

LEADER'S GUIDE

PRAYING

THE

BIBLE

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A GUIDE FOR TEACHING *PRAYING THE BIBLE*

By Donald Whitney

This leader's guide for teaching *Praying the Bible* is designed for six sessions of forty-five to sixty minutes each. If only four sessions are available, simply omit sessions five and six. If more are needed, repeat session six's pattern, but choose a different passage of Scripture to discuss the kinds of things one might pray from each verse.

SESSION 1

1. If the participants are given the book in advance, ask them to read the first six chapters before coming to session 1.
2. Open with prayer by praying through a few verses of one of the five "Psalms of the Day." Doing this each time models for people how to pray through a passage of Scripture.
3. Teach (or review the highlights of) the first six chapters of the book.
4. Using the instructions found in chapter 7, give the participants at least seven minutes (more is better) to pray individually through a psalm of their choosing.
5. At the end of the allotted time for prayer, ask, "How did it go?" Review chapter 8 in advance. Most of the testimonies will correspond to one of the common responses briefly described in that chapter. Use the material in that chapter to reinforce and expand upon the significance of what each person experienced.
 - For example, if someone says, "I can't believe that was seven minutes! It went by so quickly!" You might respond with comments like, "That's a great thing, isn't it? It might be embarrassing if we asked everyone for the last time they prayed for seven unbroken minutes. And you could have kept going, couldn't you?"
 - If someone says, "It was more about God and less about me." You could say, "Praying the Bible is a more God-centered way of praying, isn't it? When we pray the Bible we pray about the things we normally pray for, but it feels less selfish. And there tends to be more praise and thanksgiving in our prayers."

SESSION 2

1. Open with prayer by praying through a few verses of one of the five "Psalms of the Day."
2. Briefly review session 1. This is especially helpful for those who may have missed it.
3. Ask for testimonies of people who have practiced praying through a passage since session 1.
4. Ask for questions about the method of praying through a passage.
5. Try to teach to the end of the book.
6. As in session 1, give the participants seven or more minutes to pray through a psalm of their choosing, then ask for testimonies afterward.

SESSION 3

1. Open with prayer by praying through a few verses of one of the five “Psalms of the Day.”
2. Ask for testimonies from people who have practiced praying through a passage since session 2. Ask if they remember a verse or phrase from the passage they prayed through and/or what they prayed. Then encourage them with how good it is they remember these things (unlike our usual forgetfulness after our daily Bible reading) so long after the experience.
3. Ask for testimonies of people who have taught praying the Bible to someone.
4. Ask for questions about or any difficulties with the method.
5. Finish teaching through the book, if you have not already done so. If you have, choose a psalm and read through part of it aloud, asking after each verse the kinds of things one might pray from that verse. If no one suggests anything, note how that’s okay, and that not every verse will suggest something to pray. Then proceed to the next verse. Explain that sometimes a person might read several verses in a row that do not suggest something to pray about.
6. As in the previous sessions, give the participants seven or more minutes to pray through a psalm of their choosing, then ask for testimonies afterward.

SESSION 4

1. Open with prayer by either the leader or a volunteer praying through a few verses of one of the five “Psalms of the Day.”
2. Ask for testimonies from people who have practiced praying through a passage since session 2. Ask if they remember a verse or phrase from the passage they prayed through and/or what they prayed. Then encourage them with how good it is they remember these things (unlike our usual forgetfulness after our daily Bible reading) so long after the experience.
3. Ask for testimonies of people who have taught praying the Bible to someone.
4. Brainstorm for ways couples or families might pray through a passage together.
5. Ask for questions about or any difficulties with the method.
6. Choose a psalm and go through part of it aloud, asking after each verse the kinds of things one might pray from that verse. If no one suggests anything, note how that’s okay, and that not every verse will suggest something to pray. Then proceed to the next verse. Explain that sometimes a person might read several verses in a row that do not suggest something to pray about.
7. As in the previous sessions, give the participants seven or more minutes to pray through a psalm of their choosing, then ask for testimonies afterward.

SESSION 5

1. Open with prayer by either the leader or a volunteer praying through a few verses of one of the five Psalms of the Day.
2. Ask for testimonies from people who have practiced praying through a passage since session 2. Ask if they remember a verse or phrase from the passage they prayed through

and/or what they prayed. Then encourage them with how good it is they remember these things (unlike our usual forgetfulness after our daily Bible reading) so long after the experience.

3. Ask for testimonies of people who have taught praying the Bible to someone.
4. Ask for testimonies from couples or families who have prayed through a passage together.
5. Ask for questions about or any difficulties with the method.
6. Choose a section from a lesser-known New Testament letter and read through it aloud, asking after each verse the kinds of things one might pray for with that verse.
7. As in the previous sessions, give the participants seven or more minutes to pray through a passage of their choosing from a New Testament letter, then ask for testimonies afterward.

SESSION 6

1. Open with prayer by either the leader or a volunteer praying through a few verses of one of the five "Psalms of the Day."
2. Ask for testimonies from people who have practiced praying through a passage since session 2. Ask if they remember a verse or phrase from the passage they prayed through and/or what they prayed. Then encourage them with how good it is they remember these things (unlike our usual forgetfulness after our daily Bible reading) so long after the experience.
3. Ask for testimonies of people who have taught praying the Bible to someone.
4. Ask for testimonies from couples or families who have prayed through a passage together.
5. Ask for questions about or any difficulties with the method.
6. Choose a section from a narrative passage and read through it aloud, asking after each verse for ideas of the kinds of things one might pray from each verse. Remind them of what the book says about the differences between praying through a narrative passage as opposed to other kinds of biblical literature such as the Psalms or a New Testament letter.
7. As in the previous sessions, give the participants seven or more minutes to pray through a narrative passage of their choosing, then ask for testimonies about the experience afterward.
8. You might choose to end the final session by giving people an evaluation form with questions such as: (1) How have these sessions helped your prayer life? and (2) What suggestions do you have for improving this training the next time?
9. If time permits, you might ask for volunteers to share their answer to question one.