



The
CHALLENGE

Daily Reflection & Prayer Journal

weomaha.com/thechallenge

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The CHALLENGE

Reflections & Readings

This section of your workbook contains both daily and weekly exercises for both individuals and groups. WE encourage you to work through each day's scripture readings, Wesley Questions & Reflections on your own. Then, meet with your House Church to go over the "Questions To Ponder" and "Take Action" sections. Not part of a House Church? No worries. You can do these sections on your own or with a friend. If you are interested in joining a House Church, head to weomaha.com/housechurch for more information.

The CHALLENGE

Welcome to The Challenge!

As WE begin a new year, The Water's Edge would like to encourage each of you to commit to building your prayer life. Over the next 21 days (starting Sunday, January 10th), WE are committing as a church to take a look at how our prayer lives can deepen our relationship with God and others.

This workbook is designed to help you along the way. WE invite you to:

Daily

1. Read & reflect on each day's Bible readings.
2. Choose one of the week's "Seven Things To Pray For In Seven Days" to pray over each day.
3. Read each one of the "Daily Wesley Questions." Take time to reflect inwardly about this question and how you see it reflected in your life that day. (There are 21 total. We have divided them into 3 sets of 7).
4. Using the journal pages at the end of this book (or in your own journal), take time to journal your prayers each day.

Weekly:

1. Listen to each week's sermon.
2. Read the weekly devotion.
3. Use "Weekly Wesley Reflections" page provided to reflect on what you learned about each day's question and how it pertains to you. WE have provided some questions to help you with this.
4. Use the "Scripture & Sermon Reflections" page to journal any thoughts you have on the readings and/or sermon.
5. Choose some of the "Questions To Ponder" to discuss with your House Church. Spend some time discussing this week's "Take Action" section to determine ways you can apply this week's teachings to your daily life. If you are not in a House Church, you may do these on your own, with friends, or as a family. Want to join a House Church? Check out weomaha.com/housechurch for more info.

Prayers To Get You Started

The Wesley Covenant Prayer

I am no longer my own, but thine.
Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with
whom thou wilt.
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.
Let me be employed by thee or laid aside
for thee,
exalted for thee or brought low for thee.
Let me be full, let me be empty.
Let me have all things, let me have
nothing.
I freely and heartily yield all things
to thy pleasure and disposal.
And now, O glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.
And the covenant which I have made on
earth, let it be ratified in heaven.
Amen.

I am no longer my own, but yours.
Put me to what you will, place me with whom you will.
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.
Let me be put to work for you or set aside for you,
Praised for you or criticized for you.
Let me be full, let me be empty.
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.
I freely and fully surrender all things to your glory and service.
And now, O wonderful and holy God,
Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer,
you are mine, and I am yours.
So be it.
And the covenant which I have made on earth,
Let it also be made in heaven.
Amen.

The Wesley
Covenant
Prayer for
Today

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father,
who art in heaven
,hallowed be thy Name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power,
and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer for Today

God,
You are the one true God.
Your name is above all names.
May Your vision for the world become a reality.
May I think, speak and act just like You.
Provide for me; bless me with what I need.
Forgive me for my sins.
Let me share this same grace with others.
May I give You the primary place in my heart
and love others like You love them.
Save me when I hurt others and hurt myself.
This world is Yours both now and forever.
I will honor You.
Amen.

from Prayers From The Water's Edge

A Prayer For Faith Sharing

from Prayers From The Water's Edge

The world is filled with darkness, disease,
dysfunction, and death.
People experience helplessness and
hopelessness.
Friends and family are being pushed to their
limits.
Busyness, brokenness, and bitterness are
common.
I want to be Your agent of healing and hope.
Turn my desires and energy to serving Your
kingdom.
Give me compassion for the lonely in my
community.
Give me passion to share the Gospel with
people who are far from You.

May I reflect Your light to a dark world.
May I bring Your healing to a hurting world.
May I offer Your wholeness to a dysfunctional
world.
May I share Your abundant and eternal life to a
dying world.
Bless me with courage to take the next step of
faith.
Help me be a good steward of my time and
resources.
Give me creativity and imagination as I actively
share my faith.
Supply me with humor and humility so that
others may see You in me.
Connect me more closely with others who are
serving You.
Intersect my life with the lives of people who
need Your grace.
Help me be bold as I invite others to
environments where they can grow.
Bless me as I do my best to love people into a
growing relationship with You.
Amen.

The CHALLENGE

Week 1
Week of January 11th
The Wesley Prayer

The CHALLENGE

Week 1
Week of January 11th
The Wesley Prayer

PRAYER AS WE BEGIN THIS WEEK'S STUDY

Dear God,
During the moments I think of You,
During those times my heart longs for more of You.
Let me hear from You,
Let me experience Your presence.
Amen.

WEEK 1 BIBLE READINGS

Jan. 11 - Ephesians 1:15-23

Jan. 12 - Matthew 16:24-28

Jan. 13 - Ephesians 3:14-21

Jan. 14 - 2 Chronicles 7:11-22

Jan. 15 - Hebrews 5:11-14

Jan. 16 - John 15:1-17

Jan. 17 - Jeremiah 33:1-9

Seven Things To Pray For In Seven Days

1. May I praise you, Father, for who You are.
2. Thank you, Father, for all you have done.
3. Help me love my enemies the way You love each of us.
4. Help me to forgive others and myself.
5. May I give freely of my time, talents and resources to serve others.
6. Help me to open my heart and mind to the lessons I still need to learn.
7. Let me replace fear with hope.

Watch

Re-watch this week's sermon
- *The Wesley Prayer* - at
weomaha.com/thechallenge

WEEK 1 - DEVOTION - THE WESLEY PRAYER

by Leandra Esfer

Throughout this series, we will be praying Wesley's Covenant Prayer together in worship. We encourage you all to use this prayer in your House Churches or personal prayer time as well.

John Wesley wrote this prayer to be a reminder of our covenant with God. We don't often use the word covenant anymore. We are more familiar with contracts. Two parties agreeing on the terms of their relationship. I promise to make monthly payments, you provide internet. You let me rent your car, I agree to pay for any damages. I signed a contract with my cell phone company for cell service. But if I don't pay each month, the contract is broken and they can shut off my service.

Covenants are different. It's still an agreement between two parties, but one party's failure does not break the agreement. It is an unconditional commitment.

Covenants require grace, forgiveness and love. At a wedding, two people enter a marriage covenant. So even when one of them makes a mistake, there can be forgiveness and grace. Both sides can learn and grow from that mistake and the relationship can continue.

God made a covenant with us and even when we stumble and fall, God is faithful. Wesley's Covenant Prayer is a prayer that we might be faithful to God as well. It's a commitment to the relationship. The words of this prayer can be uncomfortable and challenging. Some days it will feel hard to pray these words and believe them. But even when we fail, God is faithful.

"This is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel," says the Lord. "I will put my instructions deep within them, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people." Jeremiah 31:33 NLT

Over the next 21 days, we will be praying Wesley's Covenant Prayer together and remembering our covenant with God. Living out these words can be a challenge, but if this prayer can become true in our lives, our relationship with God, others, and ourselves will be transformed. We will also experience the blessing of God's words in Jeremiah, which are summed up at the end of this prayer; *"You are mine and I am Yours."*

Week
1

Scripture & Sermon Reflections

Take some time to reflect over this week's scripture readings, sermon and other teachings. What has stood out to you the most? What are some action items you can put into practice to help you in building a relationship with God through prayer?

Week
1

Daily Wesley Questions

Each day, ask yourself one of these questions. Take time to reflect on your answer and determine your next steps when it comes to this particular question. Use the space on the next page, or a separate journal, to write down your reflections on each day's question

Jan. 11 - Do I disobey God in anything?

Jan. 12 - Do I insist upon doing something about which my conscience is uneasy?

Jan. 13 - Is Christ real to me?

Jan. 14 - Did the Bible live in me today?

Jan. 15 - Do I give the Bible time to speak to me everyday?

Jan. 16 - Am I enjoying prayer?

Jan. 17 - Do I pray about the money I spend?

Week
1

Weekly Wesley Reflections

Use the space below to reflect on each week's question. What action steps do you need to take? Things to think about:

- What was your experience in moving through the questions this week?
- Which questions stood out to you?
- Which questions were the toughest to grapple with?
- Did any of them lead to a sense of transformation as you contemplated them?
- How did living the questions this week have an impact on your relationship with God?

Week
1

Daily Wesley Question Journal

Use this page to journal your thoughts as you work through each day's Wesley Question.

Week
1

Questions To Ponder

For House Churches
& Individuals

Questions for January 9th/10th sermon.

Choose some of the "Questions To Ponder" to discuss with your House Church. If you are not in a House Church, you may do these on your own, with friends, or as a family. Want to join a House Church? Check out weomaha.com/housechurch for more info.

- What is your biggest obstacle in growing as a follower of Jesus Christ? How can you overcome that obstacle?
- What are some ways that you have grown in your relationship with God in the past
- Wesley saw the connection between the health of our human relationships and our relationships with God. Has a dysfunctional or stressful relationship with others hurt your relationship with God? Has a healthy relationship with another pointed you to God?
- Jesus said, "And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul?" –Matthew 16:26 Do you feel you spend more time and energy "gaining the world" or nurturing your soul?
- Wesley begins the Covenant Prayer: "I am no longer my own, but yours." What does this mean to you? How can this one line shape the way you live?
- Jesus found 12 disciples and connected them. Wesley's followers broke into small groups. How have other people help you grow spiritually in the past. How can others help you grow during this study and in the future?

Week
1

Take Action

Applications for January 9/10 sermon.

Spend some time discussing this week's "Take Action" section to determine ways you can apply this week's teachings to your daily life.

- Find a time. Block out a time on your daily calendar to participate in The Challenge for the next three weeks. Commit to nurturing your soul by reading, praying, and reflecting.
- Find a friend. Invite somebody to support you and offer you accountability during these next three weeks.

PRAYER AS WE CLOSE THIS WEEK'S STUDY

Father,
I don't want a surface relationship with You.
I don't want to only go through the motions of life.
Teach me to take deep breaths of faith.
Lead me into thte deep waters of Your grace.
Amen.

Notes

The CHALLENGE

Week 2
Week of January 18th
Moving Upward

The CHALLENGE

Week 2
Week of January 18th
Moving Upward

PRAYER AS WE BEGIN THIS WEEK'S STUDY

Everlasting God,
Who is your beloved Son, Who is the King of the whole world; Who wills to restore all things to be made new; Who gives Mercy to all the people of all the nations, Who with you, God, lives and reigns forever we ask that we find Jesus to be more real every day.
Amen.

WEEK 2 BIBLE READINGS

Jan. 18 - John 15:1-8

Jan. 19 - Luke 11:2-4

Jan. 20 - Philippians 4:8

Jan. 21 - Acts 2:42-47

Jan. 22 - Galatians 5:22-23

Jan. 23 - 1 Thessalonians 5:17-24

Jan. 24 - James 5:13-28

Seven Things To Pray For In Seven Days

1. Help me recognize You more in my daily life.
2. May I speak life into those you place in my life each day.
3. Thank you for the encouragers, supports and teachers in my life.
4. Transform my heart so that loving and selfless deeds are my natural reaction to the needs I see around me.
5. May I humbly receive the wisdom of those who offer it in love.
6. Grant me assurance of Your presence and love.
7. May my eyes be open to the wonder and beauty all around me.

Watch

Re-watch this week's sermon
- Moving Upward - at
weomaha.com/thechallenge

WEEK 2 - DEVOTION - MOVING UPWARD

by Michele Bonwell

When my youngest son, Felix, was a preschooler, he would often mutter to himself while he played. This wasn't strange to me. To this day, that child will strike up a conversation with anyone and everyone. People. Cats. Dogs. So, most days, I would just ignore his murmurings as he played. One day, as Felix played on the floor of the kitchen, I heard him say, "Amen." Intrigued, I began listening to what he said as he played the rest of that day. And...man, was I surprised.

Thank you, God, for the trees. Leaves are pretty. Amen. Thank you, God, for lizards. They run funny. Amen. Thank you for my Wolffie Boy. His feet smell bad after soccer. Amen. Thank you, God, for cheese. Cheese is my favorite. Amen. Thank you, God, for being God. You're awesome. Amen.

Felix wasn't just talking to himself or some imaginary friend that day. Felix was talking to God. But, Felix wasn't just talking to God...he was praying. Felix was taking time to be aware of God and His presence in everything around him. He was using this awareness to grow his relationship with God. Pretty deep for a 3-year-old, right?

But...when it comes to relationships and intimacy, kids get it. They understand that intimacy is what allows relationships to grow. It's the reason why kids always want to play with their friends. It's the reason why a child will repeat the word "Mom" 100 times just to say hi. They seek intimacy with that other person. They want the relationship to grow. And that means being aware of the other party. And always being ready to be in conversation.

Just like the child seeking intimacy from his mother, we should also seek intimacy with our father. In fact, it's what we were designed for. In order for our relationship - our faith - to grow, we need to allow ourselves to be fully aware of His constant presence in our lives. This is where we can all take a cue from the simple upward prayers of children. These upward prayers help us build the intimacy we need to grow spiritually.

Why is showing God our unending adoration so difficult for us? Because we are human. We move about our days at a hurried pace. We might see the things around us, the things that God has put in front of us, but we focus on the wrong thing or we focus on wanting more of it. So, how do we get past this? How do we overcome these obstacles to allow ourselves to freely and consistently enter into upward prayers? We have to learn to... Talk. To. Him.

A great place to start moving into an upward relationship with God - Unceasing Prayer. That is, this thing of keeping in constant touch with God, of making him the object of our thoughts and the companion of our conversations. These prayers allow us to shift our focus from the distractions and noise and center in on God by allowing ourselves to experience the presence of God in everything.

It takes time to learn to pray unceasing prayers, but, here's a simple approach - start by going through all the activities of your day in joyful awareness of God's presence. Do this with continuous whispered prayers of praise that come throughout the day. Stuck at a stoplight? Thank you, Father, for the beauty you create that surrounds me on my drive. Kids fighting? Thank you, Father, for giving us life. Stressful day at work? Father - I want to praise you simply for who you are. I am grateful that despite the stress of the day, I know you are here with me. Or maybe...take one from 3-year-old Felix - Thank you, God, for loving me. You're big and awesome. Amen.

Week
2

Scripture & Sermon Reflections

Take some time to reflect over this week's scripture readings, sermon and other teachings. What has stood out to you the most? What are some action items you can put into practice to help you in building an upward relationship with God through prayer?

Week
2

Daily Wesley Questions

Each day, ask yourself one of these questions. Take time to reflect on your answer and determine your next steps when it comes to this particular question. Use the space on the next page, or a separate journal, to write down your reflections on each day's question.

Jan. 18 - Am I proud?

Jan. 19 - Am I defeated in any part of life?

Jan. 20 - Do I go to bed on time and get up on time?

Jan. 21 - Do I grumble or complain constantly?

Jan. 22 - Am I a slave to dress, friends, work or habits?

Jan. 23 - How do I spend my spare time?

Jan. 24 - Am I self-conscious, self-pitying, or self-justifying?

Week
2

Weekly Wesley Reflections

Use the space below to reflect on each day's question. What action steps do you need to take? Things to think about:

- What was your experience in moving through the questions this week?
- Which questions stood out to you?
- Which questions were the toughest to grapple with?
- Did any of them lead to a sense of transformation as you contemplated them?
- How did living the questions this week have an impact on your relationship with God?

Week
2

Wesley Question Journal

Use this page to journal your thoughts as you work through each day's Wesley Question.

Week
2

Questions To Ponder

For House Churches
& Individuals

Questions for January 16th/17th sermon.

Choose some of the "Questions To Ponder" to discuss with your House Church. If you are not in a House Church, you may do these on your own, with friends, or as a family. Want to join a House Church? Check out weomaha.com/housechurch for more info.

- How has asking the daily questions affected your spiritual life this week?
- Which questions were the toughest to grapple with?
- What are some habits that you practice as a follower of Jesus? How have they been a blessing to you?
- Is it easy or difficult to find ways the Bible appears in your life? Explain.
- How would you currently answer the question, "Am I enjoying prayer?"

Week
2

Take Action

Applications for January 16th/17th sermon.

Spend some time discussing this week's "Take Action" section to determine ways you can apply this week's teachings to your daily life.

- Determine a faith habit that you want to put into practice starting today. Select someone in your House Church or a friend to check in with you three times over the next 21 days to see how you are doing with it.

PRAYER AS WE CLOSE THIS WEEK'S STUDY

God,
Stir within me a passion to read your Scriptures and to regularly meditate on them throughout the days and weeks. I ask that you grant me the ability to understand what I need to put your teachings into practice. Help me to remember that good intentions are worthless unless connected to and rooted in your love and grace. Help the words of the Bible not to be just words on a page, but passageways of mercy into my heart.
Amen.

Notes

The
CHALLENGE

Week 3
Week of January 25th
Moving Inward

The CHALLENGE

Week 3
Week of January 25th
Moving Inward

PRAYER AS WE BEGIN THIS WEEK'S STUDY

Creator of the universe, we thank you for the gift of life you've entrusted in us. Guard our hearts and attitudes that we may see as you see. Help us find security in you and free us from the need to feel superior. Let us see our place in your kingdom and humble ourselves before our brothers and sisters. Amen.

WEEK 3 BIBLE READINGS

Jan. 25 - Colossians 3:12

Jan. 26 - Psalm 139:13-14

Jan. 27 - John 16:33

Jan. 28 - Philippians 2:14-16

Jan. 29 - Genesis 2:2-3

Jan. 30 - 1 Timothy 6:7-9

Jan. 31 - Philippians 2:3-4

Seven Things To Pray For In Seven Days

1. Use me to show Your love today.
2. Tune my heart to listen to You today.
3. May my whole life be an offering. May even my brokenness become, in some way, a gift to the world around me.
4. Keep me from trading my perceptions of others for knowing who they truly are.
5. Help me see myself the way You see me.
6. Help me truly accept your forgiveness for my own mistakes and offer that forgiveness to others.
7. Turn my grumbling and complaining into praise and gratitude.

Watch

Re-watch this week's sermon
- *Moving Inward* - at
weomaha.com/thechallenge

WEEK 3 - DEVOTION -MOVING INWARD

by Craig Finnestad

The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend. -Exodus 33:11

Wouldn't that be cool? Speaking to God face to face as a friend? It would also be cool to love better the thing that is most important to God: His children.

Prayer brings us closer to God and others. We long for prayer. And we hide from prayer. We are attracted to prayer. And we are repelled by prayer. We believe prayer is something we should do. Prayer is something we generally want to do. But something gets in the way of us praying, doesn't it? Some of us might say its busyness. But you aren't too busy to eat or mow the lawn or watch a three-hour football game. Some of us might say that we need to be in a better place before we approach God. Some of us have prayed before and didn't get the results we wanted on the time-frame we wanted. Others might think we need to have a better understanding of how to pray. And others might assume prayer is something we have to master to be effective at. I used to think that I need to get all my motives straightened out before I could pray. I didn't really want to be a hypocrite standing or sitting or kneeling before God. You can see—there are many reasons that completely paralyze our ability to pray.

What I have discovered over the years is this: **God is big enough to receive us right where we are.** We don't have to be brilliant or even bright. We don't have to be pure or filled with faith. We don't have to be anything. This is grace. We are saved by it. We live by it. And we pray by it. Jesus teaches us that prayer is like little children approaching their parents. For those of you who have children—don't your kids come to you with the craziest requests? One of my sons—I won't give you his name but he is the younger of the two—consistently asks not to eat his vegetables because their texture is appalling to his tongue. The other son recently asked me to send him one hundred bucks on Venmo. I asked him "why?" He stated he recently opened an account and wanted to make sure it worked. Sometimes we are a little disappointed our in children's selfishness—but we would be grieved if there was no communication between us and them. We are simply glad that they do come—mixed motives and all.

This is precisely how it is with prayer. We will never have perfect motives. We will never be good enough. We will never know enough to pray perfectly. We just have to set this stuff aside and begin praying. In fact, it is in the very act of prayer itself—the intimate, ongoing interaction with God—that these matters begin to be perfected in us in due time.

Wherever you are on your prayer journey, remember one word: Simple. Simple prayer is ordinary people bringing their ordinary thoughts to a loving, compassionate, and extraordinary Father. During these conversations with God, we don't pretend to be anything other than who we actually are. We don't try to conceal our conflicting and contradictory motives from God or ourselves. We pour out our heart to the God who knows what is best for us and wants what is best for us. Jesus calls us to simple prayer when he speaks the famous words: ***Give us this day our daily bread. (Matthew 6:11)*** We will never outgrow this simple prayer because we will never outgrow the needs which give rise to it. We will never outgrow simple prayer in general because we will never outgrow the needs which give rise to it.

When we pray simple and genuine prayers, the condition of our heart is revealed. God helps us become self-aware. This is when God truly begins to work with us. Start where you are. Wherever that may be.

Week
3

Scripture & Sermon Reflections

Take some time to reflect over this week's scripture readings, sermon, and other teachings. What has stood out to you the most? What are some action items you can put into practice to help you in building an inward relationship with God through prayer?

Week
3

Daily Wesley Questions

Each day, ask yourself one of these questions. Take time to reflect on your answer and determine your next steps when it comes to this particular question. Use the space on the next page, or a separate journal, to write down your reflections on each day's question

Jan. 25 - Do I thank God that I am not like others?

Jan. 26 - Am I consciously or unconsciously creating the impression that I am better than I am? In other words, am I a hypocrite?

Jan. 27 - Do I confidentially pass on to others what was told me in confidence?

Jan. 28 - Am I jealous, impure, critical, irritable, touchy, or distrustful?

Jan. 29 - Am I honest in all my actions and words or do I exaggerate?

Jan. 30 - Is there anyone whom I fear, dislike, disown, criticize, hold resentment toward or disregard?

Jan. 31 - When did I last speak about my faith?

Week
3

Weekly Wesley Reflections

Use the space below to reflect on each day's question. What action steps do you need to take? Things to think about:

- What was your experience in moving through the questions this week?
- Which questions stood out to you?
- Which questions were the toughest to grapple with?
- Did any of them lead to a sense of transformation as you contemplated them?
- How did living the questions this week have an impact on your relationship with God?

Week
3

Wesley Question Journal

Use this page to journal your thoughts as you work through each day's Wesley Question.

Week
3

Questions To Ponder

For House Churches
& Individuals

Questions for January 23rd/24th sermon.

Choose some of the "Questions To Ponder" to discuss with your House Church. If you are not in a House Church, you may do these on your own, with friends, or as a family. Want to join a House Church? Check out weomaha.com/housechurch for more info.

- In the past 48 hours, how have you spent your spare time? What does that say about your priorities?
- What is the difference between caring for others and letting people take advantage of you? How do you serve without enabling?
- What words would you use to describe the relationships that are most important to you? What would it be like to extend these words to all other people?
- Are you open to constructive criticism or do you tend to get defensive? What drives your response?
- What signs do you see in someone who appears to be living within God's will for their life?

Week
3

Take Action

Applications for January 23rd/24th sermon.

Spend some time discussing this week's "Take Action" section to determine ways you can apply this week's teachings to your daily life.

- Launch a no-complaining challenge for 48 hours. Each time you find yourself complaining, you must text your House Church or a friend and share something you are grateful for.
- During this time, keep a log of the things you complain about. Do you notice any patterns?

PRAYER AS WE CLOSE THIS WEEK'S STUDY

God,

Teach me to serve you first and seek your kingdom.
Help me to be less concerned about myself and more about you
and your mission for this world.

Help me be aware of myself, my faults and my limitations,
but also not to be so concerned with myself that I forget your
purpose for me.

Amen.

Notes

The CHALLENGE

Week 4
Week of February 1st
Moving Outward

The CHALLENGE

Week 4
Week of February 1st
Moving Outward

PRAYER AS WE BEGIN THIS WEEK'S STUDY

Jesus,
You have modeled honesty - from your birth to your death, burial, and resurrection.
We pray that honesty may become one of our most valued and tangible virtues.
Direct our thoughts, words, and actions that we may enhance all of the relationships
we are in - at home, work, school, and places of recreation.
Amen

WEEK 4 BIBLE READINGS

Feb. 1 - Luke 18:9-14

Feb. 2 - Matthew 28:19-20

Feb. 3 - 2 Timothy 1:7

Feb. 4 - 2 Corinthians 7:1

Feb. 5 - 1 Corinthians 16:10

Feb. 6 - Proverbs 14:29-30

Feb. 7 - Romans 12:9-17

Seven Things To Pray For In Seven Days

1. Empower me to lead and serve the way You do.
2. Transform my heart so that loving and selfless deeds are my natural reaction to the needs I see around me.
3. May I never grow tired of starting over or helping others do the same. There is hope to be found in resurrection and renewal.
4. Allow me to feel hope for others instead of disappointment in them.
5. Thank you for each new day and the opportunities that come with it.
6. Father, I am yours. Use me as You will.
7. Let me step out of my comfort zone each day. Allow me to be uncomfortable as I seek to serve You and Your children.

Watch

Re-watch this week's sermon
- *Moving Outward* - at
weomaha.com/thechallenge

WEEK 4 - DEVOTION -MOVING OUTWARD

by Chad Schuchmann

I grew up in a household that prayed. We prayed “Come Lord Jesus, be our guest” at dinner. At bedtime, we prayed, “Now I lay me, down to sleep” when I was little. And “The Lord’s Prayer” as I got older. We prayed at times for my dad to find a good job or for a puppy for Christmas. Most of our prayer life was way more about asking God for the things we wanted for ourselves than it was about connecting with God.

It wasn’t until High School that I truly began to understand how prayer can transform a person’s life, and the power it can have. Having woke up uncharacteristically early for a high schooler on a Saturday morning, I remember walking down the stairs towards our living room. As I neared the bottom of the steps, I heard my mother speaking. As I reached the entryway of our home, I turned to see my mother, sitting in her arm chair, Bible open, hands slightly lifted in the air, praying. She wasn’t saying anything profound, in fact, it was almost the opposite. She was thanking God and praying for the most ordinary things. For our house, for my sister and I to be happy, for her job.

My mother demonstrated a prayer life that helped mold her into who she was, that demonstrated her relationship with God, and that expressed her love of others. It was in this prayer, the ordinary and mundane, and the focus on others that I began to grasp that one of the biggest aspects of prayer is that it often needs to be less about me than about loving God and loving others.

Seeing the way my mother prayed so simply to God changed the way I pray for myself, and for others. As we move our prayer lives outward, we begin to realize that it’s okay to pray for ourselves, for situations in our lives, for others, and for the things we hope and desire for them.

When Jesus taught us how to pray, one of the very things he demonstrated was that it is okay, and even maybe necessary, to ask of God. His words, “Give us this day, our daily bread. Forgive us our trespasses,” and “lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil” are all petitions, asks. When we pray for ourselves, it’s called petition. When we pray for others it’s called intercession. Both are necessary as we continue to pursue and grow as followers of Jesus Christ. When we pray these prayers, they can be for our basic needs, our desperate wants, for healing of ourselves and others, and for the guidance through and relief from suffering or difficulties we or others are facing.

How do we ask? I don’t want it to sound too simple, but honestly, it is. Just ask. God doesn’t care how pretty your prayers are. He cares that you pray. He isn’t looking for special words, he’s looking for your heart and waiting for you to reach out to him. I don’t think there is a special formula to make God answer our prayers one way or another. Max Lucado writes, “Our prayers may be awkward. Our attempts may be feeble. But since the power of prayer is in the one who hears it and not in the one who says it, our prayers do make a difference.”

So, whether you pray on your knees next to your bed with your head buried in your hands, or you stand with your arms raised high to heaven; whether you silently whisper your prayers as you go about your day, or scream out to God at the top of your lungs, he hears you, and your prayers do matter. They matter because we matter, and our love for others matter.

Week
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Scripture & Sermon Reflections

Take some time to reflect over this week's scripture readings and other teachings. What has stood out to you the most? What are some action items you can put into practice to help you in building an outward relationship with God through prayer?

Below are all 21 of the Wesley Questions you reflected on over the past 21 days. Take a moment to re-read over the questions. Are there any that stick out to you in relation to your life? Why do they stick out? Highlight these questions and then use the space on the next page, or a separate journal, to write down your thoughts.

1. Do I disobey God in anything?
2. Do I insist upon doing something about which my conscience is uneasy?
3. Is Christ real to me?
4. Did the Bible live in me today?
5. Do I give it time to speak to me everyday?
6. Am I enjoying prayer?
7. Do I pray about the money I spend?
8. Am I proud?
9. Am I defeated in any part of life?
10. Do I go to bed on time and get up on time?
11. Do I grumble or complain constantly?
12. Am I a slave to dress, friends, work or habits?
13. How do I spend my spare time?
14. Am I self-conscious, self-pitying, or self-justifying?
15. Do I thank God that I am not like others?
16. Am I consciously or unconsciously creating the impression that I am better than I am? In other words, am I a hypocrite?
17. Do I confidentially pass on to others what was told me in confidence?
18. Am I jealous, impure, critical, irritable, touchy, or distrustful?
19. Am I honest in all my actions and words or do I exaggerate?
20. Is there anyone whom I fear, dislike, disown, criticize, hold resentment toward or disregard?
21. When did I last speak about my faith?

Week
4

Wesley Question Journal

Use this page to journal your thoughts as you work through each day's Wesley Question.

Week
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Questions To Ponder

For House Churches
& Individuals

Questions for January 30th/31st sermon.

Choose some of the "Questions To Ponder" to discuss with your House Church. If you are not in a House Church, you may do these on your own, with friends, or as a family. Want to join a House Church? Check out weomaha.com/housechurch for more info.

- Is what others say about you consistent with who you are?
- Why are people prone to gossip? Why do we seek to hold power through information? How can we stop this harmful behavior?
- What causes feelings of jealousy and envy in our lives? How can we limit their negative consequences?
- What are good, productive ways to share your faith, and what are some methods that might drive people away?
- Am I consciously or unconsciously creating the impression that I am better than I am?

Week
4

Take Action

Applications for January 30th/31st sermon.

Spend some time discussing this week's "Take Action" section to determine ways you can apply this week's teachings to your daily life.

- Make it a goal to share your faith with someone outside of your inner circle using the methods discussed above. Share how it went with your House Church, a friend or with the WE staff (email Michele at michele@weomaha.com).

PRAYER AS WE CLOSE THIS WEEK'S STUDY

Lord,
Change us.

Remove the tendency for us to compare ourselves with others
and think we are better than they are.

Replace comparison with compassion and make us more like
Christ is - loving to all.

Jesus, we pray that we may be reconciled to all those toward
whom we hold resentment or dislike.

Amen.

Notes

The CHALLENGE

21-Days of Prayer Journal

Use the following pages to journal your prayers over the next 21 days. After the 21 days is complete, WE hope this practice has helped you form a habit of praying daily.

The CHALLENGE

Prayer Resources:

Books:

- *Prayers From The Water's Edge* by Craig Finnestad
- *Every Moment Holy* by Douglas McKelvey
- *Prayer: Forty Days of Practice* by Justin McRoberts and Scott Erickson
- *Prayer: Finding The Heart's True Home* by Richard Foster

Websites:

- weomaha.com/thechallenge
- weomaha.com/helpthankswowamen

Request Prayer:

- Online - weomaha.com/caring-ministries
- Email (general): prayer@weomaha.com
- Email (ministry staff)
 - craig@weomaha.com
 - michele@weomaha.com
 - leandra@weomaha.com
 - chad@weomaha.com
- Leave a request on our prayer wall located in the southeast corner of the sanctuary.

*Have a prayer resource that you would like to share with us?
Email Michele at michele@weomaha.com.*



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weomaha.com/thechallenge

Portions of this study guide were adapted from The Wesley Challenge by Chris Folmsbee.