**Learn in Community**

Small Group Study

**Volume Overview**

**How can I experience God’s power?**

“I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father.” ([John 14:12](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn14.12))

*When we think of power, we might think of physical strength or mental toughness. While God surely wants us to experience physical health and clarity of mind, He desires that we experience His supernatural power too.*

*In the Bible, it’s clear that our God—revealed through the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit—is powerful. He spoke the world into existence and sustains the universe by the power of His Word (*[*Hebrews 1:3*](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Heb1.3)*). God displayed His power in many ways in the Old Testament for His people. In the New Testament, Jesus’ life and works revealed His power over sickness, spiritual forces, and even the grave. After Jesus’ resurrection, God sent the Holy Spirit so we could have the power to do kingdom work today (*[*Acts 1:8*](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ac1.8)*). Clearly, God is powerful! But how do you and I experience His power? That’s the question we’ll explore in this volume.*

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| First time leading *Learn* for Adults? Check out the [Facilitator Guide](https://0b769b0ed3569ef9d18b-f88d8272f61086866d50d048b43ef630.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/sites/biblengagementproject/Listen_Facilitator_Guide.pdf). |

To access the My Spiritual Gifts Page, session content, and videos from a computer, visit: [BibleEngagementProject.com/downloads](https://bibleengagementproject.com/downloads)

**Engage**

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| **QUESTION**Who is your favorite superhero and why? |

The moviemakers seem to have hit a goldmine with the superhero franchises. Almost everyone loves to see justice served as good triumphs over evil. Maybe people are frustrated by the state of the world and are truly longing for a savior who will come and make things right.

Some Bible characters could fit the role of superheroes—Moses, Elijah, Elisha, Daniel, Peter, Paul. Because of the supernatural works that God did through them, they were able to perform miracles of faith, healing, and even raising the dead.

Of course, all of the heroes on the big screen are nothing compared to the ultimate hero—Jesus. He alone can truly save us from our plight. The amazing fact is that Jesus did come to save us! He has already defeated sin and death. He will come again one day to rule and reign. In the meantime, He’s waiting patiently for us to do our part to let everyone know what He’s done before He returns. God doesn’t want anyone to be left out. That is why He sent His Spirit to empower us to be His witnesses. That’s also why He gave us such a powerful weapon to use—prayer.

**Watch**

As we watch this video, think about your response to these questions: What was your view of prayer early in your faith journey? How does that compare to your view of prayer now?



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| **QUESTION**What was your view of prayer early in your faith journey? How does that compare to your view of prayer now? |

**Consider What the Bible Says**

The New Testament has a lot to say about prayer. Jesus taught His disciples to pray, and He showed them how to do it. Not only that, but they saw Him prioritize taking time to be alone to talk with God. Jesus was dedicated exclusively to ministry for about three years, and He spent a lot of that time in prayer. This showed the disciples, and us, that prayer is vital. In his classic devotional, *My Utmost for His Highest*, Oswald Chambers pointed out, “Prayer does not fit us for the greater works; prayer is the greater work.”

Jesus said that He came to show us what the Father is like. One of the things He showed us is that God loves relationships. God as a three-in-one Trinity of Being has set the standard for existing in perfect fellowship. He wants to welcome every person He created into fellowship as well. When we put our faith in Jesus, He is with us and in us—His love, His forgiveness, His grace, and His power. That relationship with Him requires communication to flourish. When we pray, we’re talking with our God and the Lord of our heart. When we see a need, we know that we can ask Him for help that only He can give.

Think about this. If we keep on doing our part to pray and share our faith with others, someday we could find Christians in every neighborhood and community showing the love of God and praying for others. Prayer is the greater work!

**Prayer Can Open Our Eyes to God’s Greatness**

Read [2 Kings 6:14–17](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.2Ki6.14-17).

When Elisha prayed, the servant’s eyes were opened to a spiritual realm that he could not previously see.

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| **QUESTION**How do you think Elisha’s servant felt when the Lord opened his eyes? |

Prayer keeps us connected to God and His supernatural power. But the Western worldview is heavily influenced by materialism. This philosophy maintains that only physical matter is real. In contrast, the Bible teaches that much more happens in the spiritual realm than we can physically see ([2 Corinthians 4:18](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.2Co4.18)).

When we’re facing an impossible situation, we can bring it before the King of heaven and earth. When we see something unjust happening, we can take it to the One who can do something about it. As we become disciplined in a life of prayer, we’ll begin to see more of the miraculous happen. We’ll know that God is more powerful than any problem or difficult situation in life.

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| **QUESTION**How can our faith be strengthened when we see more of God’s greatness? |

**Prayer Makes the Impossible Happen**

Read [2 Kings 6:18–19](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.2Ki6.18-19).

Elisha prayed once more, and the seemingly impossible happened again. This time the Aramean army became blind. God’s Spirit was creatively at work through Elisha for him to quickly think to pray for the impossible—and he had faith that his prayer would be immediately answered.

Think about these truths: God created everything in the universe out of a vast expanse of nothing. God sent the Savior of the world through the womb of a virgin woman. Jesus totally defeated the power of sin and death forever through an execution reserved for criminals. When we remember these truths, we can remember that nothing at all is impossible for God.

Jesus’ time on earth shows us that when we pray, we can expect miracles to happen. God already knows what we need, but He wants us to stay in communion with Him and ask for help. Further, we can’t mess up anything so badly that God can’t fix it. Remember He even helped the people who didn’t buy enough refreshments for their wedding guests ([John 2:1–12](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn2.1-12))! When we trust God and stay in close fellowship with Him through prayer, we can see Him do the impossible.

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| **QUESTION**What keeps us from having faith like Elisha? |

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| **QUESTION**Does a situation in your life seem impossible? Share if you feel comfortable. |

**Prayer Helps Us Have Hope for Everyone**

Read [2 Kings 6:20–23](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.2Ki6.20-23).

One of the most unusual things about Christianity is that Jesus showed us how to love those who hate us. He tells us to love our enemies and to pray for them ([Matthew 5:44](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt5.44)). He tells us to do right even to the people who wrong us ([Luke 6:27–31](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk6.27-31)).

Elisha gave us a good example of this principle when he spared the lives of the Aramean raiders after he had led them to Samaria. The king of Israel questioned whether he should kill them all, but Elisha advised him to feed them and send them home. Even though these soldiers were enemies, Elisha showed them kindness.

We can see through the Bible that God is able to help our enemies even while He is protecting us. He has hopes and dreams for each person—even the ones who hate Him right now. Our prayer for them can change things. We might be the only one praying for a specific person! Praying for our enemies can also open up our own heart to feel love and compassion toward them. What a change it could make in the world if every Christian would do this!

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| **QUESTION**What is the natural way that those in the world (and maybe even Christians) treat their enemies in today’s culture? |

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| **QUESTION**What kind of impact do you think it could have for the world to see Christians loving those whom others might treat with hostility? |

**Did You Know?**

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| *The city of Samaria is only twelve miles south of the town of Dothan. However, travel between the two locations was not simple. Dothan was in a small valley that served as an outcropping off the greater Jezreel Valley, a place where chariots famously had access and ease of movement. Samaria, on the other hand, was located in the hill country of Manasseh with only a direct path through the narrow Dothan Pass to link the two locations. Although the size of the force sent to Elisha isn’t known, his task of leading this force from Dothan to Samaria by the sound of his voice would have been a far more complicated task than we might imagine.* |

**Reflect**

**I Trust That God Answers Prayer**

As Christians, our greatest resource in life is not money, time, or any skill we might have. Our greatest resource is a connection to the Lord of heaven and earth. Prayer truly is powerful, and we would be wise to practice it more often. The more we pray, the more we will see God answer prayer. The more we trust God, the more impactful our faith will be to others. If we truly want to experience God’s power, we should connect with Him frequently through prayer.

Praying in faith is not saying things in just the right way, or with a particular level of intensity, or a certain number of times. It has less to do with what we do or say and more to do with God and His character. Through prayer, we connect our heart with His and put our trust in Him and His great power. We rest in the assurance that prayer is His idea and that He wants us to bring our cares to Him. When we know and believe that, we’ll grow in prayer and faith.

**Listen to God**

Let’s pause and listen to what God might want to say to us about what we have read and shared. Be silent for a few moments and reflect on the following questions. Respond to the one that most resonates with what God is saying to you now. Then complete the others during Day 1 of your devotion time this week.

**Personal Reflection Questions**

*Record your answers to the following questions in the space provided or in your personal journal.*

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| **QUESTION**What situations in your life require more attention in prayer? |

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| **QUESTION**What encourages you most about praying to God? |

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| **QUESTION**How is God challenging you in your prayer life? |

**Activate**

Many Christian communities are blessed to have men and women of great faith. These people are often the ones that others seek out when going through something difficult because God seems to hear and answer their prayers. Generally, these prayer warriors are not the youngest in the congregation. Their faith has had time and experience to grow strong. They have seen God do amazing and miraculous things as a result of prayer. As with everyone else, they had to start somewhere on their journey of faith. We can grow into people like that as we walk with God and trust Him too.

**Challenge**

A great way to grow in faith is to keep a record of prayer needs and answers. Some people find that keeping a prayer journal is helpful. Consider a more visual reminder. Use one jar or box for prayer needs written on slips of paper. Then have a second jar or box to put those same slips in when God answers each prayer. It might surprise you how quickly the second container is filled. This is a great way to begin to see how active God is in our life and how responsive He is to our prayers.

**Prayer Requests**

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| Note any requests from the group and remember to pray for them during the week. |

Before next time, continue to spend time in God’s Word with the personal devotions.

**What We Believe**

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| **Official Doctrine**Jesus emphasized the importance of importunity in prayer. The illustration of the persistent friend who came at midnight asking for bread to set before his guests became the basis for Christ’s statement, “Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for” ([Luke 11:5–10](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk11.5-10)). The parable of the widow and the unjust judge became the occasion for our Lord to emphasize importunity in prayer ([Luke 18:1–8](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk18.1-8)). These people were commended for importunity and not for prayerless positive confession.While God’s ways are above man’s ways, and we cannot understand the reason for every command in Scripture, we do know that in His wisdom God has ordained prayer as part of the process included in meeting a need. Rather than an indication of doubt, importunate prayer can be an indication of obedience and faith. |

**Learn on Your Own**

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| *Before you begin each devotion, pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Record your answers to the following questions in the space provided or in your personal journal.* |

**Day 1: Trust That God Answers Prayer**

Read [2 Kings 6:14–23](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.2Ki6.14-23).

Look back over Learn in Community and complete your responses to the Personal Reflection Questions. Plan how to complete the Activate component if you haven’t already done so. If time permits, reread the Scripture too.

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| **QUESTION**What is God saying to you about trusting that He answers prayer? |

**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 2: We Can Pray Anytime and Anywhere**

Read [Ephesians 6:18–20](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Eph6.18-20).

Becoming a person of prayer involves experiencing prayer in many situations. When we first begin walking with Jesus, prayer can seem difficult and even awkward. It seems easier to let the pastor or small group leader pray. But the more we pray, the more natural it becomes. We find that prayer, or conversation with God, can happen at any time and in any place—not just at a church gathering. We can pray no matter where we are or who we’re with. We can pray not just for our own needs and those of our loved ones, but also for the leaders of our churches and communities. We can watch for many opportunities to pray.

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| **QUESTION**What is the most challenging thing for you about prayer? |

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| **QUESTION**In what ways can you spend more time in prayer this week? |

**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 3: We Can Pray Like Jesus Prayed**

Read [Matthew 6:5–15](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt6.5-15).

Jesus’ first disciples saw how often Jesus withdrew to spend time in prayer. They also saw how powerful He was in changing lives. So they were wise to ask Him to teach them to pray. We would be wise to pay close attention to what He taught them. Prayer isn’t babbling or praying to be noticed by others. Jesus teaches us that prayer is honoring God. It’s trusting Him for all we need. It’s remembering that we cannot expect to be forgiven if we do not also forgive. And it’s looking to God for help and protection in everything. This is a wonderful model of prayer to follow.

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| **QUESTION**As you think through each part of the Lord’s Prayer, what surprises you most about it? |

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| **QUESTION**In what ways does this compare to your current way of praying? |

**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 4: We Can Pray Together**

Read [Matthew 18:18–20](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt18.18-20).

God has put a high value on community. He desires for us to be a part of Christian communities for our best interest. Living life together with other believers helps us to be less selfish. It helps us share one another’s burdens. It helps us know what needs our friends have that we can meet. Everything about believers living in community as God designed it is a sign for a watching world of how good it is to walk with God. We’re stronger together in every way, even in prayer. The promise about praying together in these verses is powerful. When just a few believers gather to pray, Jesus will be with us.

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| **QUESTION**How can the world see God’s love through our community? |

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| **QUESTION**How can you spend more time praying in community? |

**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 5: We Can Pray Even When We Don’t Have the Words**

Read [Romans 8:1–27](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ro8.1-27).

In difficult and trying situations, we sometimes aren’t sure what to pray. We might not know what outcome we should pray for. Or we might not even be able to gather our thoughts or words during painful or frightening times. God is so caring that He sent His Holy Spirit to be our Advocate ([John 14:16–17](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn14.16-17)). He is available to speak for us when we’re at a prayerful loss for words. Though our present situation may cause us to groan, God’s Spirit will groan the right prayer at the right time on our behalf.

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| **QUESTION**Do you pray in the Spirit regularly? Do you attend a church that encourages and practices corporate prayer in the Spirit? |

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| **QUESTION**How is God working in your life concerning prayer? |

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