



Persistent Prayer | Ronnie Johnson | 2.23.19
Weekly Study

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer the following question:

What was your favorite job you ever had? What was the worst job you ever had?

SHARE

Welcome to Week Four of Take-Home Faith. This year we are getting serious about equipping the church with the necessary tools to follow Jesus throughout the week. Christianity is not about creating churchgoers; it's about building Jesus followers. The calling of Jesus is to follow him in every part and every hour of your life!

This week, Ronnie continued our series by talking about the importance of prayer. Before we jump in, take some time with your group by answering these questions:

What was the most inspiring conversation you had this week? Why?

Rate your week on a scale of 1 to 10. Why did you pick the number you did?

How have your take-home assignments gone for you? How did worship impact this last week?

GROW

Read Luke 11:1-13

How would you define prayer?

Have you ever seen a prayer answered? Tell the group about it.

Have you ever felt like God was ignoring your prayer? Tell the group about it.

Prayer is one of the best practices we can take home with us, because as Ronnie reminded us, “we don’t produce spiritual disciplines out of our strength. We produce spiritual disciplines out of desperation.”

So how do we add prayer to our 167? Well when his disciples ask him how to pray, Jesus gives them a model; we call it The Lord’s Prayer. Jesus isn’t saying this is the only way we can ever pray, but He is giving us a useful model to follow. Let’s reread it:

Father, hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come.
Give us each day our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.
And lead us not into temptation.

Notice the first word of the prayer. Jesus starts with “Father.” The Aramaic word He used is “Abba,” which has a stronger connotation of love and affection than our English word does. So, according to Jesus, the starting point for prayer is realizing that your heavenly Father is gracious and loving!

The word “Father” can have a lot of baggage for some of us, so it’s essential to understand that the Father we are talking to is loving, affectionate, and full of grace. If we don’t know how much God loves us, we will never be able to keep up a consistent prayer life. Instead, we’ll be nervous or full of shame every time we sit down to speak to him.

What is the most challenging/intimidating part about prayer for you?

What is the biggest obstacle standing in your way of praying more?

M O V E

Read Luke 18:1-8

What is your most significant prayer request at the moment? What do you want to see God do in your life?

What action steps are you taking to see these prayers fulfilled?

The Bible tells the story of God, inviting humans into the ongoing creation of the world! One of the main ways we do this is through our prayers. The parable of the persistent widow is an excellent example of how God invites us to pray. He doesn't just tell us to ask once; he invites us to knock consistently until we see results.

Jesus gives us three action steps for praying effectively.

Step 1: Ask, and it will be given to you.

Step 2: Seek, and you will find.

Step 3: Knock, and the door will be opened.

At first glance, it may seem like He is just repeating himself three times. But there is a divine order to these three steps. When it comes to taking prayer home with us, it can be beneficial to break down all three steps.

Ask: God wants us to present our requests to Him. Think about that for a second. Don't be shy about your requests. God loves when we prayer bold, audacious prayers because they acknowledge that God is a big God! As James says, "you do not have, because you do not ask" (James 4:2). The first step is to make our request known to God!

Seek: As we continue to ask, we begin to recognize that prayer is a process. Discovering wisdom takes time. We live in a digital age where we get immediate answers to our questions. These days, seeking wisdom is a bit of a lost art. We may be able to obtain knowledge with the click of a button, but wisdom is a journey. And prayer is the vehicle that transports us through it. When we take the time to pray, we are seeking wisdom!

Knock: The final step moves us to action. It's one thing to ask if you can go to a friend's house; it's another thing to knock on the door. Knocking on the door signals, "This is what I want, and I'm taking steps forward." What action steps are you taking to see your prayers fulfilled?

Take-Home Assignment #4: Prayer Planning

One of the reasons we fail to pray as much as we should is because we don't have a plan. Take some time right now to do some prayer planning for the week.

What

What are you going to ask God for this week? What are you seeking an answer to? And what opportunity are you knocking on the door for? Write your responses down below.

Ask:

Seek:

Knock:

When

When are you going to pray for these things? Take out your calendar right now and schedule five 5-minute prayer appointments this week. Stick to these meetings! Treat them like you would treat any other meeting.

Take some time to share your plan with the rest of your group. This can be a scary exercise, but there is power in saying it out loud!

P R A Y

As a group, spend some time praying for the things you wrote down above! If you are in a coed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to share more freely.

T O G O

You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God.

James 4:2

