

Cultivating a Culture of Prayer

Session 3

Educate

SESSION GOALS

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

MAIN IDEA: We create a culture of prayer by inspiring people to pray, informing them about prayer, and creating opportunities for them to experience prayer.

Head Change: To understand why prayer matters, what Scripture teaches about it, and how prayer has shaped God's people throughout history.

Heart Change: To feel inspired by prayer and grateful that prayer can transform us, our communities, and the world around us.

Life Change: To intentionally inspire, inform, and create opportunities for others to pray, while finding accessible and appropriate ways to cultivate a culture of prayer in our own contexts.

OPEN

Who was your favourite teacher at school, and what did you love about the way they taught?

Of course, education isn't limited to schools, colleges, and universities. We're all called by God to educate those around us through our example of Christlike living. In this session, Brian highlights the importance of educating others to cultivate a healthy culture of prayer.

VIEW

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

- **In what three ways does Brian suggest we educate people about prayer?**
- **Mention two ways we can inspire people to pray.**
- **List some of the barriers to prayer.**
- **How can we help people experience prayer?**

Show SESSION #3: *Educate* **(14 minutes)**

REVIEW

Teaching about prayer can involve videos, practical demonstrations, guidelines, or simply creating an opportunity to pray together. But knowing about prayer and actually praying are two different things. One of the best ways to learn how to pray is to pray!

- **Think about your experience of learning to pray. What has helped you grow most: being taught about prayer, seeing someone else model it, or actually having opportunities to pray?**

Brian uses the example of his friend learning Korean to explain the importance of inspiration, information, and experience. She's been inspired by Korean culture and informed through Duolingo, but her progress is slow because she's had little opportunity to actually use the language. In the same way, simply teaching people about prayer isn't enough. We need to inspire their hearts, inform their minds, and create opportunities for them to pray and respond to God's presence.

- **Which of these three areas – inspiring, informing, or helping people experience prayer – do you think is strongest in your church, family, workplace, or community? Which is weakest? What could you do to strengthen the area that is currently lacking?**

We also need to *inform* people about prayer. This means expanding our understanding of what Scripture teaches, exploring God's promises, learning different forms of prayer, and honestly addressing the barriers that can make prayer difficult such as fear, pain, unanswered prayer, guilt, misunderstanding, and spiritual warfare. Brian highlights stories of revival and spiritual awakening, where persistent prayer has often played a significant role.

Of the barriers to prayer Brian mentions, which most often prevents you from praying?

Brian explains that education about prayer must ultimately lead to *experience*. We can help people encounter God by intentionally creating opportunities to pray together in gathered settings, online, through themed prayer, in response to local and global events, or simply by offering to pray for someone when the opportunity arises.

In your own context, when have you recently inspired someone to pray, informed someone about prayer, or created an opportunity for someone to actually pray? Which of these comes most naturally to you, and where do you need to be more intentional?

While recognising that people and contexts are different, Brian reminds us that Jesus describes God's temple as a house of prayer for all nations (Mark 11:17), a vision that challenges the church to become a community profoundly shaped by prayer. Prayer isn't an optional activity for people who happen to enjoy it; it's part of our calling as Jesus' followers. At the same time, Brian cautions against creating a culture based simply on people's prayer preferences or imposing one particular expression of prayer.

How would you respond to someone who says, 'Prayer just isn't me' or 'I'm not really a praying person'? How can we encourage people to grow in prayer without making them feel condemned or forcing them into a particular style or expression of prayer?

Brian emphasises the need for 'grace, grace, grace' and reminds us that prayer may look different depending on the time, place, people, and context.

What could you change or introduce in your church community that would genuinely help people prioritise prayer while still meeting them where they are?

LAST WORD

Perhaps the best way to learn how to pray is simply to *pray*, so let's be those who lean in and get busy praying, inspiring others to do the same. Let's avoid performative prayers and empty repetition, and rather enjoy authentic conversations with God. Let's draw on God's Word and the patterns of prayer modelled throughout church history, and let's keep on providing opportunities for those around us to experience prayer.

DEEPER WALK

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

Read: Read Deuteronomy 6:6–7 and Psalm 78:4–7. What is God saying to you about passing on a culture of prayer to the next generation? Who in your circle of influence might be looking to you for direction as they build the habit of prayer?

Write: Write down what you wish someone had taught you about prayer when you first became a Christian. Is there someone who needs that wisdom today?

Pray: Create an opportunity for prayer by hosting a prayer meeting in your home. Invite as many people as there are mugs in your kitchen cupboard.