

The Great Prayer Mystery
One-Month Prayer Experiment
“For More and Better Prayers”

Week Three: Are We Done Yet?

The challenge:

- From now through May 27th, pray for at least five minutes every day.

Final assignment (for the next 21 days):

- Each day, begin your conversation with God, by expressing things like ...
 - Thankfulness for His blessings, including Christ and the forgiveness you have in Him.
 - Any “laments” you may have
 - Your love for Him
- Each day, pray for at least one “big” request arising from the list of concerns you generated in previous weeks as well as any others you may need to add.
- Optional: Fast from eating (or some other activity) for at least part of one day per week. Use the urge to eat (or to engage in the activity) as a reminder to pray a brief prayer about your big request.

Explanation:

Prayer is participating with God in a battle against the forces of evil in the spiritual realm. However, to “do battle” doesn’t need to be complicated. It simply means *persisting* in prayer (and possibly fasting) until the answer comes. (See Daniel chapter 10).

“Too often we pray A.S.A.P. prayers – as soon as possible. We need to start praying A.L.A.T. prayers – as long as it takes.” - Mark Batterson, *The Circle Maker*

You don’t push a boulder up a hill with one shove and you don’t produce spiritual power and momentum with haphazard one-and-done prayers. You persist. You keep on keeping on. You keep doing it until the rock moves or the answer comes.

Conclusion of the Experiment:

On Sunday, May 28th, in place of the message we’re going to have an “open mic” time for people to share:

- Has God answered any of your prayers?
- How has praying more consistently changed you?
- What have you been praying about? (so that others will be able to pray with you)

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Week Two: What Should We Ask For?

The challenge:

- From now through May 27th, pray for at least five minutes every day.

Week Two assignment:

- Define your “our” (members of the community of which you are a part).
- Brainstorm a list of concerns for those individuals and groups. (See chart below).
- Each day, pray for at least one “big” request arising from those concerns.

Explanation:

It’s significant that almost half of *The Lord’s Prayer* is devoted to God’s agenda in the world and that *all* of the personal requests are phrased in terms of “we” not “me.” Jesus begins by praying “our Father” not “my Father.”

Therefore, to follow His model, our prayers should primarily focus on God’s desires and the community of which you are a part – your personal “our.” This would include your family, your coworkers, your city, your nation and especially your community of faith (the other believers in and followers of Jesus with whom you have connected yourself, which He called “the church”) as well as yourself.

The following chart will help you think through the intersection of your community and the things Jesus said to pray about. From this, you will be able to generate a list of meaningful “asks”.

The Lord’s Prayer	Applying the Prayer	Example of Concerns
<i>May your Name be “hallowed”, i.e. honored, revered, and glorified.</i>	1. Who needs to think more highly of God and to be drawn to Him? 2. Through whom does God’s glory	1. My boss is not a Christian and is skeptical of faith. Sue feels that God has let her down. 2. More glory would come to God if

	need to shine more brightly? How might that happen?	I could better control my temper. If they lived closer to the church, they could be more involved. Lots of believers at church still need to be baptized.
<i>May your Kingdom come and Your will be done on Earth as in Heaven.</i>	<p>3. Who needs a taste of “up there” “down here”? Who needs to experience the goodness of God’s kingdom in their life?</p> <p>4. Through whom does more of “up there” need to come “down here”? How might that happen?</p>	<p>3. I would be a better person if I didn’t watch so much TV. My friend, Andy, has a lot of turmoil in his family. So many young people are being misled by our culture.</p> <p>4. Our political leaders could focus more on character and unity than divisiveness. We need more young leaders at church. Our church could do more if it was fully funded (more people giving more).</p>
<i>Give us today our daily bread.</i>	5. Who has needs of the body? (Food, health, safety, job, housing, etc)	5. My brother has ongoing health issues. Christians in the Middle East are being killed for their faith. My hours are being cut. Women and kids are being trafficked in KC.
<i>Forgive us our debts (sins) as we have forgiven our debtors (those who sin against us)</i>	6. Who has needs of the heart and soul? (ex, to forgive others – heart – and to be forgiven by God – soul).	6. My coworker needs to make peace with her past and forgive her ex. My spouse is depressed and unhappy in her job. Bob needs to believe in Jesus and follow Him. My son isn’t part of a church.
<i>Lead us not into temptation (or trial) but deliver us from evil (or the Evil One).</i>	7. Who has needs of the mind and the will? To stand strong in trials and temptations that could break them?	7. I need to be more motivated and disciplined about prayer. If she takes that job, it might ruin her character and her family. He is worn out from caring for his family.

Obviously, generating this information will take some time so you could do just one question per day. In addition, you might find this quote encouraging:

“I have found that the absolute best motivator in prayer is knowing what I am going to pray for. Vague ideas of prayer promote vague prayers. Disorganized methods of prayer promote disorganized prayers. Meaningful methods for

prayer promote meaningful prayers.”
Challies

- Tim

Two pieces of advice when generating requests from your chart (in addition to writing them down!):

- Be bold in your requests of our Heavenly Father! (Hebrews 4:16)
- Ask for “more than you can imagine.” (Ephesians 3:20)

Conclusion:

On Sunday, May 28th, in place of the message we’re going to have an open mic time to hear stories of what has happened during the prayer experiment!

The Great Prayer Mystery
One-Month Prayer Experiment
Week One: What Difference Does It Make?

The challenge:

- From now through May 27th, pray for at least five minutes every day.

Week one assignment:

- Pray about praying.
- (Bonus) Pray about one biblical promise OR one problem OR one person.

Explanation:

The reason we’re going to pray about praying this week is because *not praying as we know we should* is what we’re struggling with most of all (at least as it concerns this issue). So, it only makes sense to ask God for help with *that* before anything else.

So, what does praying about praying look like? In your daily time of prayer this week, you might say to God things like:

- Father in Heaven, I want to get better at praying. I know You want me to get better, too. Please help me.
- Lord, I confess my lack of understanding about why I should pray. Help me to trust that You wouldn’t tell me to do something that doesn’t matter.
- Father, I confess my doubts about the power of prayer. Thank you that Jesus has already forgiven that sin on the cross. Please increase my faith.

- Lord, I confess my struggle with discipline. Thank you that Jesus has already forgiven that sin on the cross. Please increase my motivation.
- Father, I want to get to know You better so I can better know what to pray for. Please give me some ideas of what to pray about.

Two pieces of advice:

- Set a time in advance to pray each day.
- Write your prayer.

Conclusion:

On Sunday, May 28th, in place of the message we're going to have an open mic time to hear stories of what has happened during the prayer experiment!