

THE
PRAYERS OF MANY
COURSE



prayersofmany

00 FOR LEADERS

The following nine online sessions are intended to help you engage with corporate prayer in a fresh way and transform your local corporate prayer culture

RUNNING THE COURSE

The course has been designed so that anyone, anywhere can implement it.

It follows along with [The Prayers of Many book](#) which explores nine themes of corporate prayer in short, digestible chapters. Gather a group together and provide everyone with a copy of the book. All the teaching material is provided: teaching videos to introduce each session's theme and handouts that guide your discussion and a time of prayer. There is also bonus content including prayer tip videos and ideas for how to explore a theme in more detail.

What's more - because it's all online, you can run a course either in person or over the internet.

OUTLINE OF EACH SESSION

In each session, you will explore a theme of corporate prayer in four sections using the handout and videos provided. A few sessions require additional preparation - see 'Prepare Ahead', below.

- ▶ **1. Read a chapter of The Prayers of Many book** before you meet together, or at the beginning of the session.
- ▶ **2. Watch a short teaching video** in which the book's author, Mike Betts, gives an overview of the chapter for that session.
- ▶ **3. Discuss and reflect together** using verses and questions provided in the handout. *There is also extra content provided for those wanting to explore a theme in more detail.*
- ▶ **4. Pray together** using the creative ideas suggested to help you practically engage with the session's topic in a time of prayer together. *Over the nine sessions you will be equipped with many fresh ideas for prayer that you can apply in future prayer settings!*

PREPARE AHEAD

The following sessions require some additional planning.

Session Four - Get Praying section If possible, gather materials for a fire and meet near to a place where you can build and light a fire (it doesn't have to be big).

Session Five - Get Praying section Have a piece of orchestral music ready to play aloud

Session Six - Get Praying section Where possible, contact another church in your locality and ask how you can pray for them

01 REVOLUTION



Read Chapter 1 of The Prayers of Many

Key Verses

Acts 1:14

Acts 6:4



Watch the [first video](#) before going through the handout in your small group

DISCUSS

- ▶ As a group, reflect on some examples where there has been a significant and sustained change, either in your personal life or in your church (for example: a lifestyle change you've made or a new way your church started to run small groups). Reflect on how long it took for the changes to become a normal part of life.
- ▶ In your church, what does it look like when people pray together? Discuss together how prayer could be more effective in launching, sustaining and directing church activities.

REVIEW

- Corporate prayer is intended to be the central force that drives everything we do within our church community.
- Change that impacts church culture takes time and sustained effort in one direction.

PRAY

Changing prayer culture starts with each of us, so let's get praying about what we have been discussing.

Pray for the change you want to see. Pray that you will see a revolution of prayer in your church and nation.

PRAYER TIP

The prayers of the Bible can be a very helpful template for our own prayers. The video explains more.



WATCH TIP

EXTRA

The famous British preacher C.H. Spurgeon felt very strongly about the need for more devotion to prayer in church life. Read the following quote from Spurgeon and think about how this might apply to your church.

"Say to your minister, 'Sir, we must have more prayer.' Urge the people to more prayer. Have a prayer meeting, even if you have it all to yourself; and if you are asked how many were present, you can say, 'Four'. 'Four, how so?' 'Why, there was myself, and God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; and we have had a rich and real communion together'. We must have an outpouring of real devotion, or else what is to become of many of our churches?" ^[1]

[1] C. H. Spurgeon, 'Paul's First Prayer', 25 March 1855

02 DITCHES



Read Chapter 1 of The Prayers of Many



Watch the [second video](#) before going through the handout in your small group

Key Verses

2 Kings 3:16-18

Ephesians 3:20

DISCUSS

- ▶ Mike Betts suggests that the ditches we dig in prayer are always filled with the water that God provides. How does this statement change our attitude and approach to corporate prayer?
- ▶ It is easy to look at prayer in a 'cause and effect' way, whereas Mike Betts suggests that it is not a linear process but more like a seed being planted in hope of fruit to come. How do you view prayer?
- ▶ When you pray, is your focus more on God or on the things you are asking Him to do? What role does worship play in shifting your focus?

REVIEW

- In approaching prayer, we must not be limited by the way our culture thinks: rational, logical, empirical.
- As we work hard in corporate prayer we are digging ditches that prepare the way for God to do what He wants to do.
- If in prayer we want to hear the voice of God, it is important that our focus is not on the urgent matters but on God.

GET PRAYING

Set aside some time to pray.

Use the first half for prayerful worship - no requests or petitions, just lots of adoring prayers about God's character and promises.

Halfway through, switch to asking God for things BUT every request must be based on a promise or attribute mentioned in the first half of your time (hint: making notes helps).

PRAYER TIP

First focusing on God when we pray sounds simple but it doesn't always come naturally. Find out why building this pattern into our prayers is important.



WATCH TIP

EXTRA

In the book Mike Betts says, "Our prayers will never articulate fully what is possible as a result of them being prayed." In other words, God isn't limited in His response to our prayers by the words we have used - there isn't a formula.

Read Ephesians 3:20. Do you feel as free in your prayer language as you would when speaking to a friend or family member?

03 COMBAT



Read Chapter 1 of *The Prayers of Many*



Watch the [third video](#) before going through the handout in your small group

Key Verses

2 Chronicles 20:15

Ephesians 6:11-13

DISCUSS

- ▶ As individuals and as a church family, how do you fight the battles of life? Where in your battle tactics does corporate prayer feature?
- ▶ Would you say that corporate prayer is on your frontline? If yes, how? If not, how could that change?
- ▶ Personal individual prayer is vital, but what advantages do you see in praying with others?
- ▶ “If we fight we win, if we don’t we will face *avoidable* losses! This is the reality of war.” How does that statement motivate you to pray?
- ▶ In your church, how is prayer treated as a powerful force? Are people aware that their prayers play a key role in the outcome of spiritual battles? If not, how can we introduce these realities?

REVIEW

- Corporate prayer is our frontline heavy weaponry for fighting spiritual battles.
- Prayer will only be treated as the powerful force that it is when people understand its impact in the heavenly realms.
- The nature of war is that losses occur if we don’t fight. When we do fight, victory is certain because of the power and authority of Christ.

GET PRAYING

1. **Ask** God to help you use corporate prayer as the frontline weaponry in the life of your church. **Listen** to what God might be prompting you to do.
2. **Share** some battles you are facing in your lives or in the life of your church. **Pray** for each other, remembering the Christ’s powerful authority and certain victory.

PRAYER TIP

A great way to pray about anything is *simultaneously*: **praying altogether, out loud and at the same time**, pausing after each item to introduce the next.



WATCH TIP

EXTRA

A key enemy tactic is to convince us we are not at war. What differences are there between a community at war and one at peace?

Are you and your church community living in the reality of the spiritual war that Christ is fighting on our behalf? Watch Libby’s Story to hear her experience of being in a small but powerful prayer group.



LIBBY’S
STORY

04 FIRE



Read chapter 4 of *The Prayers of Many*



Watch [Video 4](#) before going through the handout in your small group

Key Verses

Acts 2:1-4

Romans 8:26-27

DISCUSS

- ▶ Do you ever find yourself secretly trying to keep prayer neat and tidy? Each person praying only once, not too emotional or passionate, prayers just the right length? Why do you think this is?
- ▶ How can you ensure that the rawness of interaction with God is retained, that mistakes are allowed and every contribution embraced, while also setting safe boundaries?
- ▶ What are you expecting from God as you approach prayer meetings, either as a leader or a participant?
- ▶ In what ways does our approach impact what God can do through the meeting?

REVIEW

- Our attitude and approach to prayer influences the work of the Holy Spirit.
- We need to 'pray ourselves into prayer', pushing through and persevering.
- Like a fire, careful planning and attention is needed to build a red-hot prayer culture. But once the fire is lit, it spreads.

GET PRAYING

Watch the prayer tip video. Then, as a group, go outside and make a fire, praying as you do - build your prayer time as you would build a fire:

Take unhurried time to invite the Holy Spirit to help you, and pray yourselves into your prayer time.

Encourage everyone to contribute. Each individual will add their own unique fuel.

PRAYER TIP

Sometimes it is difficult to keep the prayers flowing, just like it is difficult to keep a small fire alight. In this video, Lloyd Van Vuuren gives practical tips on how to keep prayer flowing and how to incorporate functional silences. It's worth watching before you start praying.



EXTRA

Revival is associated with times when God comes in power, like a fire. One of the hallmarks of revival prayer is simplicity and authenticity. In the video *'Revival Fire: Surrender'* Mike Betts discusses the attitude they had to prayer in the 1921 Lowelloft revival.



05 ORCHESTRA



Read chapter 5 of *The Prayers of Many*



Watch [Video 5](#) before going through the handout in your small group

Key Verses

Psalm 133
1 Timothy 2:8
John 17:20-21

DISCUSS

- ▶ Effective prayer requires us to be unified, in tune with one another. What does it mean for a church to be unified?
- ▶ How do you think corporate prayer could be used to nurture unity in your church?
- ▶ Have you ever felt a sense of competition between the different churches in your local area?
- ▶ A common feature of genuine revival is unity across a wide range of churches. How could corporate prayer contribute to church unity in your village, town or city?
- ▶ Effective prayer requires careful planning and devotion. How much time do you put into planning times of prayer?

REVIEW

- One of the best ways to build unity is to pray together.
- The effectiveness of corporate prayer is closely linked to the unity within the church.
- We do not love corporate prayer, we love the Lord. Our prayers are a way to express our love and devotion to Him.

GET PRAYING

Play some orchestral music. Listen carefully to the unity between musicians. Then:

1. Choose the person in the group that you know the least. Pray for each other. You may find that you feel more connected and unified.
2. Then spend some time praying for another church in your locality. (If you can, contact them ahead of time and find out what they would like you to pray for.) Ask God for opportunities to pray corporately together with other local churches as a way to bring greater unity between you.

PRAYER TIP

Praying together builds connections between people. Lloyd Van Vuuren explains how corporate prayer can foster unity in your church.



WATCH TIP

EXTRA

Watch this [#storiesofprayer](#) video. Peter Anderson from Edinburgh, Scotland explains how corporate prayer has developed in his city. In what ways does this story inspire you?



PETER'S STORY

06 FAMILY



Read chapter 6 of *The Prayers of Many*



Watch [Video 6](#) before going through the handout in your small group

Key Verses

Isaiah 66:7-9

Ephesians 3:14-17

DISCUSS

- ▶ What does it mean to have a lifestyle of prayer in your family and your church?
- ▶ What could you do to cultivate corporate prayer (more than one person praying together) in marriages, families and with friends?
- ▶ In the book Mike Betts talks about us being pregnant with the promises of God (p77). Do you know what promises God has made to His people? Has God made any personal promises to you that you are praying about? Spend some time discussing how you can pray into God's promises.
- ▶ We want to raise praying children. Discuss how, at home and at church, you can create space for children to learn to pray. Think also on how you can learn from children about prayer (*read Jodi's story on p83-85 of the book*).

REVIEW

- Corporate prayer is any prayer between two or more people in families, couples and friendships.
- Corporate prayer should be built around the truth that, as a local church community, we are a family. It should be part of our family conversation, and weaved into our lifestyle as God's people.
- Children teach us a lot about corporate prayer and should be given every opportunity to participate in their own unique way.

GET PRAYING

Identify promises from God from Scripture. Here are a few to get you started: Psalm 19:7, Psalm 34:8, Isaiah 40:29, Proverbs 3:5-6.

Pray these promises over each other.

Discuss ways that you as a group can continue praying for each other through the week.

PRAYER TIP

Praying God's promises back to Him is powerful. Hear why in the video and see a practical example.



WATCH TIP

EXTRA

In your home, church or school create a prayer space with one or more prayer activities. Encourage individuals of all ages to use the space, and activate prayer among your family, church or friends.

For practical tips, visit prayerspacesinschools.com. Although this website is aimed at schools it works equally well in other contexts.

07 EVICTION



Read chapter 7 of *The Prayers of Many*

Key Verses

John 10:10

1 Corinthians 15:25



Watch [Video 7](#) before going through the handout in your small group

DISCUSS

- ▶ Much of the world is broken and in the grip of the enemy. Name some situations in your locality where brokenness and sin affect people's lives.
- ▶ In Christ we have the spiritual authority to force the devil to vacate. How and where are you using your God-given authority in the situations you are praying for?
- ▶ The truth about God and His promises are the foundation we use to claim back, on behalf of God, what is rightfully His. In what ways can we use Scripture in our prayers?
- ▶ Reflecting honestly, how do you feel when you pray and nothing changes? Why is persistence important when it comes to serving a notice of eviction?

REVIEW

- Prayer engages with the process of taking back and reclaiming for the Lord what is rightfully His.
- At its heart it is simply the authority of Scripture that brings about the changes.
- The enemy will not accept an eviction notice without contest, so perseverance is important.

GET PRAYING

Think of a situation or person where you want to see the enemy evicted. Write down the lie that the enemy has used. Below the lie, write biblical truths that contradict it.

For example:

Person: A friend with low self-esteem

Lie of the enemy: "They are worthless"

Truth of Scripture: They are not worthless because God gave His Son for them (John 3:16); and Jesus loves them and died for them (Galatians 2:20)

Now get praying! Reclaim what is rightfully God's and force the enemy out using the authority of Scripture.

PRAYER TIP

"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17). Using God's truths when we pray helps to stir our faith.



WATCH TIP

EXTRA

Spend some time researching the legal court system in your nation. Maybe print out a diagram for the group to see? Note which court has the greatest authority and final say in legal matters. In the heavens, this supreme court position is held by Jesus. **Pray and praise God for the truth of Jesus' authority** using Matthew 11:27; John 3:35; John 13:3; Ephesians 1:20–21 and John 17:2.

08 TREE



Read chapter 8 of *The Prayers of Many*



Watch [Video 8](#) before going through the handout in your small group

Key Verses

2 Chronicles 7:14

2 Corinthians 1:11

DISCUSS

- ▶ What would most inspire you to pray with energy and passion: 1) praying with a small group of friends, or 2) praying in a group of 200? Why do you say this?
- ▶ Read 2 Corinthians 1:11 and discuss what Paul says about the number of people praying and the impact this has on the outcome. What conclusions can you draw?
- ▶ When do you typically start praying about important decisions, directions or activities in your life? Before you set out or when things go wrong?
- ▶ How does the image of uprooting a tree help us picture what prayer accomplishes and how the number of people praying affects the outcome?
- ▶ If corporate prayer has a key part to play in removing the obstacles to spiritual and kingdom growth, how does this change the focus and priority of prayer in your individual and church life?

REVIEW

- Prayer can be more effective, the more people are involved.
- When we come together and combine our efforts in prayer, something incredibly powerful can happen to spiritually uproot obstacles.
- It is much easier to influence our communities for the kingdom when through prayer we have uprooted the things that are in the way of fruitful growth.

GET PRAYING

We often jump from one prayer topic to the next; the tree metaphor suggests that praying with one accord together can be more effective. A good way to do this is using simple and short prayers on the same topic for a longer period of time.

Identify a spiritual tree that needs uprooting (e.g. a stronghold growing in an individual or in your community). **Uproot that tree together using short simple prayers.** Build on each other's prayers, working together in Christ to remove the obstacle to the Gospel.

PRAYER TIP

Short prayers can be very effective! Learn more in the video.



WATCH TIP

EXTRA

Jesus expects fasting to be a normal part of His disciples' lives (Matthew 6:16), and implies that prayer combined with fasting is important for unlocking situations (Mark 9:29; not all versions mention fasting). As part of our ENOUGH prayer events, we have encouraged people to try a Daniel Fast, a simple yet powerful way to draw close to God. Download our Guide and consider trying it as a group.



DANIEL
FAST
GUIDE

09 TOOLBOX



Read chapter 9 (Appendix: Toolbox)



Watch the [Video 9](#) before going through the handout in your small group

Key Verses

Psalms 132:13-14

Mark 11:17

Acts 7:49

DISCUSS

- ▶ We make choices based on what we value. What do your choices about prayer say of its value in your church life?
- ▶ When it comes to planning and embedding corporate prayer, what would it mean for us to give our very best ideas, resources and time?
- ▶ Share ideas on the following dynamics of corporate prayer:
 - ▶ Setting the right atmosphere
 - ▶ Keeping good momentum throughout
 - ▶ Offering creative ways to pray
 - ▶ Involving children

REVIEW

- We will only build a house of prayer if we value what we are building.
- Learning to use the tools of corporate prayer is like an apprenticeship.
- Corporate prayer is co-working with God and His people.
- We should put our best efforts into planning corporate prayer meetings and encouraging everyone to be a part of the action.

GET PRAYING

What will be your next step after this course? How will you approach corporate prayer differently?

Pray into this together. Use the key verses at the top of this page to help you focus your prayers.

PRAYER TIP

Watch the video to discover how you can use *any* Scripture in your prayers.



WATCH TIP

EXTRA

Discover the ENOUGH toolbox! Unpack the concepts and ideas used to run the successful 7-year ENOUGH corporate prayer programme. It will give you inspiration for creative, high investment prayer meetings that engage everyone in your church.

Available at prayersofmany.org/toolbox

The background is a dark blue gradient. Scattered throughout are several teal-colored geometric shapes, primarily chevrons and rectangles of various sizes and orientations. Some shapes are layered, creating a sense of depth. The text 'prayersofmany' is centered in the middle of the page.

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