

| Sermon Big Idea | Helpful Resources |
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| While prayer connects us to the most important relationship in life, it faces the greatest resistance in our daily routines. |  The Bible Project Guide: The Lord's Prayer |

| Read the Text |
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| In your group, read the passage out loud, with each person reading a verse. |

| Head: Grasping the Text |
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| <i>Goal: To grasp the theological concepts and historical context of the text.</i> |

1. Read Matthew 6:5–8. Jesus identifies two broken prayer postures — the Pharisee's performance and the Gentile's formula. What is wrong with each one at the root? And what does verse 8 — "your Father knows what you need before you ask" — tell us about what prayer is actually for if it is not about informing God or impressing people? Explain what is God's reward (Matt.6:6)?
2. Read Matthew 26:36–41. Jesus says "the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak" — and he says it with compassion, not condemnation. What does this tell us about how God sees our struggle with prayer? How does this inform us about what it means to be human with real limitations? What is the connection Jesus makes in verse 41 between prayerlessness and vulnerability to temptation?
3. Read Ephesians 6:10–12 and 6:18. Paul describes spiritual opposition using the word "schemes" — *methodeia* in the Greek — which implies a deliberate, studied strategy. What does it tell us about the importance of prayer that the Enemy has a specific strategy against it? And why does Paul place "praying in the Spirit" at the end of the entire armor of God passage — after all the other pieces of equipment?

| Heart: Grasping the Internal Transformation |
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| Goal: Examine how the text reshapes our identity, affections, and motivations to bring about honest self-examination. |

4. The sermon identified three resistances to prayer — performance, the flesh, and the Enemy. Which one do you recognize most in your own prayer life right now? Be specific — what does that resistance actually look like for you on a normal day?
5. Jesus looked at three exhausted disciples who fell asleep when they should have been praying — and he responded with compassion rather than condemnation. When your prayer life falls short — when tiredness wins, when distraction takes over, when you go days without really praying — what is your instinctive response toward yourself? Guilt? Shame? Indifference? Prayerlessness? What would it look like to receive the same compassion Jesus extended to the disciples in the garden?
6. The Enemy's most effective weapon is often not dramatic opposition but quiet condemnation — the voice that says you are too distracted, too sinful, or too far gone for God to listen to you right now. Have you heard that voice? Do you recognize it as a lie or do you treat it as an honest assessment? What would change in your prayer life if you learned to identify condemnation as a weapon and tactic of Satan rather than a verdict? How can you become more aware of the spiritual battle when it comes to growing in prayer?

Hands: Grasping Your Next Step

Goal: To move from hearing the Word to living it out as a disciple with specific, practical, and achievable steps for the coming week.

7. This week, find one moment each day — even just five minutes — where you pray with the door closed. Not a polished prayer. Not an impressive prayer. An honest one. No performance, no formula, no prepared words. Just tell God what is actually true about your day. Come back to your group next week ready to share one thing that surprised you about that experience.
8. The sermon asked: is your prayer life built around the time of day you actually have energy — or the time you think you are supposed to pray? This week identify the one time of day when your body and mind are most alert and available. Build your prayer into that moment rather than forcing it into a time that consistently loses to exhaustion. What specifically are you going to try — and when?
9. Every time this week that you feel resistance to prayer — mental fog, sudden distraction, the pull of your phone, the voice of condemnation — stop and name it out loud for what it is. Not a personal failing. Not evidence that you are bad at this. But open to the idea it can be used as a part of the devil's scheme. Then do the one thing the Enemy is counting on you not to do: pray anyway. Pray with Ephesians 6:10 in mind. It doesn't have to be long. It doesn't have to be eloquent. It just has to be honest. At the end of the week ask yourself — what happened when I prayed through the resistance instead of surrendering to it?