

Study guide

This study guide is designed to help you to become more familiar with the Bible. Study these passages on your own, with a friend, or with a group. If you or someone you know needs a Bible, please take one! For message manuscripts and videos go to spwired.com.

MONDAY—Read Mark 1:29-39. As he worked miracles in His early ministry, Jesus was constantly surrounded by people who needed his help. He purposely rose “very early in the morning” to be alone with God, knowing that soon “everyone” would be looking for Him. He kept control of his schedule, so he could fulfill his mission throughout Galilee. If Jesus (God’s son) needed to be alone with God, it must be vital for us in our “always on” lives. One of the biggest struggles people report with personal prayer is keeping their minds from wandering. If this is your struggle, try writing out your prayer and reading it aloud. As you read it, open your heart and imagination to sense God’s presence with you.

TUESDAY—Read Mark 6:45-56. We all have days that require us to step away and refocus. Jesus had them, too. He had just fed 5,000 people miraculously, and was about to walk out to the disciples on the Sea of Galilee and calm a storm. What did he do in between? He “went up on a mountainside to pray.” Prayer seemed to be the most renewing “break” activity in Jesus’ life. When are the best times for you to find a solitary place? Where are you most likely to remain undisturbed? Is there a time of day that you are most alert and focused? All of these questions can help make your time with God more fruitful. How can you be ready for time with God when that moment suddenly appears during a hectic day?

WEDNESDAY—Matthew 6:5-13. Jesus clearly did not regard prayer as a matter of reciting the proper formula in order to get what we want. Quite the opposite—he said, “Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.” So he didn’t mean the Lord’s Prayer as a fixed formula. It was, rather, a model of a simple, straightforward prayer, aligning us with God and God’s purpose. Pray the Lord’s Prayer, phrase by phrase. Meditate on what each phrase tells you about God and what your inner response tells you about yourself.

THURSDAY—Read Luke 11:1-13. Clearly the disciples believed that something they valued about Jesus came from his praying. They wanted to learn from him, because they wanted to be more like him. Verses 9 and 10 seem to say that we’ll receive anything we ask for in prayer. Verse 13 may offer one key to grasping Jesus’ meaning: God will always give the Holy Spirit to anyone who asks. Take with you today a simple “breath prayer” that Jesus promised God will always answer. As you draw in breath, silently start the invitation: “Come to me...” As you exhale, finish the prayer: “Holy Spirit.” Repeat at any point in the day where you need to.

FRIDAY—Luke 18:9-14. Luke said Jesus told this story “to some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else.” Plainly Jesus’ main focus was on the Pharisee. As he learned to trust God’s mercy, the tax collector could have prayed more confidently. But the Pharisee couldn’t trust in God’s mercy—it never crossed his mind that he needed any! How can God’s love and grace help us maintain a healthy sense of spiritual need without sinking into a sense of contempt, either for others or for ourselves?

Prayer Concerns

Health & Healing

Tina Bowman, Freddie & Jim McGree,
Dave Ritter, Felicity Roland, Vivian Harper

Cancer Treatment:

Pam Clifton, Rose Hymer,
Easton Murdock, Joey Walker,
Bob Benefiel

Other Concerns:

J.D. & Sierra Armstrong, Tammy Comer
Mario, Noah & Natalie Soriano
Erick Easom, Jo Clark, Austin Lewis
Artura Lara & Lara Kids,
James & Simone Lesmeister,
Ron & Bonnie Curtis, Cory Moore

Serving in the military:

We honor those serving in the military by placing their names on the Military Board in the east hallway after listing new names here for one week.

Please check that board regularly.