



ESSENTIAL SPIRITUAL PRACTICES



SIMPLE HABITS.
A DEEPER LIFE.



Sunday
November 8, 2026

Psalm 1
Luke 11:1-4
2 Corinthians 12:6-10
Phil 1:9-11

Example Teaching Rhythm

Welcome and Connect: 10 Minutes

This helps people feel connected and more comfortable participating in the study and discussion.

Look Forward: 5-10 Minutes

Share any important church events, service opportunities, or upcoming group plans. Keep this brief but clear.

Look at Scripture: 25-35 Minutes

This is the main focus of Community Groups. Read the selected scripture together and guide the group through discussion questions and observations.

Prayer: 10 Minutes

Invite members to share prayer requests and praises, then pray together as a group. This is a time to support one another.

Explaining the H.E.A.R Method

The acronym **HEAR** stands for **Highlight, Explain, Apply, and Respond**. Each of these four steps aims to cultivate an atmosphere to hear God speak.

Highlight - After praying for the Holy Spirit's guidance, read the passage of scripture, and highlight each verse that speaks to you.

Explain - Explain what the text means. Ask questions like:

- Who wrote this, to whom, and why? What does this reveal about God? What do the key words actually mean? What did this call the original audience to, and what does that reveal for me?

By asking questions, with the help of God's Spirit, and by using helpful study resources, you can understand the meaning of a passage or verse.

Apply - Application is the heart of the process. Everything you have done so far culminates under this heading. As you have done before, work to uncover the significance of these verses and the implications they have. Ask questions like:

- What does this passage reveal about God, yourself, or the world that you need to embrace or sit with? Does this passage challenge an attitude, assumption, or habit that needs to change? Is there something to do? Is there someone to love?

Respond - Your response to the passage may take on many forms. Ask: Is there something to pray? - Let the passage shape your prayer, not just inform it. Use the "Five Daily Prayer Prompts" to guide you in your response.

Prayer Consciously dependent on the Father

Introduction

Luke tells us that Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples asked him, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1). These men had watched Jesus preach to crowds, heal the sick, and calm a storm. Out of everything they had seen, the thing they asked to learn was prayer.

Last week we started this series with Scripture, where God speaks to us. Prayer is our side of that conversation, and Jesus begins it with a single word: "Father." It is the word he uses in the prayers of his that Luke quotes (10:21; 22:42; 23:46), and when he gives the disciples a prayer of their own, he starts the same way (11:2).

The order of what follows matters. The first two requests put the Father first: that his name be honored and his kingdom come. Then come three requests for ourselves: bread for today, forgiveness, and protection when we are tested (vv.2-4). So prayer begins by looking up to the Father and then moves to asking him for what we need, which is what children do. They don't grow the family's food or pay for the house, and asking is how they say where everything comes from. Notice, too, that every one of those requests is plural: give us, forgive us, lead us. Jesus is teaching a family to pray, which makes a Community Group a fitting place to learn it.

Today we'll follow that kind of dependence through three scenes. In Luke 11 we get the prayer itself. In 2 Corinthians 12, Paul prays for himself, three times, about a thorn he wants gone, and Christ answers him differently than he hoped. In Philippians 1, Paul prays from prison for friends he can't visit. Psalm 1 stays in the background of the whole series, with its picture of a tree planted beside streams of water, drinking from a supply it never made. Last week we saw that God's Word is that stream. Today we'll see that prayer is how we come to drink.

Most of us don't feel prayer as dependence while we're doing it. It can feel like a duty, a reflex in a crisis, or a speech we've given a hundred times. So as we work through these passages, keep one question in mind: what does the way I pray say about who I think I'm relying on?

Discussion Questions + Illustration

Select a question or two below to open up discussion.

- When you were a kid, what did you ask your parents for again and again? How did you go about it?
- What's the hardest thing for you to ask someone for, and why?
- When something goes wrong, who do you tell first, and how long do you wait before asking anyone?
- What have you tried to fix on your own for far too long?
- Finish this sentence and compare answers around the room: "When I pray, I usually find myself..."

In 1836, a German-born pastor named George Müller opened a home for orphans in a rented house on Wilson Street in Bristol, England. Müller took no fixed salary and had settled one rule about money: he would bring every need to God and solicit no one. He sent no appeals and took no loans. The work grew until the buildings on Ashley Down held about two thousand children at a time, and each year Müller published an account of what he had asked for and what had come. By the time he died in 1898, roughly ten thousand children had been raised in his homes. His own records include days when the money arrived only just in time.

- Müller brought every need to God and solicited no one. What would be hardest for you about living that way: the waiting, the not knowing, or keeping it between you and God?

Highlight | Lk 11:1-4, 2 Cor 12:6-10, Phil 1:9-11

Psalm 1 is our anchor for the whole series, so we'll touch it briefly. The blessed person is pictured as a tree planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in its season, with a leaf that does not wither (v.3), while the wicked are chaff the wind blows away (v.4).

In Luke 11, a disciple asks Jesus to teach them to pray after watching him pray (v.1). Jesus gives them five requests, addressed to "Father" (v.2). The first two ask for God's name to be honored and his kingdom to come, and the last three ask for daily bread, for forgiveness as we forgive others, and for protection from temptation (vv.2-4).

In 2 Corinthians 12, Paul says he could boast but holds back (v.6). He then describes a thorn in the flesh, "a messenger of Satan to harass me," given to keep him from becoming conceited (v.7). He pleaded with the Lord three times to take it away (v.8), and the Lord answered, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (v.9). Paul's response is to boast in his weaknesses so that Christ's power can rest on him, and he concludes, "when I am weak, then I am strong" (vv.9-10).

Finally, in Philippians 1, Paul prays for the church from prison. He asks that their love would abound more and more in knowledge and discernment (v.9), so that they can approve what is excellent and be pure and blameless for the day of Christ (v.10), filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God (v.11).

- Which request, image, or phrase stood out to you most, and why?
- In your own words, what is Christ telling Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:9?

Explain | Consider the Context

Luke 11 follows Mary sitting at Jesus' feet to listen (10:38-42). Jesus gives five short requests, then a story about a neighbor knocking at midnight. If a sleepy neighbor finally gets up, how much more will the Father give good things to his children (vv.5-13)? The lesson ends not with bread or safety, but with the Holy Spirit (v.13).

Paul's thorn shows dependence when the answer is no. It kept him from boasting about his visions, and he never names it, which leaves room for our own. It came from "a messenger of Satan," yet "was given" points to God, who sets the limits (Job 1:12). Paul prays to "the Lord," and Christ answers: his grace is enough, and his power rests on Paul (vv.8-9). So we pray to the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit (Eph. 2:18).

Philippians is written from prison to supporters (4:14-18). Paul prays with confidence that God will finish what he began (1:6), asking for love, discernment, and fruit (vv.9-11).

Psalms 1 ties them together. The blessed person delights in the Word (v.2), the stream the tree is planted beside, and prayer is how we come and drink.

- Why might Jesus end the lesson by promising the Holy Spirit, not bread or safety?
- How would Paul's talk of weakness have landed with the bragging Corinthians?
- Put Psalm 1:3 next to Philippians 1:11. What do they share?

Apply | Discuss as a Group

Here is what these passages teach us about God: he is a Father who hears his children. Through faith in Christ we are welcomed in (John 1:12; Gal. 3:26), and the Spirit moves us to cry, "Abba! Father!" (Rom. 8:15-16). If you're not sure you've come to him that way, the invitation is open today. When he says no, he still gives us himself, his grace and power right where we feel weakest.

They also show us something about ourselves. We pray hard in a crisis and drift through ordinary weeks, and many of us carry our thorns alone. We bring God the problems we can't solve and keep the ones we think we can. Jesus tells us to ask for daily bread, so bring your health, your job, and your safety to the Father. Paul asked for his circumstances too (Phil. 1:19), but he also prayed for who the Philippians were becoming. Ask for the bread, and ask for the character.

Psalms 1 gives one picture to hold. The tree doesn't haul its own water. It was planted where water already runs, and the fruit comes in its season. The Word is the stream, and prayer is how we come and drink. George Müller took his needs to the Father alone, yet he also stood at graves, and Paul's thorn stayed. The Father always answers, but not always with yes, and when he says no, he still gives himself.

- Where in your week do you pray only after you've run out of your own options?
- Tell about a prayer God answered differently than you asked. What did you learn?
- When you pray for someone you love, what do you usually ask for? What would change if you prayed like Paul in Philippians 1?

Respond | How should I live/pray?

This week, let's put these passages to work in four ways. First, start with the word "Father." Each morning, pray Luke 11:2-4 one line at a time, and after each request add a sentence of your own: whose name you want honored in your home or workplace, where you want his kingdom to come, what you need today, who you owe and who owes you, and where you expect to be tested. Jesus taught us to say "us" and "our," so pray it with someone at least once this week.

Second, name your thorn. Pick one weakness or hardship you've been hiding or trying to pray away, and tell Christ about it plainly. A thorn is different from sin: we confess sin and turn from it (1 John 1:9), but a thorn we keep bringing to Christ. Paul asked three times, so keep asking, and listen for his answer. Read 2 Corinthians 12:9 aloud and ask what "sufficient" would look like this week. Our high priest sympathizes with our weaknesses, having been tested as we are, yet without sin (Heb. 4:15-16). Tell one other person what you prayed.

Third, pray Philippians 1:9-11 for one person by name each day. Ask that their love would abound with knowledge and discernment, and that they would be pure, blameless, and full of the fruit of righteousness. Then tell them you prayed it. Ephesians 1:15-19 and Colossians 1:9-12 follow the same pattern.

Finally, stay planted. Choose a time and a place, and keep them. Jesus often withdrew to pray (Luke 5:16; Mark 1:35), and Daniel knelt three times a day even when it was against the law (Dan. 6:10). Say Psalm 1:3 aloud when you sit down, and pray five minutes before you reach for your phone.

- Which of these four will you start this week, and when and where will you do it?
- Who will you pray Philippians 1:9-11 for this week, and how will you let them know?

Response Tool: Five Daily Prayer Prompts

As you leave today, let these five questions carry the weight of your response into the week ahead – not as a checklist, but as an ongoing conversation with God. Introduce the five daily questions as a simple spiritual practice that can help us intentionally live out our faith in our workplaces, homes, families, and communities.

- God, where do you want me to go?
- God, who do you want me to see?
- God, what do you want me to say?
- God, what do you want me to pray?
- God, how do you want me to serve?

After this time of reflection, transition into a time of prayer requests. Allow time for members to share and, if appropriate, allow others in the class to pray for each other.

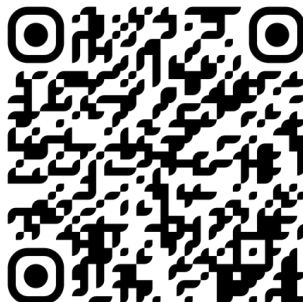
Additional Commentary

- On shatul ("planted," שָׁתַל) and palgei mayim ("streams," פְּלִגְיָיִם) (Ps. 1:3): a tree set in place by another (Ps. 92:13; Ezek. 17:8), beside channels (Prov. 21:1). Cf. Jer. 17:5-8.
- On be'ito ("in its season") and yatsliach ("prosper") (v.3): fruit at its appointed time (Ps. 104:27); Josh. 1:8 uses the same verb for meditating on the book.
- On "Father" (πατήρ) (Luke 11:2): bare "Father" in Luke, "Our Father in heaven" in Matt. 6:9 (the longer KJV form rests on later manuscripts). Jesus' own address (Luke 10:21; 22:42; 23:46; 23:34 is disputed), probably abba (Mark 14:36), shared by believers (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6).
- On epiousios ("daily," ἐπιούσιον) (Luke 11:3): only here and Matt. 6:11, meaning debated ("for today," "for the coming day," "needed for existence"). Didou is a present imperative: "keep giving." Cf. Exod. 16:4.
- On Luke 11:4-13: hamartias ("sins") pairs with opheilonti ("indebted"); cf. Matt. 6:12, 14-15; Eph. 4:32. Peirasmos means "trial" or "temptation" by context (Jas. 1:2, 13-14; Luke 22:40, 46). "Ask, seek, knock" are present imperatives (vv.9-10).
- On 2 Cor. 12:7, 9: skolops ("thorn," σκόλοψ), only here in the NT, is never identified. "Was given" (edothē) is a divine passive (cf. Job 1:12). "He has said" (eireken, perfect): an answer that stands, per most commentators. Arkei ("sufficient"): cf. 1 Tim. 6:8. Episkēnōse ("rest upon") is built on skēnē ("tent"; John 1:14). Cf. 2 Cor. 13:4; Deut. 3:23-27.
- On prayer to Christ (2 Cor. 12:8-9): cf. Acts 7:59; Rev. 22:20. To the Father through the Son: Eph. 2:18.
- On Phil. 1:9-11: aisthesis ("discernment") only here in the NT; eilikrines ("pure") only here and 2 Pet. 3:1; dokimazein ("approve") means test and affirm (Rom. 12:2). "Fruit of righteousness" (Prov. 11:30; Heb. 12:11) comes "through Jesus Christ" (John 15:4-5). On "the day of Christ": Phil. 1:6, 10. See Eph. 1:15-19; Col. 1:9-12.

Community Group Resource Page

Visit our website to view our **leadership resources**.

From Community Group training and resources to Discipleship Group starter guides, we want to equip you to make disciples.



Additional Study

Watch/Listen

Bible Project - Luke



See a collection of videos, classes, and articles that dive into [Luke](#).

Bible Project - Prayer of Jesus



See a collection of videos, classes, and articles that dive into the [Prayer of Jesus](#).

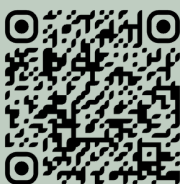
Overview

Enduring Word - 2 Cor 12



Text commentary, written materials, and audio/video recordings over [2 Corinthians 12:6-10](#).

Got Questions - Paul's Thorn



Biblical Q&A, articles, translations, audios, videos, apps, podcasts and more on [Paul's Thorn in the Flesh](#).

Expand

Bible Reference - Phil 1:9-11



Explore chapter and verse commentaries to deepen your understanding of [Philippians 1:9-11](#).

Bible Hub - 2 Corinthians 12



Parallel translations, language tools, commentaries, and much more on [2 Cor 12:6-10](#)

Deepen

Logos Factbook - Prayer



Logos Factbook shares information resources and articles about [Prayer](#).

Blue Letter Bible - Luke 11:1-4



Original texts, Translations, Cross-Refs, Commentaries, Dictionaries + more on [Luke 11:1-4](#).

