



## Basic Lesson 6 - Prayer Target

**Some words appear in different colored font to give extra emphasis, encouraging further meditation.**

Basic Principle: We pray most effectively when we pray with a target and allow Scripture to guide us.

Leaders - We are learning to allow scripture and the Holy Spirit to influence us in our prayer life. In this lesson you will have the opportunity to choose from three options to allow God's Word to shape your group prayer. The topics are: family/marriages, the church, and the world.

### Thinking Things Through

1. There is more than one way to pray, how do you do it?

Leader - Prayer is a very diverse action in the Christian faith. For example, in Korea people pray out loud, at the same time, with their own prayers. Some church traditions favor liturgical prayers with written out texts, others pray quietly and silently. Some people journal out their prayers and recite them, others pray what simply comes to their mind. You might be surprised to discover how different your group people pray.

2. What makes you pray for things other than just your own personal life?

3. When you consider spending time in prayer do you pray for things that pertain to your life, or do you seek out opportunities to pray for broader things?

Leader – It is important to have a regular prayer target. Especially praying in a group. Without one, prayers tend to be scattered, a prayer here and a prayer there. Or simply focused on the immediate parts of our individual life.

## Digging Deeper

Read Ezekiel 22:23-29

4. How does this passage align with the world around us in our day and age?

Leader – The sinful condition of the human heart is universal. What was written 2,600 years ago could easily be applied to the world around us today. People are selfish, and their motives are often evil. It's part of living in a broken world.

Read Ezekiel 22:30-31

5. What action is implied in 22:30?

6. How was the outcome in 22:31 preventable? What might it mean in our day and age?

Leader – The NIV uses the word “So” in the first part of vs. 31. It implies that the result of vs. 31 is because of the problem of vs. 30. No one would stand in the gap, so the Lord allowed tribulation. Intercessors, by definition, do not pray for their own needs. They intervene (stand in the gap) for others. In Ezekiel God was looking for someone who would fill the gap in the wall. The wall represented a brokenness in God's protection for the people. It was a significant place of vulnerability, but no one was willing to do the simple job of stepping into it to keep watch and relay information to the higher powers who could protect the land.

## Putting It Into Practice

On the following pages are three separate meditative/prayer activities. They offer three ways to allow Scripture to guide your prayer activities, towards things that really matter to you, and the world around you. Decide with your group which one to focus on.

Here are some things to keep in mind.

- A. A part of our silent meditation is allowing for the Holy Spirit to speak to you and impress upon your heart what matters to him about your situation. ASK him to speak to you before you begin. Learn to listen as you pray.
- B. [The brief sharing](#) after silent meditation is where you see the full prayer picture as each shares what they received from the Lord. Deliberately keep the sharing time brief or it will take your prayer time. Your response is really between you and the Lord.
- C. [The sharing is a time of equipping](#). As you share, others are now more able to pray with you instead of each person praying only what they received.
- D. [You pray with each other until a prayer point is finished. Just because someone prays for something once doesn't mean that it is to be checked off](#). Petition God as a group with the things all of you agree are urgent or important.
- E. [This is a time to learn](#) to recognize and follow the leadings of the Holy Spirit as each sharing fits in and complements the total picture. There is no right or wrong sharing, each is important because God gave it.
- F. [Keep your sharing short \(repeated for emphasis\)](#).
- G. ASK: What example in this passage equips me to pray today?

## Praying for the Family (Ephesians 5:21-6:4, NIV)

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

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<sup>22</sup>Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord.<sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. <sup>24</sup> Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

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<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her <sup>26</sup> to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, <sup>27</sup> and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

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<sup>28</sup> In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. <sup>29</sup> After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— <sup>30</sup> for we are members of his body.<sup>31</sup> “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”

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<sup>32</sup> This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. <sup>33</sup> However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

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**6** Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. <sup>2</sup> “Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise—<sup>3</sup> “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.”

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<sup>4</sup> Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

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## Praying for the Country (2 Chronicles 7:14, NIV)

<sup>14</sup> 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.

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## (1 Timothy 2:1-4, NIV)

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— 2 for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

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<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.

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## (Psalm 67, NIV)

<sup>1</sup> May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us— so that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations.

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<sup>3</sup> May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you.

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<sup>4</sup> May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples with equity and guide the nations of the earth.

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<sup>5</sup> May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you.

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<sup>6</sup> The land yields its harvest; God, our God, blesses us.

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<sup>7</sup> May God bless us still, so that all the ends of the earth will fear him.

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## Praying for the Church (John 17:13-26, NIV)

<sup>3</sup>“I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. <sup>14</sup>I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.

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<sup>15</sup> My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. <sup>16</sup> They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. <sup>17</sup> Sanctify them by <sup>[d]</sup> the truth; your word is truth. <sup>18</sup> As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. <sup>19</sup> For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

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<sup>20</sup> “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, <sup>21</sup> that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. <sup>22</sup> I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— <sup>23</sup> I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

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<sup>24</sup> “Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

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<sup>25</sup> “Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. <sup>26</sup> I have made you <sup>[e]</sup> known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”

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# Growth Through Meditation

## 1 Peter 1 and 2

### TAKE IT HOME

Meditation in the Word has many benefits. One is that you will grow in the Word and develop spiritual maturity. In meditation you do not just read the Word, you apply it personally, receive it into your inner most being where what you meditate on can be reproduced in your own life.

#### [Growing in the Word, 1 Peter 1 and 2](#)

**Context:** Peter's letter is to the dispersed, scattered new believers throughout Asia Minor in cities of the Roman Empire. Peter likens them to the exiled Jews in the Old Testament and points them to the Word of God for growth and maturity. This applies to you today.

#### **1 Peter 1:22**

**“Since you have purified your souls (mind, emotion, will) in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,**

**v23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed (that perishes) but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,**

**v24, 25 because ‘All flesh is as grass and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers and its flower falls away, but the word of the Lord endures forever.’”**

The first **word** (v23) is logos, all of God's word and **word** in v25 is rhema, the specific spoken word through which they were saved, born again. God's word has supernatural power first to save, deliver from the rule of Satan and now to keep His people and cause them to grow to maturity as witnesses of their new life in Jesus.

#### **1 Peter 2:1**

**“Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy and all evil speaking,**

**v2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby, v3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.”** Love for God's Word and the things of God is a mark of a believer.

The illustration is to first deal with sin, so the Word, this incorruptible seed can be planted in the soul, to “save” the soul, to change thoughts and resulting behavior so you become living testimonies to this new life. (much like James 1:21)

Malice is malignant anger, deceit is lies, hypocrisy is pretending, envy is to begrudgingly desire what others have, evil speaking is backbiting, defaming others. Desire the pure milk of the word that brings growth. Desire the Word of God and depend on it as much as a newborn for your new spiritual life. Ask for a love of the Word.

In your spiritual growth there is a time for the “meat” of the Word.

Hebrews 5:12-14, Paul is encouraging growth in the Word of God.

**v12 “For though by this time you ought to be teachers (sharing with others), you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles (sayings of Scripture) of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.”**

**v13 “For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the Word of righteousness, for he is a babe (immature).”**

**v14 “But solid food belongs to those who are of full age (mature), that is, those who by reason of use (practice) have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”**

It is unseemly to desire milk when you should be old enough for solid food. There is a time for the discernment that comes through the Word. The Word is to become your measure of truth.

God deals with you as an individual regarding solid food, the meat of the Word. He trains us individually. What he tells you at a particular time might not necessarily apply to another. God will speak individually to you about issues in your life depending where you are in your spiritual growth.

**Application:** Pray the insights you receive. Your prayers will touch others and benefit you as well.