

# The Foundation of Prayer

By Max Barnett

## Pre-Session Assignments

One week before the session, participants will take the following assignments.

### Assignment One

Study the comments on 1 John 5:14, **confidence which we have before Him**, in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: Why can we have confidence before God? Read Hebrews 4:15-16 to help you understand how we can come to God when we pray.

### Assignment Two

Study the comments on 1 John 5:14, **if we ask anything according to His will**, in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: How can we pray and know God's will? Note what Jesus did when He faced a choice between His will and His Father's, as recorded in Luke 22:42.

### Assignment Three

Study the comments on 1 John 5:15 in the section **It's in the Book**. If we do not get what we ask, must there be some other information in the Bible about why? For more insights, read Psalm 66:18; Isaiah 59:1-2 and James 4:3. Be ready to share your findings with the group.

## Scripture to Memorize

*"And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith."* Matthew 21:22

## Session Goal

Consistent with God's Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit - by the end of this session, disciples will understand God's deep desire for us to come to Him in prayer, bringing our requests before Him in faith.

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## It's in the Book

30 minutes

### Real-Life Scenario

One of your friends is having a problem with their parents. You ask, "Why don't we pray about it?" They say, "I don't know if that would help." What would you say, and what could you show him from the Bible that might help him become a person who prays?

**Read** 1 John 5:14 out loud.

### Studying the Passage

**Verse 14. confidence that we have toward Him.** Confidence leads to boldness. We come to the Lord boldly because we know Him. We place our trust in Him so we can come without reservation. We enter His presence with boldness and confidence.

### Assignment One Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment One** during the week can now answer the question, How can we come to God when we pray? Add insights from Hebrews 4:15-16 and the first part of 1 John 5:14 to explain the attitude with which we are to come to God and why we can have that attitude.

### Discussion Question

Why do you think John could write so confidently that God would answer our prayers?

### On Your Own

In the space provided, write three requests you want to see God answer. Then ask, "Am I ready to pray for these things with confidence before God?"

### Studying the Passage

**Verse 14. ask anything according to His will.** Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins. When we place our faith in Him, the way is now open for us to come into the presence of God with our petitions. God invites us to come to Him and ask for requests that are within His will.

### Assignment Two Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Two** during the week can now report on what Jesus did when He faced a choice between His will and His Father's will.

**Read** Luke 22:42 out loud.

### Discussion Question

John stresses that we know He answers if we ask anything according to God's will. Will we always know what God's will is? What did Jesus do when He was not sure that what He desired was what His Father wanted? Discuss Luke 22:42 with the group.

**Read** 1 John 5:15 out loud.

### Studying the Passage

**Verse 15. we know that He hears us.** What great confidence we can have! When we pray according to His will, He hears us. The psalmist was overwhelmed with that confidence when He wrote, "I love the LORD, because He has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy. Because He inclined His ear to me, therefore I will call on Him as long as I live" (Psalm 116:1-2). **we have the requests that we have asked.** We are taught that God hears us when we pray according to His will and that what we ask, we receive. If we do not receive, it is wise to see if we have known sin in our lives (Psalm 66:18; Isaiah 59:1-2). We should also consider whether we are asking with the wrong motives (James 4:3).

### Assignment Three Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Three** during the week can now share biblical insights into reasons believers may not receive what they pray for.

### Discussion Question

Read Psalm 66:18 and Isaiah 59:1-2 and discuss why God might not hear us when we pray. Read 1 John 1:9 and discuss what God tells us to do with that problem.

### On Your Own

Write the most important truth you have learned as a result of this study on prayer.

This week, will you pray over the Scriptures as you read your Bible? Allow the passage you have studied and the verse you have memorized to encourage you to pray, trusting God to lead you to know for whom and for what to pray.

### Heart and Hands

8 minutes

Read again the **Real-Life Scenario** near the beginning of the lesson. Consider whether your answers have changed during the session.

Be silent for two or three minutes. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice and for the gospel. Adore Him for His glorious reign on the throne of heaven. Then ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you:

1. A way the Scriptures you studied today will change your heart for the glory of

Christ.

2. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to stop doing something for the glory of Christ.

3. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to do something for the glory of Christ.

Write what the Spirit reveals to you below and then be ready to share that with the group.

### **Since Last Week**

5 minutes

Give the group this update: "In our last session I made a commitment to . . . I want to let you know how that turned out. On that same issue, I think the Holy Spirit now is leading me to . . ."

### **Grace-Filled Accountability**

5 minutes

Disciples can agree on a way to hold one another accountable. Confessing faults with other disciples allows them to offer grace, insights and encouragement. Even more important is confession to Christ, the source of true forgiveness and cleansing.

### **Planning for Evangelism, Missions, and Service**

5 minutes

Groups of disciples always are making preparations for evangelism, missions and service. Use these minutes to work on the next plan.

### **Prayer**

7 minutes

Every disciple will pray aloud, offering praise to Jesus, thanking Him specifically for His gracious acts, making heartfelt confession, committing to actions flowing from the Bible study, praying toward evangelism locally and globally and interceding for others as prompted by the Holy Spirit.

## **At Home: Nail It Down**

God has given us many phenomenal promises if we will pray.

Below are five primary truths that the Bible teaches on prayer. Read and meditate on each of the following Scriptures.

1. We need to abide in Christ. John 15:7
2. We need to ask according to God's will. 1 John 5:14-15
3. We need to pray in faith. Matthew 21:22
4. We need to pray in the name of Jesus. John 16:24
5. We need to be persistent and keep praying. Luke 18:1

### **Follow-Up Question**

*Ask, "May we pray together now?"*

The Making Disciples curriculum is a gift from Southwestern Seminary to those who, for the glory of the Father and in the power of the Spirit, will spend a lifetime embracing the full supremacy of the Son, responding to His kingly reign in all of life, inviting Christ to live His life through them, and joining Him in making disciples among all peoples.