

SMALL GROUPS

This week's sermon explored how prayer is not simply a religious habit or emergency response, but the primary way we stay connected to God as he builds his design in and through us. Drawing from Jeremiah 29:11-13, we examined how God's plan for our lives requires ongoing communication with the one who drew the blueprint — and how prayer connects us, changes us, and aligns us with his purposes.

Key Takeaways

- You were never meant to design your life. You are meant to build the life that God designed for you.
- Prayer is not an emergency button or a checklist item. It is relationship, communication, and alignment with the Father.
- Prayer keeps you connected to the architect while he builds his design in you.
- God does not just want to change your circumstances. Sometimes he uses your circumstances to change you.
- Prayer aligns your plans with God's blueprint, not the other way around.
- Every act of obedience is like another brick in the life that God is building.
- What looks like chaos to you may still be construction in the hands of God.

Discussion Questions

Section One: Staying Connected to the Architect

1. The sermon pointed out that Jeremiah 29:11 is widely quoted, but verse 12 — which immediately calls God's people to prayer — is often overlooked. Why do you think we tend to want God's plan without pursuing God's presence? What does that reveal about how we view prayer?
2. Pastor Mack said, "Sometimes we want the plan of God without the presence of God." Can you think of a time in your own life when you asked God for direction but then stopped talking to him once you felt you had an answer? What happened?
3. Jesus withdrew often to pray, even as the Son of God. What does that rhythm tell us about the nature of prayer? How does your current prayer life compare to the idea of prayer as a daily rhythm rather than an occasional event?
4. The sermon described prayer as including listening, not just talking. How comfortable are you with silence in prayer? What makes sitting and listening to God difficult, and what might help you practice it more?

Section Two: Prayer Changes the Builder

5. Pastor Mack said, "Sometimes God changes your situation, and sometimes God uses your situation to change you." Which of those two outcomes do you typically hope for when you pray? How does it shift your perspective to consider that both can be genuine answers to prayer?
6. Philippians 1:6 describes God as faithfully completing the work he began in us. In what area of your life do you feel most "under construction" right now? What does it look like to cooperate with that process rather than resist it?
7. The sermon used the image of renovation — that we often want the finished room without going through demolition. Where have you

experienced that tension spiritually? What did God need to tear out before he could build something better?

8. David's prayer in Psalms 139:23-24 asks God to search him rather than fix the people around him. How often does your prayer life focus inward versus outward? What would change if you regularly prayed, "God, what are you building in me right now?"

Section Three: Alignment and Obedience

9. The sermon described immature prayer as "God, here's my plan, make it happen," and mature prayer as "God, here's my heart, now align it with yours." Where do you find yourself most often in that spectrum? What would it take to move toward greater surrender?
10. Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane with total honesty about what he was feeling, but still surrendered to the Father's will. How does that example challenge the idea that strong faith means never wrestling with God? How does it encourage you?
11. Pastor Mack said prayer must lead to obedience — that at some point you have to get off your knees and build. Is there an area in your life where you have been praying but have been slow to act on what God has already shown you? What is holding you back?
12. The sermon described small acts of obedience as bricks being laid one at a time. What are some "small bricks" in your life right now that might feel insignificant but are actually part of what God is constructing? How does that perspective encourage you to keep going?

Section Four: Full Access

13. Near the end of the sermon, the image of a "vault" was used — areas of our hearts where we allow God access to some things but not others. Are there any rooms in your life that you have kept locked? What would it mean to give God full access to those areas?
14. The sermon closed with the reminder that God will not force his way in — access has to be granted. What fears or hesitations make it

difficult to fully surrender certain areas of your life to him? How can your group support you in that?

Practical Applications

Choose one or more of the following to practice this week:

Daily Check-In Prayer Before reaching for your phone each morning, take two to five minutes to simply say good morning to God. Thank him for the day, ask him to lead you, and give him room to speak. Keep it simple and consistent.

The Construction Question At some point this week, set aside time to ask God one specific question: "What are you building in me right now?" Write down whatever comes to mind and bring it back to share with your group next week.

Listening Practice After your normal prayer time, sit in silence for at least five minutes. Do not fill the space with more words. Simply be present. If this feels uncomfortable, that discomfort itself is worth reflecting on.

Obedience Inventory Write down one thing God has already shown you that you have not yet acted on. Identify one concrete step you can take this week to move toward obedience in that area.

Unlock a Room If the image of the vault resonated with you, spend time in prayer this week identifying one area you have kept closed off from God. Ask him to give you the courage to open it and invite him in.

Closing Prayer Focus

Close your group time by praying together with these specific focuses:

- That each person would develop a consistent, relational rhythm of prayer rather than an occasional or emergency-driven one
- That God would reveal what he is currently building in each member of the group

- That each person would have the courage to give God full access — including the areas that feel painful or private
- That your group would encourage one another through the messy, in-progress seasons of life, trusting that God finishes what he starts

Memory Verse for the Week

Jeremiah 29:12 — The verse reminds us that immediately after God declares his plans for us, he invites us into conversation with him. His plan and our prayer are meant to go together.

Looking Ahead

Next week, continue reflecting on the Blueprints series. Consider: if prayer is how we stay connected to the architect, what other habits or practices help us remain aligned with his design? Come prepared to share one way your prayer life shifted — even slightly — because of this week's discussion.