

How does aligning your heart with God's will through praise and repentance before asking for anything change the nature and focus of your prayers?

In what ways might God be inviting you to be part of the answer to prayers you're currently praying, rather than simply waiting for Him to act independently?

When Jesus teaches us to pray for 'daily bread' rather than weekly or monthly provision, what does this reveal about the kind of dependence and trust God desires from us?

How do you respond when God's answer to your prayer is 'no' or 'not yet'—does your faith remain intact, or is it contingent on receiving what you asked for?

What does it mean practically to seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness before presenting our personal needs and requests to Him?

If you could only ask God for one thing above all else, what would it be, and does your answer reflect that Jesus Himself is enough for you?

How does viewing God as a loving Father who gives good gifts change your expectations and attitude when bringing requests to Him in prayer?

In what areas of your life are you trying to instruct God on what He should do rather than surrendering to His wisdom and will?

What would change in your prayer life if you truly believed that 'when we work, we work, but when we pray, God works'?

How can the practice of asking 'Does this prayer align with God's will?' transform both what you pray for and how you pray?

## Small Group Guide: "Ask - Prayer and Daily Bread"

Based on Matthew 6:9-13, 25-34

### Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin by practicing what was taught in the sermon: Pause, Praise, and Repent before asking. Lead the group in a brief prayer following this pattern.

### Icebreaker (10 minutes)

Question: Share a time when you asked someone for something important. How did it feel to wait for their answer? How does that compare to waiting on God?

### Key Takeaways from the Sermon

#### The P-R-A-Y Model:

Pause - Give God praise before making requests

Repent - Align your heart with God through confession

Ask - Bring your requests to God

Yield - Trust God's answer (covered next week)

Central Truth: Before I ask God to move, I let God move in me.

### Three Key Questions for Prayer Requests:

Does my prayer request align with God's will?

Am I willing to be a part of the answer?

If God says no or not yet, is Jesus still enough?

#### Discussion Questions

##### Section 1: Understanding Prayer Alignment (15 minutes)

The sermon emphasized praising and repenting before asking God for things. Why do you think Jesus structured prayer this way? How does this differ from how you typically pray?

Read Matthew 6:25-33. What does it mean practically to "seek first his kingdom and his righteousness"? How does this change what we pray for?

The pastor shared about praying for Ms. Viva Jean when healing wasn't God's will. Have you experienced a time when God's answer was different from what you requested? How did that affect your faith?

##### Section 2: Partnering with God (15 minutes)

Read Matthew 9:35-10:1. Jesus told the disciples to pray for workers, then immediately sent them. When has God answered your prayer by inviting you to be part of the solution?

Look at your current prayer list. Are there any requests where God might be calling you to participate in the answer? What would that look like practically?

Mother Teresa prayed "give them today their daily bread through us." How does this perspective change the way we approach intercessory prayer?

##### Section 3: Jesus as Enough (15 minutes)

Read Psalm 27:4. David says "one thing I ask of the Lord." If you could only ask God for one thing, what would it be? What does your answer reveal about your priorities?

The sermon asked: "If God answered every prayer except the one you're asking right now, would he still be worthy of your trust?" How would you honestly answer that question?

What's the difference between trusting God for an outcome versus trusting God regardless of the outcome?

Practical Application (15 minutes)

Individual Reflection

Take 3-5 minutes of silence for each person to:

Write down one specific prayer request they're bringing to God this week

Answer the three questions about that request:

Does this align with God's will as I understand it?

Could I be part of the answer?

Is Jesus enough even if God says no?

Group Sharing

Invite volunteers to share their prayer request (only what they're comfortable sharing)

Have the group pray for each person using the P-R-A-Y model

Discuss any insights gained from asking the three questions

This Week's Challenge

Daily Prayer Exercise: Each day this week, practice the P-R-A-Y model:

Monday-Tuesday: Focus on Pause (Praise). Spend your prayer time only praising God without asking for anything.

Wednesday-Thursday: Add Repent. Praise God, then ask Him to reveal areas needing alignment.

Friday-Sunday: Practice the full model: Praise, Repent, then Ask using the three questions.

Accountability:

Share one prayer request with another group member

Check in mid-week to ask: "How is God inviting you to be part of the answer?"

Memory Verse

Matthew 6:33 - "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

Closing Prayer (10 minutes)

Go around the circle and have each person pray one sentence prayers following this pattern:

First round: Praise (something about God's character)

Second round: Repentance (area needing alignment - can be silent)

Third round: Ask (one request, ending with "Your will be done")

Close with the leader praying: "Father, you do what you want to do, and do it quickly. We trust you. In Jesus' name, Amen."

## Leader Notes

Be sensitive to those who may be struggling with unanswered prayers

Create space for honest doubt and questions

Emphasize that God is not a cosmic vending machine, but a loving Father

If someone shares a deep need, consider having elders or mature believers available for additional prayer after the group

Remind the group that learning to pray takes practice - we're all in process

## Additional Resources

Encourage group members to keep a prayer journal this week

Suggest reading Matthew 6-7 in different translations

Consider reading "The Prayer of Jabez" or "Too Busy Not to Pray" as a group follow-up

## 5-Day Devotional: Before I Ask God to Move

### Day 1: Pause and Praise Before Asking

Reading: Matthew 6:9-13; Psalm 100:1-5

Devotional: Before we rush to God with our shopping list of needs, Jesus teaches us to pause. "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name" reminds us that prayer begins with worship, not want. The psalmist declares, "Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise." When we approach God, we acknowledge His holiness, His goodness, and His sovereignty over our lives. This isn't empty ritual—it's heart alignment. Like a child who runs into their father's arms before asking for anything, we come to God first to be with Him, not just to get from Him. Today, before you present any request, spend time simply praising God for who He is. Let worship realign your perspective and remind you that you're approaching the King of the universe who is also your loving Father.

### Day 2: Repent and Realign Your Heart

Reading: Matthew 6:12; 1 John 1:5-10

Devotional: "Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors." Jesus places repentance at the heart of prayer, not to shame us, but to free us. Unconfessed sin creates distance in our relationship with God—not because He moves away, but because we hide. Like Adam in the garden, we cover ourselves rather than coming clean. Repentance realigns our hearts with our Father. It's the spiritual equivalent of getting your car's wheels aligned so it drives straight. When we confess our sins and extend forgiveness to others, we remove the barriers that prevent us from hearing God clearly. Before asking God to move in your circumstances, let Him move in you through honest confession. What needs to be made right today? What grudge needs releasing? Clear the path for God's work in your life.

### Day 3: Ask According to His Will

Reading: Matthew 6:25-34; 1 John 5:14-15

Devotional: "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." Prayer isn't about getting God to join our agenda; it's about surrendering our agenda to His. Jesus teaches us to pray for daily bread—not weekly or monthly provision—because He wants us to depend on Him daily. Like the Israelites gathering manna each morning, we learn that God's provision comes as we align with His purposes. The question isn't "Can God do this?" but "Will God do this?" And we trust that His will is always best. When we pray, we must ask ourselves: Does this request align with God's kingdom purpose? Am I seeking His glory or my comfort? Today, bring your needs to God boldly, but hold them with open hands, trusting that your Father knows what's truly good for you.

Day 4: Partner with God in the Answer

Reading: Matthew 9:35-10:8; James 2:14-17

Devotional: Jesus told His disciples to pray for more workers in the harvest, then immediately sent them out to be the answer to their own prayer. This reveals a profound truth: God often invites us to partner with Him in answering our prayers. When we pray for the sick, He may call us to visit. When we pray for the hungry, He may prompt us to provide. When we pray for the lost, He may send us to share the gospel. Faith without works is dead, and prayers without willingness to act can be hollow. Before asking God to move, ask yourself: "Am I willing to be part of the answer?" God doesn't need our help, but He graciously invites our participation in His kingdom work. Today, review your prayer list and ask God if there's something He wants you to do alongside your praying.

Day 5: Jesus Is Enough, Even When the Answer Is No

Reading: Psalm 27:1-14; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

Devotional: "One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life." David understood what we often forget: being with Jesus matters more than getting from Jesus. Paul prayed three times for his thorn to be removed, and God said no—but gave him grace instead. Sometimes God's greatest gift isn't removing our struggle but sustaining us through it. The ultimate question of faith is this: If God answered every other prayer but not this one, would He still be enough? Is your faith tied to God doing what you want, or to trusting who He is? Jesus is enough when the diagnosis doesn't change, when the relationship doesn't heal, when the provision doesn't come. Today, pray your deepest request, then end with these words: "Jesus, You are enough, even if the answer is no or not yet."