“Can you pray for my son and his family? He stopped attending church when he went away to college. Today he has two young sons, but they never attend church.”

“My daughter was raised in the LCMS, but recently became a member of a cult. It breaks my heart to know she is involved with this group that believes Jesus is just a man and you cannot pray to him. Can you help?”

Opening prayer: Pray silently for this study and for someone you know who needs prayer.

Begin with P.R.A.Y.er
The most frequent issue that people contact our ministry about is a young adult who has stopped attending church or has gotten involved in a non-Christian religion. When they ask for help, I encourage them to begin with prayer.

One way to pray is to use the acronym P.R.A.Y. P stands for Praise. Praise God for who He is and what He has done for us. R stands for Remember. Remember you are a sinner and need a Savior, and what Jesus Christ has done for you. He suffered and died for your sins and was raised to life on the third day. A is for Ask. Ask for anything you need. Y is for Yield. Yield to God’s will. There is really no specific way that we have to pray. Stephen’s was short and quick: “Lord, Jesus, receive my spirit” (Acts 7:59–60).

Prayer Keeps Life in Balance
Read and discuss Bible verses about praising the Lord:

Exodus 15:2
Psalm 66:8–9
Matthew 11:25

Compare these verses with those above:

1 Chronicles 16:8–9
I Corinthians 11:24
Philippians 4:6–8
1 Thessalonians 5:16–18

What do praise and thanksgiving have to do with prayer? What is the difference between praise and thanksgiving? 

How does prayer keep your life in balance?

God answers prayer with “yes,” “no,” and “wait.” Describe a time when God answered your prayer with “no” or “wait.” Why is that more difficult for us to accept?

Share with your small group a time when the Lord answered “yes.”

Format and Frequency
Jeff’s aunt and her friends had prayed for Jeff for over twenty years when he came to faith in Christ. It was only after he became a Christian that he learned about his aunt’s prayers. She is now with the Lord, but Jeff knows God worked through her prayers for his salvation. He is thankful that she cared enough to pray for him and his family.

The Bible shares three formats for prayer. One is small group prayer, which Jeff’s aunt used, although I’m sure she also prayed individually and asked her congregation to keep her sister and family in prayer. Another type of prayer is praying individually or privately. A third is praying corporately with the church.

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Prayer Bible study continued

Identify the frequency and/or format in the following verses:

Matthew 6:6–7
Matthew 18:19–20
Acts 12:5, 11–16
Luke 22:44
2 Corinthians 12:8
Colossians 1:9–10
Ephesians 6:18
Matthew 7:7–8

How would you describe earnest prayer?

What’s the difference between asking, seeking, and knocking on God’s door in prayer?

Why should we be specific in our prayer requests?

What happened when the church prayed?

Was this a miracle? Can God still perform miracles today?

Prayer keeps life in balance, so pray for your loved ones and friends who have either fallen away from the faith or who are not Christians. And ask other Christians to pray for them too.

Optional prayer: Consider how you might pray for one person you know who is unchurched, unsaved, or who has stopped attending church. Write down the name and remember him or her in prayer for the next two weeks.

Closing Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank You for listening to my prayers and giving me direction and guidance every day. Thank You for suffering for my sins and giving me eternal life as a free gift. Help me grow in my prayer life and always trust You. In Your name. Amen.

Closing Hymn: Sing or say together “I Am Trusting Thee, Lord Jesus” (LSB #729; LW #408; TLH #428).

Estudio bíblico de oración continuado

La Biblia comparte tres formatos de oración. Uno es la oración con un pequeño grupo, lo que usó la tía de Jeff, aunque estoy segura que también oró por él en privado y también pidió que su congregación orara para su hermana y su familia. Otro tipo de oración es orar individualmente o privadamente. El tercer tipo de oración es orar en comunidad con la iglesia.

Identifica la frecuencia y/o el formato que vemos en estos versos:

Mateo 6:6–7
Mateo 18:19–20
Hechos 12:5, 11–16
Lucas 22:44
2da de Corintios 12:8
Colosenses 1:9–10
Efesios 6:18
Mateo 7:7–8

¿Cómo describes tú la oración “seria”?

¿Qué diferencia hay entre preguntar, buscar y tocar en la puerta de Dios en oración?

¿Por qué debemos ser específicos en nuestras peticiones cuando oramos?

¿Qué pasó cuando la iglesia oraba?

¿Fue esto un milagro? ¿Puede hacer Dios milagros hoy en día?

La oración mantiene la vida en equilibrio, así que ora por tus seres queridos y amigos quienes ya no siguen la fe o no son cristianos. Y pide que otros cristianos oren contigo también.

Oración opcional: Considera cómo podrías orar por una persona que conoces quien no es cristiano o que ha dejado de ir a la iglesia. Escribe el nombre y recordarlo o recordarla en oración por las próximas dos semanas

Oración de Clausura: Señor Jesús, gracias por escuchar a mis oraciones y por darme dirección y guianza cada día. Gracias por sufrir por mis pecados y por darme la vida eterna como un regalo gratuito. Ayúdame a crecer en mi vida de oración para que pueda confiar en Ti. En Tu nombre. Amén.

Himno de Clausura: Canten o digan juntos “Mi fe descansa en Ti” (Culto Cristiano #246).