.

A Prayer of Forgiveness

Dear Lord,

I may not be able to forget, but I'm choosing to forgive

_____.

I realize trust may take time to rebuild,

but I choose to hold no grudges.

Help me to let go of bitterness or anger in my heart,

so that I may live in freedom.

Give me your grace so that I may relinquish my "right" to get even.

Help me understand that you have forgiven me so that I can forgive

_____ through you.

Now, Lord, I ask you to bless _____.

In particular, I ask you to bless them with these things:

God,

please replace my hurt with your healing.

Replace my pain with your peace.

Replace my loss with your love.

May the past truly be the past.

IN Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

Session Four NOTES

"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."
Jeremiah 29:13

PRAYING UNTIL THE PROMISE COMES TO LIFE

Seven steps for praying God's promises in your life.

1. Let God _____.

"During the first year of his [Darius'] reign, I, Daniel, learned from reading the word of the LORD, as revealed to Jeremiah the prophet, that Jerusalem must lie desolate for seventy years." (Daniel 9:2, NLT)

"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you want and it will be done for you." (John 15:7, CSB)

The more you fill your mind with Scripture, the more your prayers will be answered, because you will be praying according to the Word of God.

2. Focus _____.

"So I turned my attention to the Lord God to seek him by prayer"
(Daniel 9:3a, CSB)

"I love those who love me, and those who search for me find me."
(Proverbs 8:17, CSB)

"You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart."
(Jeremiah 29:13, CSB)

"Now without faith it is impossible to please God, since the one who draws near to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him." (Hebrews 11:6, CSB)

3. Express _____.

"Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy" (Daniel 9:3, ESV)

4. Demonstrate _____.

"So I turned my attention to the Lord God to seek him by prayer and petitions, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes." (Daniel 9:3, CSB)

5. Thank God _____.

"I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed: Ah, Lord—the great and awe-inspiring God who keeps his gracious covenant with those who love him and keep his commands—" (Daniel 9:4, CSB)

"Compassion and forgiveness belong to the Lord our God, though we have rebelled against him" (Daniel 9:9, CSB)

6. Humbly _____.

"we have sinned, done wrong, acted wickedly, rebelled, and turned away from your commands and ordinances. We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, leaders, fathers, and all the people of the land. Lord, righteousness belongs to you, but this day public shame belongs to us: the men of Judah, the residents of Jerusalem, and all Israel—those who are near and those who are far, in all the countries where you have banished them because of the disloyalty they have shown toward you. LORD, public shame belongs to us, our kings, our leaders, and our fathers, because we have sinned against you. Compassion and forgiveness belong to the Lord our God, though we have rebelled against him" (Daniel 9:5–9, CSB)

"Listen closely, my God, and hear For we are not presenting our petitions before you based on our righteous acts, but based on your abundant compassion." (Daniel 9:18, CSB)

7. Pray _____.

"While I was speaking, praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my petition before the LORD my God concerning the holy mountain of my God—while I was praying, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the first vision, reached me in my extreme weariness, about the time of the evening offering. He gave me this explanation: "Daniel, I've come now to give you understanding. At the beginning of your petitions an answer went out, and I have come to give it, for you are treasured by God" (Daniel 9:20–23, CSB)

Discovery Questions

1. Daniel waited 70 years to see God's promise fulfilled. How do you identify with Daniel's story? Have you ever had to pray for months or even years until a promise of God came to life for you? What was the outcome?
2. What is the promise prayer you are asking God about right now?
3. Jeremiah 29:23 says "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart." What does it mean to you to seek the Lord with all your heart?

Putting It Into Practice

Be doers of the Word by applying the things you are learning.

In Your Group:

PRAY TOGETHER

Commit to praying for each other every day this week. Let people know you've prayed for them with a quick phone call, text message, or handwritten note.

In Your Life:

THE IMPORTANCE OF FASTING

Have you ever fasted while praying and waiting for God's promises to come to life? Consider sacrificing food (a Biblical Fast) or something that distracts you from God for a specific amount of time this week, whether hours or days. Spend the time and energy you would have invested in this activity in extra time with God in prayer, worship, and Bible reading. Be ready to share your experiences next week.

Use the Praying Scripture guide from Sunday's Service to help you find a starting place for each day's prayer time.

Session Five NOTES

"Do not be afraid or discouraged...For the battle is not yours, but God's."
2 Chronicles 20:15 (NIV)

HOW TO PRAY IN A CRISIS

"People came and told Jehoshaphat, "A vast number from beyond the Dead Sea and from Edom has come to fight against you; they are already in Hazazon-tamar" (that is, En-gedi). Jehoshaphat was afraid..."
(2 Chronicles 20:2-3, CSB)

Six lessons from King Jehoshaphat

1. Turn to _____.

"Jehoshaphat was afraid, and he resolved to seek the LORD. Then he proclaimed a fast for all Judah," (2 Chronicles 20:3, CSB)

Never let a problem intimidate you. Instead, let it motivate you to pray!
Seek God for wisdom before you do anything else.

Remember _____.

"He said: LORD, God of our ancestors, are you not the God who is in heaven, and do you not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in your hand, and no one can stand against you."
(2 Chronicles 20:6, CSB)

Remember _____.

"Are you not our God who drove out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel?" (2 Chronicles 20:7a, CSB)

Remember _____.

"Are you not our God ... who gave it forever to the descendants of Abraham your friend?" (2 Chronicles 20:7b, CSB)

Appeal _____.

"Now here are the Ammonites, Moabites, and the inhabitants of Mount Seir. You did not let Israel invade them when Israel came out of the land of Egypt, but Israel turned away from them and did not destroy them. Look how they repay us by coming to drive us out of your possession that you gave us as an inheritance. Our God, will you not judge them? For we are powerless before this vast number that comes to fight against us. We do not know what to do, but we look to you." (2 Chronicles 20:10-12, CSB)

In essence, Jehoshaphat said to God, "I know who you are, I know what you have done, I know what you have said, and I know what you can do - and I'm asking you to do it again!"

2. Admit _____.

"Our God, will you not judge them? For we are powerless before this vast number that comes to fight against us. We do not know what to do, but we look to you." (2 Chronicles 20:12, CSB)

Miracles never happen until you admit that the situation is impossible without God's help.

"Jesus looked at them and said, 'With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.'" (Matthew 19:26, CSB)

3. Rely _____.

"O our God, won't you stop them? We are powerless against this mighty army that is about to attack us. We do not know what to do, but we are looking to you for help." (2 Chronicles 20:12, NLT)

Shift your focus from your problem to the Problem Solver.

4. Relax _____.

"and he said, 'Listen carefully, all Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and King Jehoshaphat. This is what the LORD says: 'Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast number, for the battle is not yours, but God's.'" (2 Chronicles 20:15, CSB)

"You do not have to fight this battle. Position yourselves, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD. He is with you, Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid or discouraged. Tomorrow, go out to face them, for the LORD is with you." (2 Chronicles 20:17, CSB)

When you put your life in God's hands, your battles become his battles, and your enemies become his enemies. And God says to you, just like he said to Jehoshaphat, "Relax. I've got this."

"Early the next morning the army of Judah went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. On the way Jehoshaphat stopped and said, 'Listen to me, all you people of Judah and Jerusalem! Believe in the LORD your God, and you will be able to stand firm. Believe in his prophets, and you will succeed.'" (2 Chronicles 20:20, NLT)

5. Thank God _____.

Sing victory songs before you see the victory!

"Then he consulted with the people and appointed some to sing for the LORD and some to praise the splendor of his holiness. When they went out in front of the armed forces, they kept singing: Give thanks to the LORD, for his faithful love endures forever." (2 Chronicles 20:21, CSB)

Thank God for what he is going to do, even though you don't know how he is going to do it. If you thank God after the fact, that's gratitude. But if you thank God in advance, that's faith.

"Now without faith it is impossible to please God, since the one who draws near to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him." (Hebrews 11:6, CSB)

"The moment they began their shouts and praises, the LORD set an ambush against the Ammonites, Moabites, and the inhabitants of Mount Seir who came to fight against Judah, and they were defeated." (2 Chronicles 20:22, CSB)

The Israelites didn't run in fear; they stood firm in their faith. They didn't have to lift a finger; they just lifted their voices in worship, and their enemies self-destructed. There is power in praise!

6. Expect God _____.

"When Judah came to a place overlooking the wilderness, they looked for the large army, but there were only corpses lying on the ground; nobody had escaped. Then Jehoshaphat and his people went to gather the plunder. They found among them an abundance of goods on the bodies and valuable items. So they stripped them until nobody could carry any more. They were gathering the plunder for three days because there was so much. They assembled in the Valley of Beracah on the fourth day, for there they blessed the LORD. Therefore, that place is still called the Valley of Beracah today."
(2 Chronicles 20:24–26, CSB)

When you let God fight your battles, it is a witness to everyone around you.

"The terror of God was on all the kingdoms of the lands when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel. Then Jehoshaphat's kingdom was quiet, for his God gave him rest on every side."
(2 Chronicles 20:29–30, CSB)

Discovery Questions

1. Has there ever been a time when you stopped to praise and thank God first in a moment of crisis? If so, how did that act of faith impact your perspective on the crisis? What changes did you experience physically, emotionally and mentally - were you less anxious or worried, etc.?
2. Jehoshaphat prayed, "We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you" (2 Chronicles 20:12 NIV). Is there a situation that is overwhelming or intimidating you? What steps can you take to shift your focus from your problem to the Problem Solver?
3. What are you communicating to the people around you by the way you handle the crises in your life? What does it say about your faith?

Putting It Into Practice

Be doers of the Word by applying the things you are learning.

In Your Group:

PRAY TOGETHER

Jehoshaphat didn't try to handle his crisis alone, and neither should you. If anyone is in crisis, or in need of a big breakthrough right now, gather around them, place your hands on their shoulders, and pray for them. Close your time together by giving thanks as a group – thanking God for his presence and for his victory in your lives.

PLAN A PARTY!

Consider spending time together to celebrate the journey you have just completed, and all that God has done in your 40 Days of Prayer. Before you leave your meeting, choose when, where, and how you will have your party. Whether it's potluck, pizza, weinie roast, or steaks, enjoy some time together!

In Your Life:

PRAY THE PLAN

If you or someone you know is going through a crisis, use Jehoshaphat's model of prayer this week.

1. Turn to God for help with these three reminders: Are you not, did you not, will you not?
2. Admit your inadequacy.
3. Rely on God's resources.
4. Relax in faith.
5. Thank God in advance for hearing and answering your prayer.
6. Expect God to turn your battle into blessings.

Use the Praying Scripture guide from Sunday's Service to help you find a starting place for each day's prayer time.

Session Six NOTES

MY SMALL GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

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