

Why Sunday? Why Do We Pray?
Matthew 21:12–13
Big Idea
Prayer is how we fight our battles, carry each other's burdens, and grow closer to God.

Prayer isn't just something we do when life gets hard. It is meant to be a rhythm of our lives and the foundation of our church.

Context: A House of Prayer

Matthew 21:12–13
Jesus entered the temple and saw people using God's house for business instead of what it was meant for.

Jesus declared that His house would be called a house of prayer.

Churches can have great preaching, worship, programs, community, and strategies, but these things should flow out of prayer—not replace it.

Prayer is the foundation that helps everything else grow.

As a church, we want to be people who don't just talk about God but depend on Him and desire His presence.

1. Prayer Is How We Fight
Exodus 17:8–13
When the Israelites were attacked, Joshua led the army into battle while Moses stood on the hill with his hands raised to God. When Moses grew tired, Aaron and Hur helped hold up his hands until the battle was won.

This shows us that sometimes we fight the battle, sometimes we pray, and sometimes we help hold someone else up.

We aren't meant to fight our battles alone.

Jesus never promised that life would be free from trouble (John 16:33). The question isn't whether we will face challenges, but how we will respond when they come.

Sometimes we react by getting angry, gossiping, sending hurtful messages, avoiding the problem, or asking everyone else for advice before we turn to God.

But prayer isn't our last option — it's our first response!

Before you panic, pray.

Before you react, pray.

Before you make a big decision, pray.

When anxiety, fear, or temptation comes, pray.

Prayer is how we bring our battles before God and depend on His strength instead of trying to handle everything ourselves.

2. Prayer Is More Spiritual Than You Think
Daniel 10:12–14

Daniel prayed and sought God for 21 days. When the angel finally arrived, he explained that God had heard Daniel's prayer from the very first day, but there had been spiritual opposition.

This passage reminds us that there can be more happening than what we see.

Sometimes we pray and receive an answer quickly. Other times, we experience a no or a wait. And sometimes we don't understand what is happening behind the scenes.

Just because you don't see an answer doesn't mean God hasn't heard you.

The Bible teaches that spiritual warfare is real, but we don't need to live in fear. God is the Creator, Satan is a created being, and the enemy is not equal to God.

We can pray boldly because our confidence is in God's power and victory.

Keep praying when you feel discouraged.

Keep trusting God when you don't understand.

Pray for your family, your faith, your church, and those around you.

We don't give up praying just because we can't see what God is doing.

3. Prayer Is How We Carry Each Other's Burdens
Acts 12:1–5
Peter was arrested and put in prison, but the church responded by earnestly praying for him.

While Peter was surrounded by guards, the church surrounded him in prayer.

God answered their prayers, and Peter was miraculously freed from prison.

This is a picture of what the church is called to be: a community that stands together, carries one another's burdens, and brings people's needs before God.

Prayer is an act of love.

When someone shares a struggle with you, taking time to pray with them shows that you care. We don't have to have all the answers or know exactly what to say. We can bring their situation to God together.

Even when the people praying for Peter struggled to believe that he had actually been freed, God still answered their prayers.

The power of prayer isn't found in the person praying, but in the Person we're praying to!

- Pray for people who are struggling.
- Pray for friends and family who don't know Jesus.
- Pray for healing, freedom, and breakthrough.
- Don't just say, "I'll pray for you"—pray with them!

We all need people who will stand with us in prayer, even when we struggle to pray for ourselves.

4. Prayer Gives Us More of God
Genesis 15:1
Abraham was waiting for God's promise of a son. In the middle of his longing, God reminded him that He Himself was Abraham's greatest reward.

Abraham wanted an answer, but God reminded him of something even greater: “You have Me.”

Sometimes we approach prayer as a way to get things from God. We ask for healing, opportunities, relationships, good grades, and answers to our problems. There is nothing wrong with bringing our needs to God, but we can miss the greatest gift of prayer if that's all we want.

Prayer isn't just about getting things from God. It's about getting closer to God.

Throughout Scripture, we see people who desired God's presence above everything else.

David wanted to dwell in the house of the Lord (Psalm 27:4).

Moses said he didn't want to go forward without God's presence (Exodus 33).

Paul continued to desire to know Christ more (Philippians 3).

The more we know God, the more we realize there is still more of Him to know.

Through Jesus, we have access to God. We don't have to be perfect or earn our way into His presence.

The question is: Do we want Him? Do we hunger for more of Him?

When we pray, we aren't simply asking God to change our circumstances. We're inviting Him to shape our hearts, deepen our faith, and help us know Him more.

Conclusion: Why Do We Pray?

Prayer is much more than a religious routine. It is how we live in relationship with God and depend on Him.

We pray to fight. We bring our battles to God instead of trying to face them alone.

We pray to care. We carry each other's burdens and stand together in faith.

We pray to know God. We seek His presence, not just His provision.

As a church, we don't want to simply make room for prayer in our services. We want to become a people who are rooted in prayer.

When God moves, lives can change, people can find freedom, shame can lose its voice, and people can discover the hope of Jesus.

We don't just want to tolerate God's presence. We want to desire His presence.

Study & Discussion

- Why should prayer be our first response instead of our last option?
- What can we do when we pray but don't see an answer?
- How can praying for someone be an act of love?
- What's the difference between praying to get something from God and praying to know God?
- Which of the four reasons for prayer do you need to grow in most right now?

Practice of the Week: Pray First

Fight — Before reacting to a difficult situation, pause and pray.

Care — Choose one person who is struggling and pray for them by name.

Know — Spend time with God this week, not just asking for things but growing in your relationship with Him.

Goal of the Week
To make prayer a daily rhythm of life—not just asking God for things, but learning to depend on Him, carry others' burdens, and grow closer to His presence.