

CHURCH OF HOPE 17 WEEK EVANGELISM AND MINISTRY TRAINING COURSE



STUDY GUIDE: WEEK ONE (POWERPOINTS)

**TOPIC ONE: THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING A
LIFESTYLE OF PRAYER**

INTRODUCTION TO COURSE:



- This is the first week's study guide for the Church of Hope 17 week Evangelism and Ministry Training Course that is on their website page: www.coh.org.au/ministry_course
- The first week's study is on the importance of having a lifestyle of prayer.
- Other teachings on prayer can also be viewed and downloaded from the Church of Hope SERMONS page: [www.coh.org.au/Teachings Study Materials](http://www.coh.org.au/Teachings_Study_Materials)
- Our prayer is that this course will be a great blessing for all those who complete it

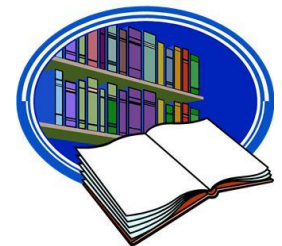
We will begin this course by looking at a passage of Scripture in Colossians. The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. To this end I also labour, striving to His working which works in me mightily.” **(Colossians 1:28-29)**



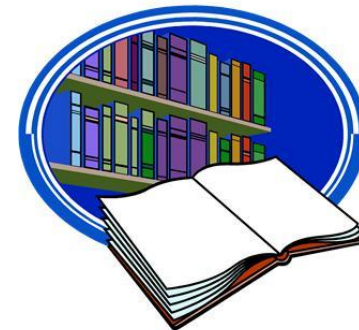
- In this passage of Scripture we see the Apostle Paul emphasising the importance of preaching the gospel to all people and the importance of seeing Christians coming to maturity in their faith

- The whole purpose of this course is to help equip and to encourage all Christians to become strong in their faith and soul winners
- To achieve this end, each week's study guide will contain a number of key areas and points to focus on and related bible Scriptures to meditate on
- Studying the Word of God is a great key to growing strong in our walk with the Lord



The Apostle Paul wrote,

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” **(2 Timothy 3:16-17)**




We will now begin this study on prayer by looking at the overview in the *Pastors Workshop Guidelines and Teachings Manual* for the topic: Building our lives on the Word of God and Prayer. (Page 5)

This manual can be downloaded from the Downloads page of our website: www.coh.org.au/downloads



- All Christians need to build their life on the Word of God and prayer... Prayer is also a key to seeing God's plan and purpose unfolding in our lives and churches. Jesus often withdrew to spend time praying to His Father. **(Luke 5:16)**


- We need to continually pray (**1 Thessalonians 5:17**) and to seek God's direction for our lives (**Proverbs 3:5-6**) and to make our needs known to Him
- Life is full of important choices. God is always willing to give us the wisdom that we need to do life well (**James 1:5**)
- Prayer is simply communing with God 
- When we live a lifestyle of prayer we will not be overcome by anxiety (**Philippians 4:6-7**) when confronted by needs and challenging situations, but we will learn to cast our cares upon the Lord

- God promises in His Word that He will answer all of our prayers which are in line with His will for our life.
(Mark 11:22-24) (John 14:12-14) (John 16:23-24)



The Apostle John wrote,

“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.” **(1 John 5:14-15)**

- At times God will lead Believers into times of fasting and prayer, often just prior to a new season in their life
 - Fasting helps us to humble ourselves before God (**Ezra 8:21**) and to get closer to God
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- This is why Jesus told His disciples that in the days when He was no longer physically with them, then they should fast. (**Luke 5:35**)
 - During times of fasting God will often speak very clearly in terms of future direction and at the same time bring about an increased hunger for spiritual things

- During times of fasting it is often far easier to discern the voice of God.
- During these times we also experience increased spiritual power as His strength is made perfect in our weakness.

(2 Corinthians 12:9)



- Jesus Himself fasted for 40 days before commencing His ministry. **(Luke 4:1-2) (Mark 1:13-15)**
- Those in the early church often fasted and prayed. **(Acts 13:2-3)**
- Fasting and prayer also helps people to be set free of addictions and demonic strongholds. **(Matthew 17:18-21)**

14 AREAS AND RELATED SCRIPTURES TO LOOK AT AND STUDY IN RELATION TO LIVING A LIFESTYLE OF PRAYER

1) Prayer helps us to examine our hearts and to deal with any wrong attitudes quickly. It is crucial that we keep a soft and right heart. **(Proverbs 4:23) (Luke 6:45)** We must learn to be open before the Lord and quickly deal with any hurts and disappointments and wrong attitudes by surrendering them to the Lord **(Psalm 51:1-10)**



In the book of Proverbs we read,

“Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.” (Proverbs 4:23)



Jesus Himself said, “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.” **(Luke 6:45)**



2) The importance of listening to God when we pray.

In the book of Jeremiah we read, “For who has stood in the counsel of the LORD, And has perceived and heard His word? Who has marked His word and heard it?” (**Jeremiah 23:18**)

- Prayer is a two way communication with God.



The word of the LORD came to the Prophet Jeremiah in prison, “Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.” (**Jeremiah 33:3**)

- **The Holy Spirit will speak to us clearly in prayer when we are still**



Jesus himself said,

“However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.” **(John 16:13)**

3) The importance of making time to spend with the Lord to pray to Him.



King David wrote,

“I sought the LORD, and He heard me, And delivered me from all my fears. They looked to Him and were radiant, And their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried out, and the LORD heard him, And saved him out of all his troubles.”
(Psalm 34:4-6)

King David also wrote,

“O GOD, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for you; My flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.” **(Psalm 63:1)**

- We must never get too busy to pray
- Non Praying people are powerless
- Our prayers can remove the hindrances and mountains in our life



Jesus Himself said,

“Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.”

“Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.”
(Mark 11:22-24)



- **The enemy will try and keep us too busy to pray**



In the gospel of Luke we read, “Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary who also sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.” And Jesus answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.” (Luke 10:38-42)

4) The importance of committing our weekly and daily plans to the Lord in prayer so that we remain in the centre of God's will for our life



In the book of Proverbs we read,

“Commit your works to the Lord, and your thoughts will be established.” (**Proverbs 16:3**)

- Prayerfully involving God in our plans helps us to be fruitful in our walk with the Lord

- God’s plan for our life unfolds one step at a time



King David wrote,

“The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD and He delights in his way.” **(Psalm 37:23)**

**5) The importance of involving the Lord in all that we do.
(Having a lifestyle of prayer)**

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.” (Proverbs 3:5-6)

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“pray without ceasing,” (1 Thessalonians 5:17)



- God's ways are far higher than our ways **(Isaiah 55:8-9)**
- WE NEED CONTINUALLY GOD'S GUIDANCE AND WISDOM in life and in all that we do
- God promises to give us wisdom when we ask of Him
- Life is full of choices
- Some wrong choices can impact us for a lifetime



In the book of James we read,

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.” **(James 1:5)**



6) The importance of praying with an open Bible

- God will speak through His Word to us to give us clear direction in life when we commit our needs to Him and seek Him for wisdom and guidance



- God will often give us a Rhema word of encouragement through His Word when we are seeking Him for help and encouragement during times of trials and challenges

The Psalmist wrote,

**“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”
(Psalm 119:105)**

**“Direct my steps by Your word, And let no iniquity have
dominion over me.” (Psalm 119:133)**



7) The importance of being led and empowered by the Holy Spirit in our prayers



- This is a key to praying in line with the will of God for our life and according to His Word

The Apostle Paul wrote, “Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.”
(Romans 8:26-27)

The Apostle John wrote,

“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.” **(1 John 5:14-15)**



8) The importance of being persistent in our prayers

- Praying until we get the breakthroughs
- We must not allow temporary circumstances to stop us from being fervent in our prayers
- God's timing is always perfect



In the book of James we read,

“Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. **Elijah** was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.” (**James 5:16-18**)



In the Parable of the Persistent Widow we read,



“Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, saying “There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him saying, ‘Get justice for me from my adversary.’ And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, ‘Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me’”
(Luke 18:1-5)

“Then the Lord said, “Hear what the unjust judge said, And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them?”

“I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?” **(Luke 18:6-8)**



9) We need to pray believing already for the answered prayer **WHEN WE PRAY**

- We must always pray in faith. Nothing is impossible with God
- We must pray with an expectation that God will answer our prayers in His perfect timing



Jesus Himself said,

“Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.”
(Mark 11:24)



In the book of Hebrews we read, “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” (Hebrews 11:6)

10) Committing our cares continually to the Lord in prayer is a great key to maintaining a heart of peace and hearing God's voice

- We must refuse to continually talk about our problems but learn to instinctively give them to Jesus in prayer.
- God both hears and answers our prayers



The Apostle Peter wrote, “casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:7)

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” **(Philippians 4:6-7)**



11) Prayer in the secret place (in isolation) with the Lord is a key to gaining revelation knowledge from God and to growing in intimacy with Him



- We need to frequently draw aside to a quiet place to pray
- Those who wait upon the Lord renew their strength and in His Presence is fullness of joy
- Jesus Himself during His time here on earth often drew aside to pray to His Father in heaven

In the Gospel of Luke we read,

“So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.” **(Luke 5:16)**



Jesus Himself said,

“But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.” **(Matthew 6:6)**

12) We need to learn to be specific in our prayers and never forget that “For with God nothing will be impossible” (Luke 1:37)

Jesus Himself said, “whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them...” (Mark 11:24)

- Being specific rather than general in our prayers is a great key to seeing answers to our prayers
- The prayer of agreement is also powerful



Jesus Himself said,

“Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven.” **(Matthew 18:19)**



13) Worship and Prayer go together

- When we worship the Lord we connect with God's heart for people and have a greater sensitivity and passion as to what to pray about



King David wrote,

“Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.” **(Psalm 37:4)**

- Worship helps to usher God's presence into our circumstances **(Psalm 22:3)**

- Chains were loosed when Paul and Silas were praying and singing Hymns to God after they had been beaten and thrown into prison.



In the book of Acts we read,

“But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone’s chains were loosed.”

(Acts 16:25-26) AND

14) For Pastors we need to ensure that our corporate prayer meetings are focussed and Spirit led as we pray for our community, the nation and those in our church and that we encourage all believers in our churches to develop and cultivate a lifestyle of prayer themselves



- ***SOME BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF ANSWERED PRAYER:
(James 5:17-18) (Acts 12:5-12) (Acts 3:1-10)***

SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER AND DISCUSS IN RELATION TO PRAYER BASED ON THIS WEEK'S READINGS

i. What can stop us from having a vibrant prayer life and involving God in all that we do?



ii. How can we maintain a strong faith that we always believe for answered prayers when we pray?

- iii. As a pastor do I encourage those in our church to develop an active prayer life and God dependency?**
- iv. Is prayer an important part of our church life and in my own walk with the Lord?, and**
- v. What can be some of the hindrances to our prayers being answered?**

