

## The Praying Life: Connecting with God in a Distracting World



Week 2: Jan. 30 – Feb. 5

Chapters 3 - 4

- Check out the Prayer Challenge Schedule on the prayer guide tab for schedule details
- Check out the daily reflections for prayer growth
- Check out the prayer requests on the prayer guide. Prayers are posted at the end of this page or on the prayer requests only tab.

As I think back to my childhood (I grew up in a church going family) my church was my second home, my church friends were family to me. Many of the adults were like second parents to my sister and I. I sit here writing today with tear filled eyes because of the rich memories. It was the best! Our church family did life together, you know, the New Testament “ACTS” church way. Interesting that chapter’s name: ACTS! Hmmm! We devoted ourselves to biblical teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. I remember my parent’s hosting prayer meetings in our home. We called them cottage prayer meetings. I remember weekly prayer meetings at our church on Wednesday evenings. I remember going to the altar to pray. Prayer has been indoctrinated into my life but sometimes, even now, I get so distracted that I find, at the end of the day, I never even took the time to pray. I may have written about prayer, read about prayer, thought about prayer but I didn’t really take time to talk to God. I didn’t take time to converse with the most important person in history. That person that came to earth, lived a perfect life, died on the cross and rose again so that I could have eternal life. That person that has totally rocked my world and turned it right side up. That person that created me for fellowship. Yet, I let that time go by. I get distracted, in a world of distractions, just like you, some of my distractions are actually good distractions but I keep hearing the Master say, in your world of distractions, “Come to me!” “Come to me, Susan, with all your weariness, with all your burdens, with all your feelings of anxiety and defeat, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28.

I love those words of Jesus, “Come to me.” Growing up we sang the old hymn ***Just As I Am*** during many invitations. It’s one of those songs I still can sing by memory. Come to Me though you be tossed about by many conflicts, and many doubts. Come to Me, my arms are opened wide to receive and to welcome you with cleansing, relief, and forgiveness. He’ll take the poor, the wretched, the blind, the sick, the rich, the cheerful, the sighted, the healthy. Come just as you are. And don’t just come once, that one time act of salvation. Come, just as you are, daily! Come just as you are hourly! Come. Come. Come. Come and have fellowship with HE who is waiting for that appointed time with You.

I recognize that not all homes were as nurturing and loving as the one I grew up in. As a school counselor and youth leader for many years, my eyes were opened to the sadness, brokenness and neglect that abounds in homes across this country/globally. I think that’s what so beautiful

and freeing about this loving relationship with Jesus. We can really go to Him and be received, JUST AS WE ARE. He wants us to cry out to Him with our angry past, our hurts, habits, hang ups. He wants it all. As His children, embracing what He has to offer is the most freeing gift ever given. Let Him show you what a loving Father He is.

I absolutely love when Jesus completely speaks to me in a way that is just so special. Today, it happened again! I read chapter 3 and 4 several weeks ago. Not really remembering everything that's covered in the chapters, I sat down to write this introduction. I asked God, what do you want me to say in this introduction. I certainly had not looked at any of the discussion questions from the discussion guide *A Praying Life* that I'm using to adapt for our purposes when I wrote the intro. And then when I turned to the questions in the discussion guide I found they were just where God had me in the intro. The questions pertaining to coming to Him just as we are; messy or put together. I don't know about you but when Jesus' promptings are right on with where you are supposed to be and you didn't even know it, it's just a little sweet something. He gives us those little sweet surprises when we take the time to come. Email me with your little sweet somethings from Jesus. I'd love to hear about them.

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-----*Daily Reflections*-----

- Sunday, Jan. 30: As this week's chapters are opened, begin to consider what ways Jesus wants you to become like a little child. You'll be reading about this on pages 17 – 20 this week. And think about a child you know. What do they ask for? How often? In what way? You'll be reading about learning to talk with your Father on pages 25-30.
- Monday-Friday, Jan. 31-Feb. 4: **Chapter 3:** Describe the difference between coming to God messy and coming put together. What does it look like to come messy/put together? How does God respond when we come messy/put together? What's hard about coming messy/put together? Why is it so important to come to God just as you are (pp. 20-22)? Why can this be so hard for us? What kind of people did Jesus come for in Mark 2:13-17? What kind of person must Jesus have been like – that "tax collector's and sinners" enjoyed him? What is the heart of prayer (pp.22-23)? **Chapter 4:** In what ways are you similar to and different from that child (the one you were asked to think about on Sunday) as you talk to you Father? How does Jesus show his approval for those who exhibit a childlike faith? Read Matt. 8:5-13; Luke 7:1-9, Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30. Read Luke 18:1-8, Jesus' story of why you should always pray and not give up. What is this widow like? How is she persistent? What

obstacles would she have potentially faced as a widow? What do little children believe about their parents that keeps them pestering? Do you believe this about your Father? What is it that you want to pester God about?

- Saturday, Feb. 5: Think about this statement from chapter 4, “Don’t be embarrassed by how needy your heart is and how much it needs to cry out for grace.’ Just start praying. Spend time crying out to God about your needy heart.



Weekly Prayer Guide for Jan. 30 – Feb. 5

**A**doration: praising God for what and who He is:

I will bless You, Lord, at all times;  
Your praise will always be in my mouth.  
My soul will make its boast in You, Lord;  
The humble will hear and be glad.  
May all Your people magnify You with me,  
And let us exalt Your name together.  
You are my stronghold, My God, You are a rock of refuge to me.

**C**onfession: stating our sins, and asking forgiveness:

Take some time right now, to come to God messy, for just five minutes. Bring all your burdens, all your weariness, all your pain, all your sin to Jesus – just as you are.

You, O Lord, have said,

“Come now, let us reason together.  
Though your sins are like scarlet,  
They shall be as white as snow;  
Though they are red as crimson,  
They shall be like wool.”

*Ask the Spirit to search your heart and reveal any areas of unconfessed sin. Acknowledge these to the Lord and thank Him for His forgiveness.*

**T**hanksgiving: thanking God for specific things He has done.

In the day that You created Your people, You made them in Your likeness. You created them male and female and blessed them in the day they were created. It was You, Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and all that grows in it; you give breath to its people, and spirit to those who walk on it. Thank You, Lord, for You are great and greatly to be praised.

We thank you for loving us. Thank you for dying for our sins. Thank you for rising from the dead. Thank you for sending the Holy Spirit. Thank you for your guidance in our life. We know when 2 or 3 are gathered together in your name that you have promised to be in the midst, so we thank you for being here and listening to our prayers. We thank you for promising to give us the desires of our heart when we do what pleases you and ask for your will to be done. We thank you for your Holy Spirit in our lives, your living word in our hands and your indwelling life in our hearts. Yahweh, God of Israel, there is no God like you, in heaven above, or on earth beneath; You keep covenant and loving kindness with your servants, You walk before us with all Your heart. Joyful, joyful, we adore You, God of glory, Lord of love; hearts unfold like flowers before You, opening to the sun above. You fill us with the light of day. You put joy in our hearts, joy unspeakable joy comes down from You, Heavenly Father. We praise You with our lips for all eternity!

Praises for Equip America on Jan. 29:

- We praise You, God, for allowing Equip America to take place in Albany, GA, Orlando, FL, and Mayaguez, PR. To God be the Glory for the great things He has done.
- We praise God for more people with readiness to share the Gospel
- We praise God for the new believers in Christ
- We praise God for the churches that are ready to start implementing EE training.
- We praise God for a renewed spirit of Christ followers seeing the hand of God at work on Saturday.

**S**upplication: asking for things we want God to do, for others or for us.

O Lord, may I be strong in You and in Your mighty power as I put on Your full armor, so that I will be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. Lord, help me to be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.

*Pause here to petition God for growth in your desire to know and please Jesus Christ. Pray for a greater love and commitment to Him, for the grace to practice His presence and for the grace to glorify Him in your life. Offer prayers regarding your activities for the week and any special concerns you may have.*

- Pray for the US ministry of EE: it's vision for the future, God's person to fill the position of US director (Randall Woods (our director for 8 years will be leaving EE to pastor Midway Baptist Church), a smooth transition over the next few months
- Pray for additional ministry partnerships so that TOGETHER we can reach the world with the Gospel.
- For America to turn to God and our Nation to see the next Great Spiritual Awakening.
- For our leaders to be God-fearing and recognize that they are accountable to Him for each decision and act. (Prov. 9:10)
- For God to grant people in authority wisdom, knowledge, and understanding.
- Pray that the Church in America will open their eyes to see the hope to which we've been called.
- For prospective churches to host Equip America in future locations around the country.
- For plans and preparations for Congress Of Nations in 2023
- For God to expand the ministry of Hope For Kids in 2022. For expansion of the Explorers' Club ministry.
- Pray churches that have attended Everyday Evangelism Launches will begin implementing.
- For Pastors' in America to Stand UP! Stand Firm! Stand on God's Word with grace, power, and mercy!
- Pray for peace in our cities and unity in our churches and nation.
- **The 71st National Day of Prayer** will be celebrated on Thursday, May 5, 2022. The theme this year is a call to praise in prayer. *'EXALT THE LORD, WHO HAS ESTABLISHED US'* based on *Colossians 2:6-7*.
- Lift prayers for our persecuted brothers and sisters: ask God to help them rest in the knowledge that Our Good Shepherd walks with them through every difficult situation. Ask God to provide Bibles and Christian literature that will reach the most remote and needy areas where they are in the shortest supply. Ask God to continually bring comforting scripture to their mind giving them the strength to press on. Ask God to bring about justice in an unjust world.
- Pray for your pastor and church leadership.
- Pray for ministries in your church and ministry directors
- Pray for unbelieving family members that God would draw them to salvation.
- Pray for the grieving. There is much loss everywhere. Many lives that are struck by the loss of those they love dearly. Ask God to shower them with his tender mercy and cover them with His feathers and they would take refuge under His wings. That they would grasp His faithfulness to be their shield and rampart.

**(Ministries of EE: Share Your Faith Workshop, Everyday Evangelism, Hope for Kids)**

<b>SYFW</b>	<b>2/5</b>	<b>Wilson Presbyterian Church</b>	<b>Wilson, NC</b>
<b>SYFW</b>	2/9 -3/16	First Baptist Rogers	Rogers, AR
<b>SYFW</b>	2/19	Calvary Church	Everett, WA
<b>SYFW</b>	2/19	Shilo Baptist Church	Brandy Station, VA
<b>SYFW</b>	2/19	Whitehall Bible Fellowship	Whitehall, PA
<b>SYFW</b>	2/26	New Life in Christ	Fredericksburg, VA
<b>SYFW</b>	3/5	Hutto Bible Church	Hutto, TX
<b>SYFW</b>	3/12	Bethany EPC	Havertown, PA
<b>SYFW</b>	3/12	Pathway Community Church	Cincinnati, OH
<b>SYFW</b>	3/12-3/13	Village Baptist Church	Bella Vista, AR
<b>SYFW</b>	3/19	Covenant Presbyterian Church	Harleysville, PA
<b>SYFW</b>	3/26	First Baptist Church of Cole	Blanchard, OK
<b>SYFW</b>	4/30	Broadway Baptist Church	Maryville, TN
<b>EV2 Launch</b>	2/18-2/19	Eficaz a Filipino American Alliance (Espanol)	Arlington, TX
<b>EV2 Launch</b>	2/11 – 2/12	Bethel AME Church	Columbia, SC
<b>EV2 Launch</b>	2/18 – 2/19	Filipino American Alliance Church	Arlington, TX
<b>EV2 Launch</b>	3/17 – 3/18	Harmony Community Church	Peachland, NC
<b>EV2 Launch</b>	4/7 - 4/8	First Baptist Rogers	Rogers, AR
<b>EV2 Launch</b>	4/22	Eficaz a Iglesia Un Nuevo Comienzo	El Paso, TX
<b>EV2 Launch</b>	8/4 – 8/5	First Baptist Rogers	Rogers, AR
<b>HFK Lab</b>	3/25 - 3/26	Landmark Church of God	Statesville, NC