



PRAYING LIKE  
**PAUL**

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A Guide for Studying Paul's Prayers

# Contents

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## Personal Study

PAGE 3

## Weekly Study Questions

PAGE 4

## 3D Discussion & Other Resources

PAGE 9

## About This Study

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D.A. Carson writes, "One of the foundational steps in knowing God, and one of the basic demonstrations that we do know God, is prayer---spiritual, persistent, biblically minded prayer."

Prayer is a vital part of every Christian life. It is a means by which we can approach our heavenly Father, praise Him for who He is, share our joys and concerns, and ask for Him to move in our lives in ways only He can do.

This study guide, along with our sermon series, takes a look at five of Paul's prayers. Paul was a man with an active prayer life, full of rich, vibrant, and honest prayers. His prayers point us to what he believes about God, the intimacy of his relationship with the Lord, and the concerns he had for those he loved and ministered alongside.

As we desire to grow deeper in our own prayer life, we can learn from Paul's example as he points us towards Christ. Let us be a people and a church who knows God deeply and prays spiritual, persistent, and biblically minded prayers.

## Digging Deeper

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If you would like to dig deeper on the ideas of this study, here are a couple recommended resources. You can also find them at [thewellsilverspring.org/resources](http://thewellsilverspring.org/resources)

[Praying with Paul](#) by D.A Carson - This book calls believers to reject superficiality and revolutionize their lives by embracing a God-guided approach to prayer. Carson does this by unpacking a number of Paul's prayers.

[A Praying Life](#) by Paul Miller - This book is a prayer guide that encourages us to pursue a vibrant prayer life full of joy and power and has helped them learn how to pray faithfully and courageously. A life of prayer invites you to a life of connection to God.

"Kingdom-Centered Prayer," by Tim Keller - Throughout the Old and New Testaments and church history, every spiritual awakening was founded on corporate, prevailing, intensive, kingdom-centered prayer. We cannot create spiritual renewal by ourselves, but we can "prepare the altar" and ask God to send his Holy Spirit to change our hearts, our churches, and our communities. This article explores that idea.

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# Personal Daily Study

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Spend the entire week on the given section, slowly reading and rereading it in order to deeply, and accurately, interact with God. Also consider the below supplemental questions per each given week (You can also check out our other simple guides online for additional Bible study resources at [thewellsilverspring.org/resources](http://thewellsilverspring.org/resources).)

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## What Does It Say?

First, we ask: *“What does this say?”*

Read the passage a few times and carefully observe the words; give full attention to what it says. The purpose is to saturate in the content of the passage.

Look for things such as: important words (what’s being talked about), conjunctions (how is one idea connected to another), admonitions (something being commanded), contrasts, comparisons, illustrations, repeated phrases/ words, mood, and grammatical construction (verb tenses, prepositional phrases, etc.).

Linger here, listening to what God is saying in the detail of His words. Write down questions that the passage raises for you, things you don’t understand, ideas you’d like to pursue further.

## What Does It Mean?

We now ask ourselves: *“What does it mean?”*

Use the observations you just gathered, the context of the section, and other passages of scripture to get at the meaning of what you have read.

Consider using [a commentary](#), the [GROW](#) or [SOAP](#) Bible study tools, the [ESV Study Bible](#) notes, or other resources to help.

Next, summarize the main truth you heard from God in His word.

Consider writing out the synthesized truth in your own words. Outline, diagram, draw, or flowchart the line of thought or main idea of the passage. What jumped out?

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## So What?

Now we must ask: *“So what?”*

After meeting God in His word, we cannot ignore, or walk away unchanged. Why does the truth you heard matter to you today?

Is there something new to believe, cling to, or a sin to confess?

Is there something for you to do (or not do) in response to what you have read?

Is there someone with whom to share this truth (believer or nonbeliever)?

Do not forget to apply the gospel for your forgiveness, and as the reason compelling your obedience:

*Christ is enough!*

He has forgiven you for \_\_\_\_\_  
and He is the reason why we \_\_\_\_\_.

# Week One

## Ephesians 1:15-23

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### QUESTIONS

Do the above process, slowly seeking Him, deeply listening to His words, and journaling as you interact with the living God. This will take you longer than one sitting with God in His word in this passage.

*What does it say?*

*What does it mean?*

*So what?*

What is the context of the church Paul is praying about here? What issues are they dealing with? Pressures facing? It might be helpful to reference a study bible or commentary.

What is the main theme or themes of this prayer?

How does this prayer contextualize to our modern day lives?

What element of Paul's prayer life is revealed in this passage?

### SO WHAT?

What would it look like for this prayer to be answered in your own life? Where is this convicting or encouraging for you?

What would it look like for this prayer to be answered in the life of our church?

Who could you pray this for in your own life? What would it look like for this prayer to be answered in their lives?

Spend time praying the themes of this prayer, both for yourself and those God has placed in your life.

## Week Two

# Philippians 1:9-11

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### QUESTIONS

Do the above process, slowly seeking Him, deeply listening to His words, and journaling as you interact with the living God. This will take you longer than one sitting with God in His word in this passage.

*What does it say?*

*What does it mean?*

*So what?*

What is the context of the church Paul is praying about here? What issues are they dealing with? Pressures facing? Etc. It might be helpful to reference a study bible or commentary.

What is the main theme or themes of this prayer?

How does this prayer contextualize to our modern day lives?

What element of Paul's prayer life is revealed in this passage?

### SO WHAT?

What would it look like for this prayer to be answered in your own life? Where is this convicting or encouraging for you?

What would it look like for this prayer to be answered in the life of our church?

Who could you pray this for in your own life? What would it look like for this prayer to be answered in their lives?

Spend time praying the themes of this prayer, both for yourself and those God has placed in your life.

# Week Three

## 2 Thessalonians 1:3-12

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### QUESTIONS

Do the above process, slowly seeking Him, deeply listening to His words, and journaling as you interact with the living God. This will take you longer than one sitting with God in His word in this passage.

*What does it say?*

*What does it mean?*

*So what?*

What is the context of the church Paul is praying about here? What issues are they dealing with? Pressures facing? Etc. It might be helpful to reference a study bible or commentary.

What is the main theme or themes of this prayer?

How does this prayer contextualize to our modern day lives?

What element of Paul's prayer life is revealed in this passage?

### SO WHAT?

What would it look like for this prayer to be answered in your own life? Where is this convicting or encouraging for you?

What would it look like for this prayer to be answered in the life of our church?

Who could you pray this for in your own life? What would it look like for this prayer to be answered in their lives?

Spend time praying the themes of this prayer, both for yourself and those God has placed in your life.

## Week Four

# 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13



### QUESTIONS

Do the above process, slowly seeking Him, deeply listening to His words, and journaling as you interact with the living God. This will take you longer than one sitting with God in His word in this passage.

*What does it say?*

*What does it mean?*

*So what?*

What is the context of the church Paul is praying about here? What issues are they dealing with? Pressures facing? Etc. It might be helpful to reference a study bible or commentary.

What is the main theme or themes of this prayer?

How does this prayer contextualize to our modern day lives?

What element of Paul's prayer life is revealed in this passage?

### SO WHAT?

What would it look like for this prayer to be answered in your own life? Where is this convicting or encouraging for you?

What would it look like for this prayer to be answered in the life of our church?

Who could you pray this for in your own life? What would it look like for this prayer to be answered in their lives?

Spend time praying the themes of this prayer, both for yourself and those God has placed in your life.

# Week Five

## Colossians 1:9-14

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### QUESTIONS

Do the above process, slowly seeking Him, deeply listening to His words, and journaling as you interact with the living God. This will take you longer than one sitting with God in His word in this passage.

*What does it say?*

*What does it mean?*

*So what?*

What is the context of the church Paul is praying about here? What issues are they dealing with? Pressures facing? Etc. It might be helpful to reference a study bible or commentary.

What is the main theme or themes of this prayer?

How does this prayer contextualize to our modern day lives?

What element of Paul's prayer life is revealed in this passage?

### SO WHAT?

What would it look like for this prayer to be answered in your own life? Where is this convicting or encouraging for you?

What would it look like for this prayer to be answered in the life of our church?

Who could you pray this for in your own life? What would it look like for this prayer to be answered in their lives?

Spend time praying the themes of this prayer, both for yourself and those God has placed in your life.



## Together With Your 3D Group

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You'll find the specific supplementary questions for the scripture passages in the above schedule. You can also find the full details for 3D discussion in our [3D Meeting Guide](#). Here's a summary:

### Bible

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*First, discuss the Bible passage from the week:*

- 1** What does the passage say? What jumps out to you? What key ideas, commands, promises, words, ideas, etc, struck you this week?

- 2** How would you summarize the main truth from the section? How might this inform your thinking and shape the way we are to live?

- 3** Where is the gospel connected to this truth? What does this highlight about who we are, or about who God is?

### Life

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*Share about how this truth impacts your life today:*

For you today, why does this specifically matter?

Is there something God calling you to obey in response to His word?

Is there something you need to do or not do? Something to believe, promise to cling to, or a sin to confess?

Is there someone to share this truth with?

### Prayer

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*Pray throughout your time together.*

Offer praises to God when something encouraging is shared; ask for help from God as challenges are shared.

Close in prayer.

Spend time to respond to God's truth in the scriptures and from your conversation.

Praise Him.

Confess sin to Him.

Thank Him.

Ask Him for His power and provision.

## Resources

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Here are some good resources to consider when getting to know God and growing to live for Christ.

### Bibles & Commentaries

English Standard Version (ESV) Study Bible  
The ESV Study Bible is a great resource - everyone should own one. Short commentary on each book of the Bible. You'll love this Bible for the passages above.

The Gospel Coalition Commentaries | [thegospelcoalition.org/commentary](http://thegospelcoalition.org/commentary)  
TGC has put together a collection of wonderful, accessible, and free digital commentaries.

Matthew Henry's Concise  
Commentary on the Whole Bible  
Online pdf is free and solid.

### Online Media

BibleProject | [bibleproject.com](http://bibleproject.com)

Short videos on Paul's life in Luke/Acts are great. They have solid videos for every book of the Bible, themes that flow through the Scriptures, and theology in general.

Christian Classics Ethereal Library | [ccel.org](http://ccel.org)

Online resource pool with tons of resources, a little much to sort through, but many are helpful.

Precept Austin | [preceptaustin.org](http://preceptaustin.org)

Online resource pool with tons of resources, a little much to sort through, but many are helpful.

## ACTS Prayer

### ENJOYING & ENGAGING GOD IN PRAYER

The Lord's Prayer and Psalms generally fall into four "categories" of conversation. Adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication. Use this guide to talk with God in prayer, lingering a few minutes in each of area.

#### ADORATION – Praising God for Who He Is

- What have you learned about His character lately? Praise Him
- What ways has God been \_\_\_\_\_ to you? Praise Him.
- Where do you need God to be who He is in your life? Praise Him.
- Read through the Psalms if necessary as a guide to help praise Him.

#### CONFESSION – Things Done, Not Done, Motives, Etc.

- What do you need to confess to Him about your thoughts?
- What do you need to confess to Him about your motives?
- What do you need to confess to Him about your attitude?
- What do you need to confess to Him in your work? What do you need to confess to Him in your relationships?

#### THANKSGIVING – Things God has Given or Done

- What relationship can you thank Him for?
- What tangible things has He provided that you can thank Him for?
- What in your work can you thank Him for?
- What has he done in you, for you, in spite of you, through you?

#### SUPPLICATION – Requests for Yourself, Family, Work, Leaders, Lost People, Etc.

- Pray that He would change (you or a situation).
- Pray that He would meet (you or someone).
- Pray that He would give (tangibly or intangibly).
- Pray that He would save (neighbor/coworker/friend/family).

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## Morning & Evening

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### Morning Prayer- Commit, Submit, Accept

#### **Commit**

Spend time praising God for who He is. Let your praise of Him turn to committing your day to Him. You will live for Him alone. Talk with Him about the implications this might have on your life and actions today.

#### **Submit**

God is all powerful and fully good. Submit your plans to Him. Let His character shape your submission. If He changes your plans, ask that you would be present + faithful with Him, and present + loving with others in those changes.

#### **Accept**

Preemptively accept His grace. Accept His grace, strength, power to do what He has called you to do today. Accept His grace for times you may fall short of what He has called you to do and in who He has called you to be. Let His overwhelming grace empower and compel your obedience.

### Evening Prayer- Rejoice, Repent, Receive

#### **Rejoice**

Rejoice over how God met you today. What specific things can you thank + praise Him for? What blessings did He provide, what struggles did He carry you through? Give thanks for His provision of breath, bread, relationships, job etc. Praise Him for who He is, and what He has done.

#### **Repent**

Where did you fall short today? Confess things you said, did, didn't say, didn't do, thought, wanted, looked at, avoided, felt... Be honest and specific. He knows you, forgives you, loves you. Let His overwhelming grace empower, compel, and sustain your relationship and obedience.

#### **Receive**

Receive how God met you today. Did He show you something about Himself or yourself in the scriptures? Did He teach you something about Himself or yourself through interactions or circumstances? Listen to what He is telling you in His word, by the Spirit, in your day with Him.