

## **SPEND TIME IN PRAYER: GROUP LEADER INSTRUCTIONS**

### **Lessons 1-6**

The **Spend Time in Prayer** section is a crucial part of each lesson and is designed to help people apply what they are learning. Our recommendation is to allow at least 20-30 minutes of your lesson time for prayer if possible. Feel free to tweak these prayer times to meet your needs, especially if you are meeting online.

- **Important Note:** Please understand that about 5% of the people in your church are what we would call “gifted intercessors.” Scripture says that we are **all** called to intercede:  
“I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— <sup>2</sup>for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. <sup>3</sup>This is good, and pleases God our Savior, <sup>4</sup>who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:1-4).

**However,** there are some who understand this calling to intercede on a level that most of the church has yet to grasp or learn. These are the people that leaders and others in the church describe as the “best pray-ers” or the ones who pray on an entirely different level than everyone else. You can likely think of several right now. You may even be one who identifies this way.

It is difficult for experienced intercessors to understand what they see as “prayerlessness” in their leaders and the rest of their church community. Many don’t understand why others don’t pray with the same fervor or level of intensity or with the same urgency as they do.

That said, please acknowledge that there could potentially be several different levels of prayer “ability” in your group. Be aware that, if you do have any in your group, the more seasoned intercessors will not necessarily like or understand being guided through a time of prayer. They are used to “just praying” without any kind of “help.” But most people will appreciate what might seem simplistic or “step by step” to those who don’t require or need guidance in prayer.

Reminding your group that these prayer times are designed for **everyone** to be able to participate and that some people need to be guided in order to grow and stretch into their full potential in prayer. Consider asking those more experienced in prayer to help those who are growing and learning.

## **Spend Time in Prayer - Lesson 1**

### **Praying through the Hebrew Names of God**

#### **Group Leader Preparation:**

- If needed, print off copies of the prayer time for each participant.
- **Please reassure your group that no one will be asked to pray out loud if they are not comfortable doing so.**
- If your group is very large, you may wish to break people up into groups of 3-4 for this prayer time.
- There are 7 names of God to pray through. Each section has a name of God in Hebrew, the Scripture passage where each name was given, and a prayer.
- Determine if you will read each Name, Scripture and prayer or ask the smaller groups to choose one person to do the reading for the group.
- When there is a blank, instruct the group to fill these in as and if they feel led, one at a time - this allows others in the group to pray in agreement.

- Some groups will move more quickly through the prayer time. Please ask those who are finished to spend time quietly talking about this experience together until all groups are finished.
- Ask if there are any questions before you begin.
- Read the introduction or ask someone else to do so.

## **Introduction to Prayer Time**

To help His people know who He really is, God reveals Himself to us through His many names in the Bible. In fact, it is often through the names of God in the Bible that we learn to understand Him better.

Knowing His names draws us into a closer relationship with Him, enabling a bond that is filled with intimacy, trust and understanding.

Take time to pray a few of the many names of God. As you do so, remember how important names are and that God gives each name for a specific purpose. Fill in the blanks as a group. You don't all have to say the same thing – just speak out what or who is on your heart until everyone who wants to has had an opportunity. The written prayers are here to help guide you. They do not need to be the only prayers you pray. Allow the Holy Spirit to lead.

## **Spend Time in Prayer – Lesson 2** **You Are God's House**

### **Group Leader Preparation:**

- If needed, print off copies of the prayer time for each participant.
- **Please reassure your group that no one will be asked to pray out loud if they are not comfortable doing so.**

- Remember that these prayer times are designed so that individuals taking this course on their own can also utilize the material. For your group, please tell participants to use the plural pronouns rather than the personal ones as they pray.
- There are 8 Scriptures and prayers – assign different people to read each scripture and then pray using the written prayers as a guideline.
- Instruct those who are reading and praying to allow about 30 seconds to sit in stillness during the pause and reflect before going on to the next prayer.
- Read the introduction to the group: Pray through these scriptures affirming that you as an individual, and you as the community of believers in your church, are God's house.
- Pray the prayer following the introduction.
- After the last prayer, take 30 seconds to Pause and reflect...and then pray the prayer at the end.
- Before beginning, ask if anyone has any questions about the prayer time.

## **Spend Time in Prayer – Lesson 3**

### **Listening Prayer - Audio**

#### **Group Leader Preparation:**

- This prayer time will be completely led by an audio recording. The link can be found under **Spend Time in Prayer for Lesson 3**. Test the volume ahead of time to be sure it can be heard by everyone.

- The two scriptures in the reading are:

**John 8:28**

So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me."

**John 5:19**

Jesus gave them this answer: "Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does."

- You may wish to do this prayer time ahead of your group in order to fully understand what you all will experience. The length of the prayer time is approximately 8 ½ minutes.
- Be sure everyone has a journal or piece of paper and a pen or pencil in case they want to write down what they may sense from God during this time.
- Let people know that there will be several lengthy pauses in the midst of the audio recording to allow them to listen and reflect.
- The audio recording will end with this instruction: "Take some time now to share your experience with one other person, or as a group. Share what this experience of listening prayer and the word of God was like for you."  
**Structure this time any way you wish depending upon how much time you have.**
- Close in prayer for one another and give God thanks for this time of listening.

## **Spend Time in Prayer – Lesson 4**

### **Praying God's Kingdom and Not My Own**

#### **Group Leader Instructions:**

- If needed, print off copies of the prayer time for each participant.
- **Please reassure your group that no one will be asked to pray out loud if they are not comfortable doing so.**
- **Before beginning, ask different people** to read each scripture out loud (#1-12; some people may need to read twice).
- **Stand in a circle together**, or whatever works best.
- **Read to the group:** Think of the cycle of prayer that moves what is on God's heart for His kingdom to the realm of the Spirit, who brings God's desire to you, the Believer. Allow God's desires to become your own as we bring these prayers to the Father through Jesus, our Intercessor.
- **Have each person in turn**, read their assigned Scriptures. Following the reading of each, lead the group to pray each prayer out loud together.
- **Instruct people reading and praying to pause about 5 – 10 seconds (Selah) between each reading/prayer** to allow what has been prayed to sink into each person's heart.
- Close in prayer for one another and give God thanks for this time of prayer together.

## **Spend Time in Prayer – Lesson 5**

### **Standing in the Gap**

#### **Group Leader Instructions:**

**Familiarize yourself with these instructions and guide your group through this time of prayer:**

- Each person should have something to write with and either paper or a journal.
- Break the group up into smaller groups of 3. Include yourself in one of the groups if there is a group left with two people. If there is only one extra person, they may join into a group as a fourth. Have each group determine who will be 1, 2 and 3. If needed, have one group have a #4.
- **Please reassure your group that no one will be asked to pray out loud if they are not comfortable doing so, but always encourage them to try to stretch out of their comfort zone to join their voices with others.**
- **Read these passages of Scripture to the group:**

**1 Timothy 2:8** “So I want men everywhere to pray with holy hands lifted up to God, free from sin and anger and resentment.”

**Exodus 17:8-13** “The Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites at Rephidim. Moses said to Joshua, “Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands.”

So Joshua fought the Amalekites as Moses had ordered, and Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill. As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but

whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning. When Moses' hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up—one on one side, one on the other—so that his hands remained steady till sunset. So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword."

- **Say to the group:** "Moses stood in the gap on behalf of Joshua and the Israelites, asking God to help them win this battle against the Amalekites. Sometimes standing in the gap is hard work and we need the help of others to keep going."
- **Read these instructions and move through the action steps to guide this season of prayer:**
  - Since we have been learning about standing in the gap in prayer, and that God is looking for those who will intercede, we are going to spend a few minutes focusing on how God wants to use us as His intercessors.
  - First, we will spend some time in silent prayer. Ask God to show you a person, a situation, or even a group of people who need you to stand in the gap on their behalf. Pay attention to whatever thoughts come as you focus on the Father. The Holy Spirit may bring a person, a nation, a world situation, or even a family member to mind. If you feel led, journal or write down what you sense from God.
    - **Give everyone a minute or two in silent prayer. Then say, "Let's be bringing our prayer time to a close." Give a few seconds for everyone to look up.**
  - Now that you have something or someone in mind to pray about, ask God to show you where or why the wall is broken down in someone's life or in this situation (if



you don't know already). Ask Him to show you how to stand in the gap.

- **Give everyone a minute or two in silent prayer. Then say, "Let's be bringing our prayer time to a close." Give a few seconds for everyone to look up.**

➤ In your groups of three, here is how we will respond to what we sense God saying to us:

1. In every group Person #1 will share what or who you sense God is placing on your heart and how you sense you are to stand in the gap in prayer. If you don't wish to share, simply tell people that you want it to stay private.
2. Person #1 will lift up his or her arms as Moses did when praying for Joshua and the Israelites in battle.
3. Persons #2 and #3 will get on either side of Person #1 and hold up the arms of Person #1. This will represent Aaron and Hur holding up the arms of Moses so that he could win the battle in prayer.
4. Person #1 can begin praying out loud or silently about their person, persons or situation. Persons #2 and #3 pray in agreement however you are comfortable. If there is a Person #4, he or she can stretch out a hand toward Person #1 to pray in agreement. When you are done, put your arms down and remain quiet until I (Leader) bring the prayer time to a close.
5. Then, we will move to Person #2, #3 and #4 if needed, doing the same.
6. I (the Leader) will bring each prayer time to a close and instruct you to move to the next person.
  - **Leader: Give some time for prayer until it seems there is only one group still praying.**
  - **Say: "Let's bring our prayer time to a close."**
  - **Give a few seconds for the last group to finish and then say, "Now let's move on to**

**Person #2.” The group will follow the same pattern as before until all 3 or 4 have had an opportunity to pray.**

7. When everyone has prayed, close the time of prayer by thanking the Father for being present in your midst and for hearing and answering the prayers each one has prayed.
8. Encourage your group to follow through on these prayer assignments through the week.

## **Spend Time in Prayer – Lesson 6**

### **Prayers to Focus on God’s Glory – Declarative Prayer!**

- If needed, print off copies of the prayer time for each participant.
- **Please reassure your group that no one will be asked to pray out loud if they are not comfortable doing so.**
- As the leader, familiarize yourself with these instructions, which are part of the prayer guide each participant will have. Guide this prayer time any way you feel led:
  - Read and declare out loud the truth of these Scriptures. Use them to inform a season of prayer focused on God’s glory! Perhaps you will want to pray the Scriptures back to God or use them to jumpstart your own prayers either individually or as a group!
  - Please don’t simply read these Scriptures – DECLARE them! Feel free to say, “Amen!” or, “Yes!” or, however else the Spirit leads you to respond as you hear the spoken Word of God declaring His glory in your midst! This is the God we serve!

- At the end, **Close Together**, read the quote and then lead the group in declaring the last two Scriptures out loud together!