

Cultivating a Culture of Prayer

Session 2

Example

SESSION GOALS

The point of every session is a main idea with the goal of informing what we know, feel, and do.

MAIN IDEA: A culture of prayer begins by personally modelling a life of prayer.

Head Change: To know that what we consistently live out is more powerful than what we teach.

Heart Change: To feel inspired by Jesus' example of making time to be with the Father, and to be encouraged that our personal prayer lives can positively influence those around us.

Life Change: To find a solitary place to regularly pray, and to consider how our daily lives can be a visible example of prayer to others.

OPEN

As a child, who did you most look up to and in what way did you follow that person's example? If you have kids of your own, have you noticed them (for better or worse) doing as you do, and saying as you say?

We're wired for connection and community, and so it's unsurprising that we find ourselves mirroring and being mirrored by other humans. In this session, Brian unpacks the power of *example* in cultivating a healthy culture of prayer.

VIEW

As you watch, write down how Brian answers these questions.

- **How did Jesus model personal prayer to His disciples?**
- **What did Jesus' disciples ask Him to teach them?**
- **Which Old Testament characters demonstrate the idea that a prayer culture is more caught than taught?**
- **What are some helpful questions Brian suggests we ask ourselves as we assess our personal prayer life and seek to be an example to others?**

Show SESSION #2: *Example* **(13 minutes)**

REVIEW

Brian quotes E.M. Bounds, who said, 'None but praying leaders can have praying followers,' and reminds us that a life of prayer is often more caught than taught.

- **Whose prayer life has influenced your own? What was it about their example that encouraged or challenged you?**

In an aeroplane emergency situation, you'd put on your own oxygen mask before helping others with theirs. In the same way, if we want to encourage prayer in our families, churches, or communities, we should make sure we're praying ourselves. The disciples watched Jesus praying, and that prompted them to ask, 'Lord, teach us to pray.' (Luke 11:1)

- **If someone spent a week observing your daily life, what would they conclude about the place prayer occupies on your list of priorities? What aspects of your example would you be pleased for others to imitate, and what might need to change?**

Brian asks some searching questions about our prayer lives: *Are we growing spiritually? Does our prayer life enhance our relationship with Christ? Do we change how we pray? Would our families recognise our growth? Is peace evident at the centre of our lives? How has our prayer life grown?* He encourages us to regularly reflect on these questions so that our lives increasingly model prayer to those around us.

- **What are some practical ways a growing prayer life could become visible in everyday family goings-on?**

- **Which of Brian's self-reflection questions challenges you most, and why?**
- **What is one step you could take this week to become a more consistent example of prayer to those around you?**

LAST WORD

Like Jesus' first disciples, we too can ask, 'Lord, teach us to pray.' (Luke 11:1) Wondrously, we can learn from the example of Jesus, and the example of many of His followers throughout the centuries and today, for whom the habit of prayer has been deeply entrenched and beautifully evident. Let's be mindful too that prayer is often caught, not just taught. What we wish to ignite in others must first burn within us. It's then that those watching our lives will learn from our example.

DEEPER WALK

Select at least one activity below to complete before watching the next session.

Read: Meditate on Romans 8:34. What is your response to the truth that Jesus intercedes for you?

Write: Write down your answers to the questions Brian asks: (1) Am I on a journey towards deeper spirituality? (2) Is my private prayer life designed to enhance my relationship with Christ? (3) Do I change how I pray? (4) Would my family recognise my spiritual growth? (5) Do I have peace at the centre of my life? (6) How has my prayer life grown?

Pray: Meet with two or three others who are seeking to example prayer in their family or community. Ask God to develop you as leaders, and to make you bold, authentic, and vulnerable when needed. Pray for ease of communication with the Father, so that prayer might become more and more of a joy to you and others.