



WEEK OF PRAYER

19th-24th Feb

'Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness'

Matthew 6:33

*10 minute meditations tied to our
Week of Prayer daily themes*

'And when you pray...'

Here are two tips that I hope will help even the busiest of us to join in with our week of prayer.

1. A plan

As Don Carson notes, *"much praying is not done because we do not plan to pray."*

One of our great privileges as Christians is permanent access to God in prayer. We can pray at any time and in any place. However, I think most folk who pray regularly find it helpful to set aside and guard a slot(s) in the day for prayer.

These prayer resources are designed to support about 10 mins of prayer – so they can fit over breakfast, or on the bus, or in a lunch/coffee break etc. - on the grounds that it is *"better to pray often with brevity than rarely but at length."* [Carson]

2. A pattern

We shall route our prayers in a passage of Scripture that fits the theme of the day. This is helpful for two reasons:

- a. Our prayers are always a response to God – who He is and what He promises. God's word *moves* us to pray.
- b. God's word is a 'resource' – it *mentors* us in prayer as it reveals God's agenda for us and for others and gives us a vocabulary to express ourselves.

How can we read the Bible so that it leads to prayer? We want to read in such a way that we are not just informed, but warmed and stirred. Here is one pattern:

Read	Read the text slowly, line by line, several times.
Note	What does it say about (i) God's character, (ii) sinful nature, (iii) Jesus, grace and how it empowers growth and change, (iv) personal / church life...
Think	What does this mean <i>for me</i> ? What calls forth praise / confession / petition?
Pray	Pray these things through.

Seeking God (Monday 20th February)

When Jesus teaches us to pray he begins with the fatherhood of God - 'Our Father in heaven ...'

Q. Why did Christ command us to call God "our Father"? A. To awaken in us ... what should be basic to our prayer— a childlike reverence and trust that through Christ God has become our Father, and that just as our parents do not refuse us the things of this life, even less will God our Father refuse to give us what we ask in faith.

[Heidelberg catechism Q&A 120]

<p>'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.' (Matthew 6:9-13)</p>	<p><u>Note</u></p> <p><u>Think</u></p> <p><u>Pray</u></p>
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- Pray for us to have confidence in God as one who is personally committed to us like a good Father and powerful as one who rules in heaven.
- Pray for us to draw near and seek God's company through word and prayer confident that as we do so he will draw near to us.
- Pray for us to live as his children - seeking his Kingdom and his righteousness in our lives and beyond.
- Pray for us to lean on God and not on our own understanding and resources.
- Pray for a spirit of thankfulness for God's daily provision and blessings to characterise our lives.

Serving God (Tuesday 21st February)

“Life is meant for ministry”, says Rick Warren.

Certainly service is a hallmark of authentic discipleship. Service glorifies God and is good for us.

We serve God as we use the gifts he gives each one of us to serve others. This is the way of life because it is the way of Jesus who came ‘not to be served but to serve.’

<p>Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 4: 10-11)</p>	<p><u>Note</u></p> <p><u>Think</u></p> <p><u>Pray</u></p>
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- Pray for us to delight in the truth that Jesus has given us all gifts.
- Pray for us to discern our gifts and the needs and opportunities around us at church and beyond in which we might put them to use.
- Pray that we would use our gifts for God’s glory and the good of others.
- Pray for the ministries at St Andrew’s that are particularly close to your heart or that you are personally involved in.
- Pray for God’s provision for us as a church – financial, spiritual, personal etc.

Sustained by the gospel (Thursday 23rd February)

The word of God brings us to life and it brings forth the life of God in us as it flows through us. Derek Tidball asks – “How much do I love God’s law and build my life and relationships around it?”

<p>Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither— whatever they do prospers. Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to destruction. (Psalm 1)</p>	<p><u>Note</u></p> <p><u>Think</u></p> <p><u>Pray</u></p>
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- Pray for us to be increasingly united by the gospel.
- Pray for us to be delighting in God’s word such that it bears fruit in our lives.
- Pray for a particular ‘age and stage’ of life – pray for the gospel to address them as they have particular need.
- Pray for us to encourage and support one another in our Christian life.

