



Group Guide: Make Ready - Preparing to Possess God's Promises

Opening Prayer: Begin the session with a prayer, asking God to guide your discussion and help apply the sermon's teachings to your lives.

Key Takeaways:

1. Prayer is essential for preparing to possess God's promises.
2. We should aim for an "I know He heard me now!" prayer life, rather than a "Can He hear me now?" approach.
3. Four key aspects of effective prayer: Sprint, Approach the Throne, Make Clean Intercession, and Excel.

Discussion Questions:

1. SPRINT:

- How can we cultivate a habit of "sprinting to God" in prayer each morning?
- What obstacles prevent you from making prayer your first priority of the day?

2. APPROACH THE THRONE:

- How does understanding our access to God's throne room change your perspective on prayer?
- Share a time when you experienced God's mercy or grace through prayer.

3. MAKE CLEAN INTERCESSION:

- What does it mean to "cleanse your hands" and "purify your hearts" in the context of prayer?
- How can we balance praying for our own needs with interceding for others?

4. EXCEL:

- What do you think James means by "effective, fervent prayer"?
- How can we pray more boldly, like the poet asking Alexander the Great for a ton of gold?

5. Reflection:

- Which of the four prayer aspects (Sprint, Approach the Throne, Make Clean Intercession, Excel) do you find most challenging? Why?
- How might improving your prayer life help you prepare for God's promises in your personal life and in our church?

Practical Applications:

1. Seven-Day Prayer Challenge: Commit to "sprinting to God" in prayer each morning for the next week. Share your experiences at the next meeting.
2. Prayer Partners: Pair up with another group member to hold each other accountable in prayer and share prayer requests throughout the week.
3. Intercessory Prayer List: Create a list of people or situations to pray for regularly, focusing on others' needs as well as your own.
4. Bold Prayer Exercise: Write down one "bold" prayer request that seems beyond your current circumstances. Pray for it daily and watch for God's response.
5. Prayer Journal: Start a prayer journal to record your prayers, God's answers, and your growth in this spiritual discipline.

Closing Prayer: End the session by praying together, perhaps using the ACTS method (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication) to practice the principles discussed.

Scripture to Meditate On:

"Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." - Hebrews 4:16 (NIV)



Don't let the message end when the service does. Take these questions into your week—ask them at dinner, in the car, on a walk, or online. Let them open doors for faith to grow and for hearts to be stirred toward Jesus.

- How can we cultivate a 'sprint to God' mindset in our daily lives, especially when facing challenges or transitions?
- In what ways might our own sins or shortcomings be hindering our prayer life and connection with God?
- How can we balance praying for our own needs (supplication) with praying for others (intercession) in our spiritual practice?
- What does it mean to approach God's throne 'boldly,' and how can we reconcile this with maintaining reverence and humility?
- How might the story of the Israelites crossing the Jordan River apply to our own faith journey and the challenges we face?

- In what ways can we prepare ourselves, like the Israelites were instructed to, for the 'promise land' God has for us individually and as a community?
- How can we discern between 'measly prayers' and 'mighty prayers,' and what might be holding us back from praying more boldly?
- What role does community play in our prayer life, especially considering James' instruction to 'confess your trespasses to one another'?
- How can we maintain faith and courage, like the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, when facing our own metaphorical 'furnace of change'?
- In what ways can we cultivate a prayer life that moves beyond 'Can He hear me now?' to 'I know He heard me now!'?



Day 1: Preparing for God's Promises

Reading: Joshua 1:1-11

Devotional: Just as God prepared Joshua and the Israelites to enter the Promised Land, He is preparing us for His promises in our lives. The command to "make ready" echoes through time, calling us to prepare our hearts and minds for what God has in store.

Reflect on areas in your life where you feel God is leading you into new territory. How can you "make ready" spiritually? Consider setting aside time each day this week to pray specifically about God's direction for your life and your church community.

Day 2: The Power of Prayer

Reading: James 4:7-10

Devotional: Prayer is our direct line to God, a gift that allows us to "sprint" into His presence. Today's reading reminds us to draw near to God, and He will draw near to us. Think about your prayer life - do you approach it with the urgency and excitement of someone sprinting to meet a loved one? Challenge yourself to start each day this week by "sprinting" to God in prayer before doing anything else. Ask Him to cleanse your heart and prepare you for whatever the day may bring.

Day 3: Approaching God's Throne

Reading: Hebrews 4:14-16

Devotional: Through Christ, we have the incredible privilege of approaching God's throne with confidence. This access was bought at a great price - the sacrifice of Jesus. As you read today's passage, imagine yourself entering the throne room of God. What would you say? What burdens would you lay before Him? Take time to thank Jesus for making this direct access to God possible, and practice approaching God's throne boldly in your prayers today.

Day 4: The Power of Intercessory Prayer

Reading: 1 Timothy 2:1-4

Devotional: Intercessory prayer - praying for others - is a powerful act of love and faith. It shifts our focus from our own needs to the needs of those around us. Today, challenge yourself to make a list of people in your life who need prayer. Include not just friends and family, but also leaders, those who are suffering, and even those you might consider enemies. Spend time lifting each person up to God, asking for His intervention and blessing in their lives.

Day 5: Praying with Expectation

Reading: Mark 11:22-24

Devotional: Our prayers should be bold, reflecting our faith in a mighty God. Just as Alexander the Great was pleased by a bold request, our God is honored when we pray with faith and expectation. What "mountain" in your life needs moving? What seems impossible that you need to bring before God? Today, pray with renewed boldness and expectation, trusting that God is able to do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine. Write down your bold prayer requests and commit to praying for them consistently, watching expectantly for God's answer.

