

Lesson #5

Focusing Prayer on Mission

We often turn to prayer in times of great need; and as we learned during the Life Action event, we should also pray fervently for repentance and restoration! But what comes after that? What will define our prayers for the months and years to come?

In addition to simply adoring God and cultivating our personal relationship with Him, an important answer to that question is mission. The closer we get to Christ, the more our souls yearn to see His grand mission completed. So our prayers can begin to reflect His heart to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10).

CURIOSITY QUESTIONS

Many people report that although they believe in prayer, they struggle to pray consistently. Why do you think this is?

Have you ever found any method or approach to prayer that really helped you engage with God on a deeper or more consistent level? Can you tell us about that experience?

MOVING INTO GOD'S WORD

Ephesians 6:10-20 – Prayer plays an important role in the spiritual battle we face, and even Paul asked for prayer regarding his mission and the struggles he knew he would face for the gospel. Why do you think verse 18 commands us to be constantly prayerful?

Paul speaks here in military battle terms, clearly elevating our need for spiritual armor and prayer. These are life-and-death issues! How could we as a group more regularly include mission-oriented elements in our prayer times?

Imagine that a group of Christians was as well-armored and fervently praying as this text suggests. What results might we expect to see in their lives and in their circles of influence?

Luke 10:1-3 – Jesus commissioned this group of disciples to go out on mission; and just before He did, He asked them to pray. But rather than praying only about their own mission, they were called on to pray for even more workers to address the great opportunities



in the harvest field. Walk through this text phrase by phrase as a group. What aspects of it surprise you?

What "harvest fields" (different people groups) define your community or neighborhood, that you could begin praying about?

Thinking more globally, there are still many areas of the world that lack access to the gospel, or that need additional "workers" in the fields. Does your group have any personal connection to or burden for one of these areas, that perhaps could become a matter of mission-oriented prayer in the months to come?

MAKING IT PERSONAL

My prayer life over the past year has been: *(circle any that apply)*

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|-----------|-----------|------------|------------------|--------------|
| Joyful | Formal | Consistent | Hit-and-miss | Passionate |
| Effective | Deep | Shallow | Non-existent | Hypocritical |
| Obedient | Authentic | Lax | Mission-oriented | Need-based |
| Daily | Growing | Relational | Persistent | Reverent |

The one word above that I want to define my prayer life in the year ahead is _____.

What would be the best times of day for me to set aside to speak with God? (Even a commitment to pray for 1-2 minutes at a given time every day can be a meaningful start.)

Prayer is often motivated in our hearts when it is tied to the mission we are on earth to accomplish. What are some mission-oriented things I could potentially pray about specifically, so my prayers begin to echo God's heart of love for the world?

PRAYER TIME

Turn back to Ephesians 6:13-17 and pray for each other regarding each item of armor needed for the spiritual battle. Ask God to give you wisdom regarding the best way to begin praying more consistently.