

WHEN GOD'S PEOPLE PRAY



JIM CYMBALA

DISCUSSION GUIDE

**FIVE SESSIONS ON THE TRANSFORMING
POWER OF PRAYER**

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SESSION ONE

GOD'S HEART FOR US

Introduction

DVD Introduction by Jim Cymbala

Question to think about

In what way/s do you think 'calling on God' is an essential part of the life and worship of NVBC?

DVD Teaching Segment
(Take Notes)

DVD Prayer Story

(Take Notes)

Group Discussion

1. How were you challenged or energised by this story?

2. What did the story say to you about prayer?

Wrap Up

Closing DVD comments

by Jim Cymbala

Personal Reflection

In what ways does the promise of 1 John 5:14 & 15 make a difference in your life?

Group Prayer

Briefly share a needy/or impossible situation you face. Pray for one another.

Personal Journey (To do on your own)

Be encouraged as you read of the examples of God's people asking Him for help:

- Genesis 32:9-12
- Exodus 15:22-27
- Ezra 8:21-23, 31-32
- Psalm 34:4-10
- Luke 1:5-13, 23-25
- Acts 16:25-34
- 2 Corinthians 12:7-9

SESSION TWO

THE AMAZING POWER OF PRAYER

Introduction

DVD Introduction by Jim Cymbala

Question to think about

Who are the people you would describe as men and women of prayer?

DVD Teaching Segment
(Take Notes)

Group Discussion

1. Jim Cymbala presents prayer “in part, as work, travail, staying up all hours of the night in spiritual battle”. How do these images compare with your understanding of the nature of prayer?
2. What excites you about prayer?
3. What fears do you have about prayer?

Bible Discovery

What do the following scriptures say about prayer in the life and ministry of Jesus?

1. Mark 1:32-39
2. Luke 3:21 & 22; 4:1 & 2, 14-19
3. Luke 5:15 & 16
4. Luke 6:12 & 13
5. Luke 22:39-46

DVD Prayer Story

(Take Notes)

Group Discussion

1. What did the story say to you about your prayer life?
2. What are some of the distractions we might need to deal with to focus more on prayer?

Wrap Up

Closing DVD comments

by Jim Cymbala

Personal Reflection

Consider the instruction from Ephesians 6:18, and take a moment to respond to the following questions:-

- Have I been filled with the Holy Spirit?
- Am I willing for the Holy Spirit to pour himself into my life?
- Am I willing for the Holy Spirit to make Himself known to me in new, fresh, and more powerful ways?

Group Prayer

Take a moment to confess your sins to God, and ask Him to anoint you with His Spirit. Pray with one another concerning the things you believe God wants to accomplish through prayer.

Personal Journey (To do on your own)

Practice daily prayer in the light of scriptures:

- Matt 26:41
- Romans 12:12
- Ephesians 6:18
- Colossians 4:2

SESSION THREE

OBEDIENCE IN PRAYER

Introduction

DVD Introduction by Jim Cymbala

Question to think about

Why is it that many Christians struggle to develop and maintain a healthy prayer life?

DVD Teaching Segment
(Take Notes)

Group Discussion

1. How do you respond to the suggestion that prayer is a “battle ground” for Christians?
2. Why is it important that we ask God to continually reveal unconfessed sins in our lives?

Bible Discovery

Consider how seriously God views sin, and of His warnings of the consequences of ongoing disobedience:

1. Ezekiel 8:16-18 (20:30 & 31)
2. Isaiah 1:10-15 (59:1 & 2)

Consider how God responds when we repent of sin and request His mercy:

1. 1 John 1:9
2. Psalm 32:1-5

DVD Prayer Story

(Take Notes)

Group Discussion

What is your understanding of how our human relationships affect our relationship with God?

DVD Teaching Segment (2)

(Take Notes)

Group Discussion

1. What is your understanding/experience of “Preparatory Prayer”?
2. How might Preparatory Prayer help us better face critical moments in our lives?

Wrap Up

Closing DVD comments

by Jim Cymbala

Personal Reflection

Read Psalm 66:18; Psalm 139:23 & 24; James 4:3. Take a moment to be alone with God. Open up your heart to Him, and ask Him to clear away any “issue” that is blocking His response of power and love into your life.

Group Prayer

Pray out loud – Psalm 32:1 & 2

Pray for one another

Personal Journey (To do on your own)

Remind yourself from the following scriptures who God listens to and who He will not:

- Psalm 37:4-6; 16-19
- Psalm 66:16-20
- John 9:30 & 31
- James 4:3
- 1 Peter 3:12
- 1 John 5:14 & 15

SESSION FOUR

THE WORD OF GOD AND PRAYER

Introduction

DVD Introduction by Jim Cymbala

Question to think about

How does your knowledge of the Bible affect your prayer life?

DVD Teaching Segment
(Take Notes)

Group Discussion

1. How do you respond to George Meullers statement “Prayer is not overcoming God’s reluctance. It is laying hold of God’s willingness”?
2. What for you is the most challenging aspect of enduring prayer?
3. How has your trust in God been tested, and how did you win through?

Bible Discovery

1. How do the following descriptions of the power of God’s Word help you in your prayer life? (Refer to Jeremiah 23:28 & 29; Hebrews 4:12 & 13)
2. How do the following scriptures challenge and encourage you in your prayer life?
 - Psalm 1:1-3
 - Psalm 56:3 & 4, 10 & 11
 - Psalm 119:145-152
 - Matthew 4:4
 - Romans 15:4

DVD Prayer Story
(Take Notes)

Group Discussion

1. In what way did you identify with Roberta's story?
2. How does Roberta's story encourage you and give you hope?

Wrap Up

Closing DVD comments
by Jim Cymbala

Personal Reflection

Which of the promises from God's Word speak into your life of a recent/present need?

Group Prayer

Share with group. Pray for one another.

Personal Journey (To do on your own)

Be encouraged as you allow the following scriptures to reinforce the trustworthiness of God:

- Deuteronomy 7:9
- Psalm 32:10
- Psalm 33:1-4
- Psalm 23:3
- Matthew 7:7-11
- 1 Corinthians 1:8
- 2 Timothy 1:12
- 1 Peter 1:3-5

SESSION FIVE

WHY PRAYER MATTERS

Introduction

DVD Introduction by Jim Cymbala

Bible Passages to think upon

- Luke 22:24-32
- Hebrews 7:23-25
- Romans 8:31-35
- Romans 8:26 & 27 (Ephesians 6:18)

DVD Teaching Segment
(Take Notes)

DVD PRAYER STORY

(Take Notes)

Group Discussion

How do you “see” intercessory prayer being played out at NVBC?

Bible Discovery

1. Consider the belief and practice of intercessory prayer amongst the early Christians:

- Acts 4:18-31
- Acts 12:5-17
- Ephesians 1:15-23
- Ephesians 3:14-19
- Ephesians 6:19 & 20
- Philippians 1:9-11
- Colossians 1:9-13
- 1 Timothy 2:1-4

2. What adjustments do you think we need to make in the matter of intercessory prayer at NVBC?

DVD Teaching Segment (2)

(Take Notes)

Group Discussion

1. What are the kind of things that have created a temptation for you to “give up” in the matter of praying?
2. What does Luke 18:1-8 say to us about intercessory prayer?
3. What does it mean for you that God is the God of Hope?
4. What do these scriptures say to you about the nature of prayer? (See Colossians 4:12; Galatians 4:19)

Wrap Up

Closing DVD comments

by Jim Cymbala

Personal Reflection

In the light of the direction of Ephesians 6:18 “to pray in the Spirit on all occasions” take time now for the Lord to bring to your attention someone who needs prayer, and pray quietly for them.

Group Prayer

Pray for/with one another according to what the Holy Spirit is saying to the group at this time.

Personal Journey (To do on your own)

Allow the prayer ministry of Jesus to take you deeper into your prayer life for others:

- For all followers of Jesus – John 17:20-23
- For ‘close’ followers of Jesus – John 17:15-19
- For our ‘enemies’ – Luke 23:32-34 (see also Matthew 5:44; Acts 7:59)
- Be faithful in prayer – Romans 12:12

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