Cultivating a Culture of Prayer

Session 4
Embed

SESSION GOALS

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

MAIN IDEA: Prayer becomes embedded in our lives and communities when we intentionally create sustainable rhythms that help us pray consistently and persistently.

Head Change: To know that embedding prayer requires intentional, sustainable rhythms that help us keep praying consistently over time.

Heart Change: To value prayer enough to make it an integral part of our lives, trusting God even when answers seem slow or absent.

Life Change: To establish or strengthen sustainable prayer rhythms that help us, and those around us, to keep praying.

OPEN

Recite a nursery rhyme you memorised as a child. Do you remember who taught it to you and the circumstances in which you would recite it?

We may be a little rusty, but we're probably all able to recall a poem, story, or song that was embedded in our lives during childhood, either to teach us or amuse us. In this session, Brian explores the idea that the same can be true of prayer. Having *exampled* prayer and *educated* ourselves and others about it, there are helpful ways to *embed* it in our lives.

VIEW

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

- **What does it mean to *embed* something in our lives?**
- **How did early church leaders encourage people to embed the Lord's prayer in their lives?**
- **According to Brian, why are rhythms important as we seek to embed prayer in our lives?**

Show SESSION #4: *Embed* (12 minutes)

REVIEW

Prayer rhythms are not only about individual spiritual habits. Churches and communities can intentionally create shared patterns such as daily moments of prayer, weekly prayer meetings, monthly gatherings, and annual celebrations. These rhythms communicate that prayer isn't an occasional thing to add on but an integral part of the community's life and identity.

- **Talk about a shared prayer rhythm that has strengthened your community.**

Jesus didn't simply teach His disciples about prayer; He gave them a pattern of prayer that could become part of their everyday lives.

- **What do you think would help you to make prayer more than an occasional activity but rather an embedded part of your everyday life?**

Brian points out the importance of moving 'from prayer rooms to prayer rhythms.' A prayer room or special event can create a powerful moment, but embedding prayer requires rhythms that can be sustained long-term. The goal isn't simply to host more prayer activities; it's to develop patterns that fit realistically into our lives, families, workplaces, and communities.

- **Have you ever experienced a prayer initiative that struggled to maintain momentum or faded out? If so, why do you think that was? What lessons could be learnt to help establish a more sustainable rhythm of prayer in future initiatives?**

Brian encourages us to think about prayer at different levels: daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annually. Daily prayer might be brief and regular, while weekly or monthly rhythms could create space for deeper prayer. Retreats, prayer days, and annual reflection can help us step back and consider how we're growing. These rhythms weave prayer into the fabric of life.

Which prayer rhythm – daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annually – would you like to strengthen? What would be the first step you need to take to do so?

LAST WORD

Before moving on to the final session of the series, take a moment as a group to give thanks for the joy of being able to embed rhythms of prayer in our personal lives and in the lives of those around us as we cultivate a culture of prayer. May God by His Holy Spirit inspire and lead us to create rhythms which will be sustainable and lifegiving for ourselves and for the people we lead.

DEEPER WALK

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

Read: Read Matthew 11:28–30 in The Message paraphrase. Does prayer feel like an obligation, or does it feel like one of the 'unforced rhythms of grace'? What is God saying to you about resting in His presence?

Write: Write out a prayer of praise or lament.

Pray: Memorise the prayer of praise or lament you've written. Every day this week – or you could even try it for a full month – practise praying it first thing in the morning, or when your head hits the pillow at night.