

# Prayer is the Power

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[ 0 : 00 ] For the last time we get to watch that little video introduction, how many of y'all have enjoyed our study of Paul's letter to the church in Ephesus? Yeah, I have enjoyed it too. Well, in honor of that, I'm going to re-preach all the sermons this morning that I've preached over the last few months.

Look, we should be out of here in about three hours, alright? So, it's alright. Alright, the funny thing is, I am actually going to go back. If you have come in in the middle of this series, or at the tail end, or you missed some along the way, that's okay.

I'm going to give you a little summary of each chapter as we prepare to wrap up this series in Ephesians. So, if you'll take your Bibles and go to Ephesians 6, and if you'd like to turn all the way back to chapter 1 and go with me as we go chapter by chapter, up to chapter 6, you can. But I'm going to be starting off talking about this book.

It's divided into two sections. Let's say it together. Ready? Who we are, how we live. That's kind of the themes of the book of Ephesians, written by the Apostle Paul, who wrote many, many books in the New Testament.

It was written around AD 62 from his setting in Roman imprisonment. He was likely under house arrest at this time. This was a church he was very familiar with.

[ 1 : 27 ] He had been their pastor for approximately three years, and you can read all about that in Acts chapter 19. So, much of the study from this series was done from these two books, as well as a few others kind of trickled in, but the Christ-Centered Exposition series and the Bible Exposition Commentary.

Part 1, again, talks about who we are in Christ, who we are in Christ. So, by way of review, let's dive into it. Chapter 1, Ephesians chapter 1, we talked about understanding my identity in Christ causes real-life worship.

Y'all remember that? Understanding my identity in Christ causes real-life worship. Verse 7 of Ephesians 1, in Him, in Jesus, we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of His grace.

And in verse 6, it says, to the praise of His glorious grace. So, when we understand all that God did for us, all that He made us to be in spite of how bad we are, God, you know, you know how bad you are, you know how bad I am.

You may not know how bad I am, but let me tell you, it's pretty bad, okay? In spite of us, God loved us so much that He gave us real-life value.

[ 2 : 46 ] He gave us real-life worth. So much worth that it cost the blood of His own Son. So, that understanding, that identity in Christ Jesus causes us to worship Him in real life.

Not just sing the songs, not just show up at church, but real-life worship, obedience, prayer, taking time, setting time aside to dive into His Word where He reveals Himself to us.

Again, in chapter 1, it says, we studied several weeks ago, my confidence grows as my intimate knowledge of God grows. My confidence grows as my intimate knowledge of God grows.

Back in verse 18, I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what is the wealth of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is His immeasurable greatness of power toward us who believed.

Our confidence in God can grow when we understand and begin to gain a more intimate knowledge of how great God is, how much better God is than we are, how much mightier, how much more faithful and reliable than our confidence in Him grows.

[ 4 : 01 ] And then, since He has given us such worth and called us His children, our confidence in ourselves can grow, not in our flesh, but in His Spirit, which lives in us. So, chapter 2.

Chapter 2. A gospel-centered life gives me purpose. A gospel-centered life gives me purpose. What do we mean by that? Whoa. Sorry.

I jumped ahead a little bit. Here we go. I give up earthly privileges. I give up earthly preferences. I give up earthly priorities. And I give up earthly passions.

Then, I daily trade my earthly identity for my heavenly identity. So, this is kind of the theme of chapter 2. All right? Let's back up. A gospel-centered life gives me purpose.

First of all, you and I are always trying to find the purpose for our broad life, the purpose for our year, the purpose for our month, the purpose for our day. What will our purpose be today?

[ 5 : 04 ] What will the purpose be of this conversation? What will the purpose be of this task? Our purpose should come from our gospel-centered life. What do we mean by gospel-centered life?

It means that we are centering our life in the decisions we make, in the actions we make, in the way we think. We've been talking in Romans 12 about changing the way we think.

We've been talking about changing us from self-centered to gospel-centered. I recognize that my new identity in Christ reframes my life to not be about me anymore.

Now it's about Jesus and what he did for me and what he is making me to become. So now the decisions I make are in that new mind, toward that new man that God is creating in me.

So a gospel-centered life then gives me purpose. Now I know what I should say to that person who's mistreating me. Now I know how I should respond to that person when I want to respond one way, but I know that my purpose in this gospel-centered life would be to respond how Jesus would.

[ 6 : 22 ] So that means we have to give up earthly privileges that we would otherwise hold tightly to. We give up earthly preferences that seem like the biggest thing in the world to us.

We give up earthly priorities. You ever had somebody rearrange your priorities? You ever had life rearrange your priorities? You ever had life? Moving along, trying to make as much money as you can, trying to be as successful as you can, and then all of a sudden a heart attack hits.

All of a sudden something stops you in your tracks that rearranges your priorities. The gospel can do that for you in the best of ways. And then we give up our earthly passions.

What passions of the flesh are drawing you away from the beautiful, beautiful future that God has lined out for you? So, we daily trade our earthly identity for our heavenly identity.

And then, chapter 3, we talked about a Christ-centered Christian. How a Christ-centered Christian is a willing prisoner of Christ. A Christ-centered Christian understands the mystery of Christ.

[ 7 : 31 ] So willingly, we're surrendering to Christ and saying, God, I don't fully understand you and everything about your mystery, but I understand that it's a mystery. Why did you love me so much?

Why did you send your son to die for me? How did you know that I would be a sinner and yet you chose me? And yet you gave me the ability to respond to you and the responsibility to say yes to your call.

We don't understand everything about the mystery of God, but we understand that it's a beautiful mystery and it has saved our souls. What a wonderful thing.

And a Christ-centered Christian is a servant of the gospel of Christ. That's that rearranging of priorities. We're no longer a servant to sin. Now we are a servant to a much better master.

The gospel of Jesus. The good news of Jesus that says, hey, I'm a sinner. You're a sinner. We're all sinners. But God, in his great love with which he loved us, sent his only son, Jesus.

[ 8 : 41 ] And that is the message that I will take to anyone everywhere. I will be a servant to that good news. And because we're a servant of the gospel, we proclaim the riches of Christ.

The wonderful riches. Does your life reflect the riches of Christ? Would your spouse say your life reflects the riches of Christ? Would your kids say your life reflect the riches of Christ?

If not, we need to spend a little more time thinking, praying, focusing on that gospel and letting it change us from the inside out.

Letting it change the way we think. And then people will believe us when we proclaim the riches of Christ. Say, hey, trust me. God is so rich in mercy. He's so rich in grace.

He's so rich in love. And he wants to be that for you too. And then a Christ-centered Christian boldly accesses the Father. In chapter 3, a Christ-centered Christian boldly accesses the Father.

[ 9 : 44 ] We don't have to be ashamed to come to God because despite all of our faults, despite all of our shortcomings, he welcomes us with open arms. He never holds it over our head. He welcomes us as a good father would to his child.

So, for some reason, this is not advancing anymore. Can you take me to the next slide? There we go.

Thank you. I don't know why that's not working. It was working. So, continuing in chapter 3, Jesus Christ himself, y'all remember this part, is the why behind the what of me being a Christian.

Jesus is the why behind the what. How many of you grew up in churches that always talk to you, whether it's this church or another one, that so often talk to you about what you should do or what you should not do as a Christian.

I grew up like that. Oftentimes, and listen, the Bible is full of those kinds of admonitions of what we should do and what we should not do as Christians.

[10:52] However, sometimes in churches, probably more than sometimes, we have missed the why behind the what. We talked about this several weeks ago.

Jesus is the why behind the what. Sometimes, then, in our efforts to get people to conform to how we think a Christian ought to be, we lack telling them about the motivation.

We lack telling them about the real reason why you shouldn't go out and get drunk. Why you shouldn't go out and do the things that your flesh tells you to do. Why you should go be faithful to be here on Sundays in church and not forsake the gathering of the church body together.

All these things that the Bible commands a Christian to do, the Bible is very clear about the why.

But sometimes, we've missed that. So we've got to remind ourselves that Jesus is the why behind the what.

It says in verse 18 of chapter 3, Through Him, through Jesus Christ, we both have access in one spirit to one Father. So, we talked about powerful prayer.

[12:07] Which is awesome because in just a few minutes, we're going to wrap up this book at the end of chapter 6 and talk about powerful prayer. But there's a little preview here in chapter 3.

It says, Pray with humility. Pray for God's full power and full love. Pray with great expectations. Can you imagine a prayer life that looks like that? Where we humbly come before God?

Not thinking, Man, I'm a pretty good Christian. God needs to listen to me and He better do what I want. None of us would ever say that, right?

But sometimes, that's the attitude we bring in prayer. And then, if God doesn't respond exactly how we want Him to, we get a little bent out of shape sometimes. But praying with humility and praying for God's full power and full love.

Can you imagine a prayer life like that? Praying for God's full power and full love in your life or in the life of someone you're praying for?

[13:08] What a difference that would make. And praying with great expectations. It's an old missionary, C.T. Stud, who said, expect great things from God and attempt great things for God.

Pray with great expectations. There is nothing that God can't do. There's no mountain He won't move. So we should pray expecting nothing less than God's greatness to be at work.

And then, well, it's kind of working sometimes and then not. So if you'll take me to the next one, sorry, thank you, ask God to help you take the next step in your life.

What do we mean by that? Ask God to help you take the next step in your life. The second to last verse of Ephesians 3, now to Him who is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory.

God can do everything that we want Him to do and so much more. So sometimes He doesn't answer us exactly as we want Him to answer us because He wants to give us that so much more part.

[14:27] And in our mind, that doesn't work, right? Because we're this small-minded, right here, right now kind of people. We don't see it from His perspective.

So God might be wanting us to take the next step toward this beautiful ending that He has for us. And that might look a little different than what we have planned.

So we have to ask God, God, what is the next step that I need to take in my prayer life? And then chapter, well, before we jump into chapter 4, we're launching into part 2.

So that was our identity in Christ, who we are in Christ. Part 2, how we live for Christ. How we live for Christ. We said in chapter 4, God's design is diversity.

Satan's distraction is division. God's design is the diversity of the believers. Look around this church. Seriously, look around for a minute. Check around, you know, I'm giving you permission.

[ 15 : 29 ] Look at everybody's outfits. Judge not, lest ye be judged. Look around at this diverse crowd we got in here.

We got all kinds of people from all kinds of different walks of life, right? All kinds of different experiences and backgrounds in here. That's God's design. God's design is diversity. Diversity among races. Diversity among genders. Diversity among financial standing. Diversity among family life. Diversity among experiences and backgrounds. Diversity among future. But God brings us all together under His banner. His banner of love. His banner of being washed in His blood.

Washed clean from all those sins that separate us from Him. But Satan wants to take that same concept and distort it. His distraction for us is division.

[ 16 : 29 ] God's design was this beautiful diverse body gathering together under His name. Satan's distraction is highlighting those differences to drive us apart.

And that happens so often in churches. Y'all, I think it's incredible that this church has been around since 1876. Right? Most churches never last that long.

So, chapter 4. We walk worthy before God when we apply the gospel directly.

We're challenged in chapter 4. Live worthy of the calling you have received. So, when we apply this gospel of diversity, when we apply this gospel of unity, when we apply this gospel of not putting ourselves above everybody else, then we walk worthy of that gospel that we've received, that we've received because we're applying it directly.

Can I tell you the gospel of Jesus, the good news is Jesus, of Jesus, is not just good enough to save you from your sins, it's good enough to get you through this life.

[ 17 : 43 ] it's good enough to help you walk worthy before God. But you've got to apply it. Not just applying it by putting your faith in Jesus and saying, I trust Jesus enough to save me from my sin.

I trust Him enough that He died on the cross, that He was buried, that He didn't stay dead, He came up out of the grave and He's alive today. He hears me when I pray, He hears me when I sing to Him.

I believe, I put my faith in Him for salvation. That's good, that's the starting place. But you've got to keep applying the gospel in all the days that come after that until He brings us home.

So many Christians have been saved for so many years. Man, that day when you put your faith in Jesus was 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70 years ago.

But you haven't applied that gospel very many days after that. There's no other way to walk worthy before God than when we apply the gospel directly.

[ 18 : 53 ] So what does that look like? It looks like a new creation from conversion to transformation. We're not just staying at the converted part. Talking about getting saved, we call it.

Putting your faith in Jesus and saying, I believe. That makes you a child of God. That makes you a Christian. That's being converted from death to life. But then the transformation part happens.

Then the Holy Spirit starts to transform you and change you from the inside out. Once again, we're hitting on churches again.

Sometimes churches have tried to change people from the outside in. It doesn't work very well, does it? You can get people to conform to the outside changes you want them to make.

I've seen it happen. I've seen it happen in my own life. But inwardly, they're not changed. Inwardly, they're just as rotten as you want their outside to stop being.

[ 19 : 59 ] God wants to transform you from the outside, from the inside out. Romans 12, once again, he wants to change the way you think.

So, Romans 4, I'm sorry, Ephesians 4, daily renew my values to reflect my new nature in Christ. Y'all, this is a daily transformation.

It's not a one-time pill that you take that makes you look like Jesus every day. Doesn't work. It is a daily renewal saying, going to God in prayer better than any pill could be.

He's always there. He's always effective. And the side effects are grace, peace, faith, love, hope, joy, long-suffering, goodness, patience, meekness.

So, we daily renew our values to reflect our new nature in Christ. Your family knows when you do this. Your family knows when you don't.

[ 21 : 05 ] You know when you do this. You know when you don't. So, that's our challenge. Here's a question. How often do my words and actions cause grief to the God who loves me so deeply?

How often do my words and actions cause grief to the God who loves me so deeply? In the latter part of Ephesians 4, putting away lying, speak truth, each one, to his neighbor.

Be angry and do not sin. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another just as God also forgave you in Christ. God laid so much on the line.

He sacrificed everything. He gave up His one and only Son, His highest prize, His highest treasure. So, why would we then turn around and hold back so much from Him?

Why would we not turn around and forgive our neighbor? Why would we not show the same kind of love that God showed to us? My true nature is revealed in my words, my actions, and my attitudes toward others.

[ 22 : 13 ] That's what Ephesians 4 challenges us on so much. Be kind to each other. Be gentle with each other. Share with each other. Don't be stingy. Don't be prideful.

Don't be arrogant. Don't be hateful and unkind. Our true nature, that daily renewal of our attitudes, our perspectives, is revealed in our words, our actions, and our attitudes toward others.

So, how often does my path stray from following Jesus' footsteps? The answer is pretty often, isn't it? It's true. The answer is pretty often. Chapter 5 challenges us to imitate Jesus when we walk in love, light, and wisdom.

Love, light, and wisdom. Everything exposed by the light is made visible. What makes everything visible is light. Get up, sleeper. Rise from the dead and Christ will shine on you.

Let the light of Jesus shine into the dark corners of your life. Whether it's sin, whether it's trauma from the past, whether it's a broken relationship, whatever the dark corners of your mind and your heart and your life are, God can shine there and He can transform it.

[ 23 : 33 ] He can bring hope where there is no hope. And He can help you develop that new nature that walks worthy of Him and His gospel.

So, then we get into, I want to make sure we got, there we go. Then we get into the last part of chapter 5 and it talks about mutual submission.

We pivot then if we're talking about being kind to each other, treating each other well, then we start getting specific. Paul starts highlighting different relationships, husband and wife, bosses and employees, parents and children.

And he introduces this concept of mutual submission. We submit to God's Spirit in us when we voluntarily submit to each other.

This is not lording it over each other. This is not saying, I'm in charge, you better listen to me. That's not at all the Spirit that Jesus taught His disciples and that's not at all the Spirit that Paul is teaching us.

[ 24 : 33 ] He says, submit one another to one another, submit yourselves to each other. So, how does God want to change my thinking to see my relationships as He would see them?

You might have had a different view of your relationships, but how are you going to let God influence how you view your relationships? Husbands, are you going to let God change the way you think about your home and about your wife?

Wives, are you going to let God influence the way you think about your husband? Husbands, we're supposed to love our wives sacrificially, lay down our life for them as Jesus did for His church.

Husbands, I mean, wives, you're supposed to lovingly honor, respect, and follow your husband as he follows Christ. And as he follows Christ, laying his life down for you, that is a picture of mutual submission to each other, not one dominating over the other.

Chapter 5 also says, we submit to God's Spirit in us when we voluntarily submit to each other.

That's what it teaches at the end of chapter 5. Then, we get into serving the Lord by serving others.

[ 25 : 49 ] In chapter 6, it gets into parents and children, bosses and employees, and this concept continues on. Less hierarchy, more humility. Less who's in charge, and more, how can I serve?

You understand there's a mind shift? Once again, we're just going to keep hitting on it. Romans 12, changing the way you think. That's why I referenced this passage time and time again through our study of Ephesians.

So the first part of chapter 6, we serve God when we willingly serve each other. Parents serving children. Sometimes that looks like training them up in the way they should go.

Teaching them. To follow Jesus in all of His teachings. That's often how parents can serve their kids. But also, not being cruel, not being unkind, not being impatient is a way parents can serve their kids.

Kids, you can serve your parents by honoring them, by obeying them, so your days would be long on this land. And then we got into the last part of chapter 6.

[ 26 : 57 ] Last Sunday, and we said, know your enemy, Satan himself, see some passages, some verses about that. Our struggle is not against flesh and blood.

It's against rulers, authorities, the cosmic powers of this darkness, against evil, spiritual forces in the heaven. It's against all the darkness of sin. It's against all the darkness of lostness.

Wade in here. Do you remember when I said last Sunday, our enemy is not each other, our enemy is lostness, being lost, all the darkness, spiritual darkness out there of being lost and not being saved.

I went to Wade's Bible study the next night. By the way, men, if you haven't had a chance to attend Wade's Bible study on Monday nights, that's an awesome opportunity. Jump in with that if you can, if your schedule allows.

And I went last week and it's a great, great time, a fellowship, Bible study, prayer. So I got there and Wade had drawn the Loch Ness Monster. You know what they call the Loch Ness Monster?

[ 28 : 03 ] Nessie. They call her Nessie sometimes. Well, this was Lossie, right? Lossie, the lostness monster instead of Loch Ness. I'm just saying that so it'll stick in your head, all right?

So who's our enemy? Lossie, the lostness monster, okay? We're fighting against lostness out there. We're not fighting each other. We're not fighting politics. We're not fighting Hollywood. We're fighting against sin.

And then you know your equipment. You know your enemy and you know your equipment. And we talked about the armor of God. Our enemy is the spiritual darkness of lostness, but our equipment is the spiritual armor of God.

You see, spiritual fights spiritual. We can talk about gun control and what kind of guns we should be allowed to own and all this, but y'all, that's not what we're fighting this spiritual battle with.

We're fighting this spiritual battle with the armor of God. And we went through it last Sunday. Every piece of protective armor, the weapon, which is the word of God, that two-edged sword.

[ 29 : 06 ] So we prepare for war by putting on the Lord Jesus himself. All the armor, all the weapons that you can assemble is nothing without Christ himself. He's the one that gives the power.

So, in the last five minutes today, we're going to close out Ephesians 6. Would you look with me at verse 10?

If you're able to join us in standing, would you stand? If you need to remain seated, that's fine.

Ephesians 6, and verse 10. Finally, be strengthened by the Lord and by his vast strength.

Skip down to verse 18. Pray at all times in the Spirit with every prayer and request. Stay alert with all perseverance and intercession for all the saints.

Pray also for me that the message may be given to me when I open my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel. For this, I am an ambassador in chains.

[ 30 : 04 ] Pray that I might be bold enough to speak about it as I should. And then he gives his farewell address. Tychicus, our dearly loved brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will tell you all the news about me so you can be informed.

I'm sending him to you for this reason, to let you know how we are and to encourage your hearts.

Peace to the brothers and sisters and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all who have undying love for our Lord Jesus Christ.

You may be seated. Prayer is the power. How do we remember who we are in Christ?

How do we wake up every morning and say, man, I'm not going to be upset. I'm a child of God.

Prayer is the power. Going to God first, the start of each day.

Closing each day by going back to God before we go to sleep. Doing as Jesus did and praying before our meals. Stopping along the way to give thanks to God.

[ 31 : 05 ] Stopping to bring problems to Him. Stopping to bring requests to Him as needs arise.

Prayer is the power. All the time, everywhere, for everything, and everyone.

How are we supposed to pray? Let's say it together. Would you join me? All the time, everywhere, for everything, and everyone.

Let's do it again. All the time, everywhere, for everything, and everyone. That's how we're supposed to pray. That's how we're supposed to pray.

So can you and I improve our prayer life? Yeah? Can you improve your prayer life? I know I can improve mine. Y'all looking at me like, no, I got this under control, but I think you can.

Verse 18 tells us that. Pray at all times in the Spirit with every prayer and every request.

[ 32 : 09 ] Okay? That's our commission from God. 1 Thessalonians 5, 17 gives a similar charge. Pray constantly. Give thanks in everything, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Give thanks to God in the good times. Give thanks to God in the bad times. In every season, for everything, give thanks to God, even when it breaks your heart, even when it's hard, even when it's difficult.

Thank God you have someone to run to in prayer. Philippians 4, 6. Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

D.L. Moody said it this way, He who kneels the most stands the best. Thought that was one of the best quotes I've read on prayer. He who kneels the most in prayer stands the best in this life.

Number two, pray for gospel advance. This is what Paul asked them to pray for. At the end of this letter, after everything he'd given them, all this incredible content that came from the Holy Spirit of God, and it was preserved for you and I to read today, Paul closes it out by saying, pray that I will share the gospel.

[ 33 : 26 ] Pray for the gospel to flourish. Y'all, how many times have we been guilty of not praying for the gospel? Not praying for the lost to be saved.

Our enemy is lostness. We'll pray against a lot of other things. We'll pray for a lot of other things, but so often we don't pray for the gospel to advance. And we read about this in verses 19 and 20.

Romans 10, 1, Paul was all about this. He said, my heart's desire and my prayer for God, to God, is that they would be saved. He's talking about the Israelites who were lost, his people, his countrymen.

He wanted them to be saved. How many friends, co-workers, families, neighbors, how many people do you know in your life that need to be saved?

And are we praying for them? Are we praying? Is that our heart's desire to God? Matthew 9, 38, Jesus said, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.

[ 34 : 29 ] We pray for the lost to be saved and we pray for the saved to be sent out as witnesses, as missionaries with his gospel, people.

It's a hard quote, y'all. Paul Washer, a pastor who often tells it like it is, okay, he said, we spend more time praying to keep saints out of heaven than we ever spend praying to get sinners into heaven.

I'm not saying you shouldn't pray for Aunt So-and-So's heart attack or whatever, you fill in the blank with the health concern, but y'all, is it true that we probably spend more time praying to keep saints on this earth and out of heaven?

than we ever pray to get sinners into heaven. God, save my sister. God, save my brother. Save my son. Save my mom.

Save my boss. Save my neighbor. Save that person that drives me nuts. So finally, verse 23 and 24.

[ 35 : 37 ] we can be encouraged. I don't want to leave you just feeling guilty. It's not how Paul left us in Ephesians here. Be encouraged by God's peace, his love, his faith, and his grace.

Those four words are found in the final two verses of Ephesians. God's peace, love, faith, and grace. God's peace. So as we pray, as we pray for all things, for everyone, at all times, for the gospel to advance, we know that God's got us.

We know that our faith in him, that he bore in our hearts, and we responded to when he called our name. And the love that he continually shows to us and calls us to show to each other.

And the grace that he initially showed us in not sending us to hell to pay for our sins. And the grace that he continues to show us every day in withholding so many things from us that our mistakes and our failures would otherwise lead us into.

And the peace that surpasses all our understanding. The peace that is beyond explanation. The peace in the middle of the storm.

[ 37 : 02 ] These four things will go with us. As we go into another sermon series, as we leave today and we go have lunch, as we get up and go to work tomorrow, as we get up and interact with each other, these four things can carry us on.

God's peace, his love, his faith that he gave to us and his grace. So the takeaway for today, God's great purpose for me starts with prayer.

Ephesians is all about God's great purpose. Who are we in Christ? What are we supposed to do for Christ? Christ. This is God's great purpose for me.

For you and for me, it starts with prayer. So church, I want to call us into a season of prayer. For the next several months, you'll hear things on the calendar to try to enable that and try to provide opportunities for us to pray individually and corporately together as a church.

church. But I would love to call us into an intentional season of prayer at First Baptist Henrietta. So would you, with heads bowed and eyes closed in this moment, would you start that right now?

[ 38 : 25 ] All of us together, would we purpose in our hearts and say, God, maybe my prayer life is better than it's been in a long time? Or maybe it's suffering.

Maybe I'm not praying anywhere near as much as I should. Regardless of where you find yourself right now, none of us are praying as we ought to. So would you take a moment in this quiet time and ask God to remind you frequently throughout the day to turn to him in prayer?

And then would you take an extra step and say, God, help me to schedule a time to pray. Y'all, I don't know about you, but if I don't schedule something, it's probably not going to get done.

You can talk to Joy or Sarah or any member of the staff and they'll tell you if I don't put it on my calendar, I'm going to forget it. Part of it. Maybe you're like that too.

Whatever it takes for you, if it's putting it on a calendar on your phone or on a paper calendar or writing a sticky note on your mirror, whatever it takes for you, would you find a time that you can schedule to pray?

[ 39 : 40 ] Family prayer is important. Praying with best friends is important. But private, individual, one-on-one time with God is irreplaceable.

you can't replace that. That's where God speaks to us in ways that we'll never otherwise hear.

That's where God opens His arms and holds us close and gives us that peace when we stop and slow down and pray.

That's where God reveals His great purpose to us. So if you're struggling a little bit, whatever that is, would you lay it on Jesus in prayer?

God, right now, would you work in your church? Would you work in our hearts? What a difference could be made in Henrietta, Texas, and beyond if our church was a church committed to prayer?

Show us what steps we need to take, God, in our own lives and together as a church. We'll give you the glory of God. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.