

Cultivating a Culture of Prayer

A Discussion Guide for Your Team

INTRODUCTION

Every ministry team spends real time learning how to plan an event, prep a lesson, or lead a meeting well — and that's good, necessary work. But how many of us spend that same kind of intentional time learning to pray together as a team? This guide is an invitation to slow down and ask a hard question: are we leading in our own strength, or are we truly depending on God through prayer? Good teaching and good strategy matter, but on their own they can only make a ministry effective — not powerful. We want more than a ministry that simply runs well; we want one carried by God's presence and power. In this session, we'll look at three truths from Scripture that shape how a ministry team should think about prayer — and then talk practically about what it could look like for prayer to become an actual rhythm in how we lead, not just a good idea we agree with.

Opening Question

1. Do you find it easy or hard to pray? What makes it feel that way for you?
2. Where have you seen prayer modeled well by someone in your life — a leader, mentor, or parent? What impact did that have on you?

POINT 1: THIS IS GOD'S WILL FOR US

Read aloud: “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” — 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 (ESV)

Understanding Question:

1. According to this verse, whose idea is it that we pray continually? What do you think “pray without ceasing” actually means in practice?

Reflective Questions:

1. Have you ever thought of prayer as optional rather than commanded? How does knowing this is God's will change that?
2. What would it look like for prayer to become as continuous as this verse describes — not just at meetings, but throughout your week?

POINT 2: WE WERE NEVER MEANT TO PLAN WITH CERTAINTY

Read aloud: “Come now, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit’— yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, ‘If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.’” — James 4:13–15 (ESV)

Understanding Question:

1. What kind of attitude is James warning against here? What does he say we should say instead, and why?

Reflective Questions:

1. What is tempting about making our own ministry plans without first going to the Lord? What is dangerous about that sort of approach?
2. How can we as a team make sure we are seeking the Lord's will when we plan?

POINT 3: ONLY GOD GIVES THE GROWTH:

Read aloud: “I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.” — 1 Corinthians 3:6–7 (ESV)

Understanding Question:

1. In this passage, what is Paul's role, what is Apollos's role, and what is God's role? Why does Paul say neither of them is “anything”?

Reflective Questions:

1. What are some things in our ministry that only God can do — things no amount of planning or effort on our part can produce?
2. What is the relationship between our efforts — planning, teaching, inviting — and our prayers for the change only God can bring? How do the two work together rather than compete?

PERSONAL AND MINISTRY APPLICATION

Take a few minutes to move from reflection to action. Use the questions below to talk through what this could look like for your team specifically.

1. In your own words, why is prayer an essential part of our ministry?
2. How can we better incorporate prayer into our team's culture?
3. How will you include prayer more often in your role as a leader?