

The Prayer Step



Leader's Note: Before class begins, be sure to make copies of the Participant Handout for the session. Begin by welcoming the ladies and open the class in prayer. Before you watch the video, introduce the topic by spending approximately five minutes going over the definition and Session Opening. After you watch the video, open the floor for discussion and move into your selected group exercise(s).

The group exercises are designed to generate meaningful discussion. Depending on how much time you have, you may not have time to discuss all of the exercises. Before class begins, select the exercise(s) you want to focus your session on. Remember, the goal is not to “get through” all of the exercises, but to create an atmosphere where revelation comes through group dialogue that creates “aha moments”. When women bond through shared experiences and increased knowledge of God’s word, healing comes and creates an opportunity where safe and solid relationships can be built that can last well beyond the group study.

Definition of Prayer:



The prayer step is the practice of **conversing** with God to seek direction and wisdom.

Session Opening:



Obviously, prayer is much more than just talking to God to gain direction and wisdom for our own lives, but for a woman struggling with relationship addiction, this particular aspect of prayer is crucial to her recovery. Why is God’s direction and wisdom so important? Because most love junkies have discounted their inner witness and their ability to hear God’s voice. Insecurities have muffled God’s voice. The desire to please others has made her vulnerable to temptation. As a result, she has often accepted unacceptable relationships. With a healthy prayer life to gain discernment, however, she can learn how to pay attention to her instinct, hear the voice of God and position herself to make healthy relationship choices.

For me....my struggle with prayer was _____. *(As a facilitator share part of your own journey and struggle with your prayer life. Be vulnerable and transparent. Remember, you are setting the stage for others to feel like the group is a safe place to open up and share.)*



Video & Discussion Time: Watch the video for Session 6. Afterward, discuss the video before you transition into the group exercises. Here is a question to get you started:

? What is your favorite place to pray? Has your perception of prayer changed since listening to the video and reading the prayer step?



Group Exercises

Group Exercise A

Go around the room and have the participants take turns reading the bulleted items from their handout. Encourage group members to share and make comments after each item is read.


When your prayer step is compromised you may typically say:

- My faith and emotions are usually up and down, depending on my circumstances.
- I rarely or never hear God's voice.
- I don't have any close Christian friends that pray for me.
- Most of the time church seems like a ritual to me. I usually don't always get anything out of it.
- Truth be known...I hardly ever read the Bible.
- When I'm sad or discouraged I tend to isolate myself until my mood passes.
- God's word usually makes me feel guilty.
- When I'm struggling my focus usually stays on the problem.
- My prayer life is virtually non-existent.
- I rarely have devotional time or Bible study.

Group Exercise B


Go around the room and have the participants take turns reading the scriptures and questions from their handout. Encourage group members to share and each person reads.

Prayer Scriptures

 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV)

? What does it mean to guard our hearts?

? In romantic relationships, do you tend to over-protect or under-protect your heart?


 Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know. Jeremiah 33:3 (NIV)


? What is your favorite place in which you hear or have heard from God?


? How would you describe your prayer life?


- a) Non-existent.
- b) A rant session. I feel much better after I scream and holler.
- c) It's more of a lecture. God is the professor. I just listen and learn.
- d) Like a text message. We talk daily, but it's short and sweet.
- e) It's a friends and family plan. I have God on speed dial with unlimited access.

? Think about the times you've heard God's voice or felt His presence. Where were you or what were you doing? How might positioning yourself back in that environment aid you in hearing God's voice more frequently?

 If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. James 1:5 (NIV)


 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil. 1 Peter 3:12 (NIV)

 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, Philippians 1:9-10

 Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them." Matthew 18:19 (NIV)

? According to Matthew 18:19, if two on earth agree about anything, it will be done in heaven. If we declare something contrary to God's word and others agree with our negative confessions, how might they deactivate our prayers?

? Ecclesiastes 4:12 says a cord of three strands is not easily broken. Bible teachers call this principle the power in agreement. Psychologists call it the Pygmalion effect or a self-fulfilling prophecy. Describe a time when you have witnessed this truth in action with either gossip and murmuring or praise and affirmation.

 You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. James 4:2-3 (NIV)

? Sometimes we get so busy that we set aside our prayer time. What types of distractions most often interfere with your prayer time or ability to hear God's voice?

- ❓ **In Genesis 37, Joseph had a dream at the age of seventeen. Between his dream and destiny, he experienced over two decades of hardships that prepared him for his future. How does knowing that God used Joseph's desert season to prepare him for his destiny encourage you to believe for your own dream?**

Group Exercise C

The following action points are discussed in Love Junkies beginning on page 171. Read each action point. Participants can either follow along in their books or fill in the blanks on their handouts. After you read each bullet point, encourage group members to comment, giving their own insight or sharing their own experiences.

If you struggle with prayer, try these action points:

- Listen **intentionally**. Tune into a Christian radio program on the way to work or running errands and turn secular radio off.
- Watch something **inspiring**. Record or watch a Christian TV program.
- Read your **Bible**.
- Find a prayer **partner**. Find someone to pray with you, not just at the altar, but someone you can pray back and forth with. To know someone is praying for you is encouraging, but to have your own ears hear it is even more powerful.
- Attend **church** regularly.
- Listen to **praise** music.
- **Memorize** scripture.
- Keep a prayer **journal**.



Reading Assignment for Next Week: Resolve

Chapters 18-20