8-SESSION BIBLE STUDY

The BATTLE PLAN for PRAYER

BIBLE STUDY

STEPHEN KENDRICK ALEX KENDRICK WITH TRAVIS AGNEW



Jhe BATTLE PLAN Jor PRAYER

BIBLE STUDY

STEPHEN KENDRICK ALEX KENDRICK with Travis Agnew

LifeWay Press® Nashville, Tennessee Published by LifeWay Press[®] © Copyright 2015 Kendrick Brothers, LLC. Used under license, all rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, except as may be expressly permitted in writing by the publisher. Requests for permission should be addressed in writing to LifeWay Press; One LifeWay Plaza; Nashville, TN 37234-0152.

ISBN: 9781430040453

Item: 005728499

Dewey Decimal Classification: 248.84

Subject Heading: PRAYER/SPIRITUAL WARFARE/SPIRITUAL LIFE

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are taken from the New American Standard Bible®, Copyright ©1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. (www.lockman.org). Scripture marked HCSB taken from the Holman Christian Standard Bible®, copyright © 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission. Scripture marked NIV taken from THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. Scripture marked KJV is from the King James Version Bible. Scripture marked NKJV is from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982, Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers.

Printed in the United States of America

To order additional copies of this resource, write to LifeWay Christian Resources Customer Service; One LifeWay Plaza; Nashville, TN 37234-0113; fax 615.251.5933; phone toll free 800.458.2772; email *orderentry@lifeway.com*; order only at *www.lifeway.com*; or visit the LifeWay Christian Store serving you.

Adult Ministry Publishing LifeWay Christian Resources One LifeWay Plaza Nashville, TN 37234-0152

CONTENTS

- 4 ABOUT THE AUTHORS
- 5 INTRODUCTION
- 6 SESSION 1: DEVOTED TO PRAYER
- 22 SESSION 2: SCHEDULED AND SPONTANEOUS PRAYER
- 38 SESSION 3: TYPES OF PRAYER
- 52 SESSION 4: LOCKS AND KEYS OF PRAYER
- 72 SESSION 5: SPIRITUAL WARFARE
- 86 SESSION 6: PRAYING IN FAITH
- 102 SESSION 7: PRAYING SPECIFICALLY AND STRATEGICALLY
- 118 SESSION 8: PRAYER STRATEGIES

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Stephen Kendrick is a speaker, film producer, and author with a ministry passion for prayer and discipleship. He is a cowriter and producer of the movies *WAR ROOM, Courageous, Facing the Giants,* and *Fireproof* and cowriter of the New York Times bestsellers *The Resolution for Men* and *The Love Dare.* Stephen is an ordained minister and speaks at conferences and men's events. He attended seminary, received a communications degree from Kennesaw State University, and now serves on the board of the Fatherhood CoMission. Stephen and his wife, Jill, live in Albany, Georgia, with their six children, where they are active members of Sherwood Church.



Alex Kendrick is an award-winning author gifted at telling stories of hope and redemption. He is best known as an actor, writer, and director of the films *Fireproof, Courageous, Facing the Giants,* and *WAR ROOM* and coauthor of the New York Times bestselling books *The Love Dare, The Resolution for Men, Fireproof* (the novel), and *Courageous* (the novel). In 2002, Alex helped found Sherwood Pictures and partnered with his brother Stephen to launch Kendrick Brothers Productions. He is a graduate of Kennesaw State University and attended seminary before being ordained into ministry. Alex and his wife, Christina, live in Albany, Georgia, with their six children. They are active members of Sherwood Church.



Travis Agnew's life mission is to make disciples. Married to his high school sweetheart, Amanda, Travis is the father of two sons and one daughter. Currently Family & Worship Pastor at North Side Baptist Church in Greenwood, SC, he also serves as adjunct religion instructor at Lander University. Travis graduated from North Greenville University with a B.A. in Christian Studies and a Music minor. Earning an M.Div. and D.Min. from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, his doctoral focus was on equipping parents to evangelize and disciple their children.

INTRODUCTION

Knowing the dynamics of battle is key to success for any army. Those in command gather intelligence about the enemy, they create a plan of attack, and they prepare to respond appropriately to ensure victory. Wise leaders choose their battles and fight to win.

As believers it is time for us to get our battle plan ready. It is time for us to strategically prepare and fight for our homes and families. It is time for us, as the church, to stand up for truth. And prayer is a powerful weapon that is absolutely necessary to ensure our victory in this spiritual battle. So, welcome to *The Battle Plan for Prayer* Bible study.

We believe in the power of prayer. We've seen it in God's Word. We've seen prayer work in the lives of others. And we've experienced it first hand in our own lives. We grew up in a praying home. Our church is a praying church. We have praying friends. It's undeniable to us that God willingly, readily, and powerfully answers prayer. Stories in the Bible may seem far-fetched until you experience God and answered prayer for yourself.

Many in our generation have lost sight of the power of prayer. We don't pray. Prayer is hard work. It's easier to go out and attempt to fix things ourselves than to pray. Because prayer requires us to be still, quiet, humble, dependent, and honest before a sovereign and holy God, prayer becomes our last resort. But prayer is so misunderstood and underutilized.

What would happen if churches really began to pray again? What if believers got right with the Lord and began to seek His face again? Second Chronicles 7:14 reminds us that if "My people who are called by My name humble themselves, pray and seek My face, and turn from their evil ways, then I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land."

We believe God is raising up an army of prayer warriors in our generation. We are asking you to go with us on this journey and equip yourself and others to pray more effectively. We will discuss types of prayer, hindrances to prayer, keys to effective prayer, praying strategically for the lost and for believers alike. We will be sharing real stories of answered prayer in our lives and in Christian history and we will be hearing from some of our generation's most respected prayer teachers and trainers and learning from them as well.



We're also excited to introduce the War Room Prayer app. Keep your war room on your phone and manage prayer requests for easy access. Available for iOS and Android. This amazingly simple tool will help you in your goal of becoming more devoted to prayer.



Welcome to week one of *The Battle Plan for Prayer*. We hope this Bible study changes your prayer life in many ways. We can't wait to hear how God works and answers prayers as you complete this study and learn to pray more strategically and specifically.

Let's take a moment to get to know one another before we watch this week's video.

What drew you to this study?

What do you hope to gain from this study of prayer?

What are the most common prayers you pray now?

Do you have a story—in your life or the life of someone you know—of answered prayer? Share with the group if you feel comfortable.

Through this study, you will learn to pray for those around you. You will learn how to use the powerful weapon of prayer to fight life's battles and to grow closer to Christ.

Take a moment to pray with your group. Pray that God will teach you through this study. Pray for the open hearts and minds of those in your group. Pray that God will unify you as a group and help you to be vulnerable with one another for the next eight weeks. Thank Him for the opportunity to study His Word together.

SESSION 1

VIDEO NOTES

Video sessions are available for download at www.lifeway.com/BattlePlan

.

THE BATTLE PLAN FOR PRAYER

After viewing the video, discuss the following questions with your group.

What were the most important points for you personally during this video session?

Do you know anyone who is a person of prayer? What makes you say that about them?

Do you think we've lost a passion for prayer? Why or why not?

In the video we mentioned that prayer is not so much a posture or practice; it is all about a relationship. How does that information make prayer easier or harder for you?

Why do you think we sometimes make prayer a "last ditch effort" in our spiritual lives?

Take a moment and list seven specific things you want to pray about during this study. Bring them to the Lord now and commit to pray for these needs and issues weekly as you go through this study.

- 1.
- 2.

3.

- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

Close this time with your group in prayer asking God to teach you how to pray more effectively through this Bible study. As you dismiss your group, don't forget to assign the following five daily devotions to be completed between now and your next meeting together.

SESSION 1: DEVOTED TO PRAYER

9

PRAYER 101

What does the word *prayer* stir up in you? Does it make you feel comforted and at peace, or does it make you feel nervous and guilty? Write out some of your feelings about prayer as we jump into this study together.

When we really stop to think about prayer, we should quickly realize what a privilege it is. God does not have to communicate with us and doesn't need for us to communicate with Him. But, He chooses to. That's the love of God—He chooses to involve us in His work. He wants to have a relationship with us. He wants to show Himself mighty in our lives and intercede on our behalf time and time again.

When you really stop to think about it, what amazes you about prayer?

The heart of prayer is simply talking to God. In this study, we are going to get a better grasp on this vital practice in our lives and then we are going to take it a step further to create a strategy for prayer. Through this study, you will learn to strategically pray for yourself, your spouse, your kids, your lost friends. But, we have to start with the basics and lay a foundation before we can build up to large prayer strategies.

So, back to the heart of prayer—how would you define prayer?

Some of the words that came up in your definition might have included: *petition, request, thanksgiving, praise.* If you feel so led, it would be great if you would share this definition with your group next time and hear what other people wrote down as well.

If God compiled a list of the top five prayers He hears, what do you think would make the list?

Most likely, the list you compiled revolved around individual crises or routine rituals. Those prayers are important, but God's Word instructs believers to be devoted to prayer. This means we must move beyond the status quo. As we're beginning this study, maybe you're hesitant to add one more thing to your already busy schedule.

What is your greatest struggle with prayer? Finding time to pray? Knowing what to pray? Something else?

Prayer isn't one more thing to add to your list. Prayer empowers the list. We are not asking you to add something new, but to do what you are already doing relying on God's power and provision instead. We are challenging you to devote yourself to prayer.

One of the game changers when it comes to prayer is recognizing how much God loves us and wants to hear from us. When we stop to remember how much God longs for us to walk so closely with Him, it really does change everything.

Take a moment to read Ephesians 3:16-18 (HCSB):

16 I pray that He may grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power in the inner man through His Spirit, 17 and that the Messiah may dwell in your hearts through faith. I pray that you, being rooted and firmly established in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the length and width, height and depth of God's love.

Underline the words *pray* and *love* each time you see them.

How do you think your prayer life could be impacted if you prayed knowing that you are "rooted and firmly established in love"?

Prayer doesn't have to be something you are scared of or anxious about. If you remind yourself of your sure footing in the love of Christ, your prayers will hopefully come a little easier and be a little bolder. May God deepen your grasp of His love as you learn to boldly approach Him in a renewed devotion to prayer.

DAY 2

INSTRUCTIONS ON PRAYER

Right above 1 Timothy 2 in the HCSB, the heading "Instructions in Prayer" appears. So, let's read these instructions and unpack them today:

1 First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, 2 for kings and all those who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. 3 This is good, and it pleases God our Savior, 4 who wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

What other words are listed in verse 1 that mean prayer?

For whom specifically does Paul say we should pray?

The last verse here is what sets us in awe. Why does prayer please God?

Our God is a good God who longs for His people to come to salvation. We will talk more later in the study about praying specifically for those who are lost, but for now let's think a little bigger.

You came to this study with a hope to be better equipped for prayer. Maybe to pray more often, or to even begin to pray, or perhaps to pray with more intensity and focus. It is our hope that God will move you to a whole new level of prayer through your focus on it during this study, but since 1 Timothy tells us to pray for everyone, we would love for you to take some time to list out those specific people you want to be more strategic in praying for.

Make a list now and then b	peside each name	write one main	thing you want
to pray over that person.			

1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
б.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

Now, if you haven't already done this, take a few minutes to do just that pray about each person and the word you wrote for each person.

We would love for you to bookmark this page somehow so you can come back to this list over the next few weeks, not only to remember to keep praying for these people and the specific item for each person, but to also watch and see how God will work and move through those prayers.

DAY 3

DEVOTED To prayer

Paul commanded believers to be devoted to prayer (Rom. 12:12; Col. 4:2). While that sounds like a noble concept, what does that really mean? What does that type of devotion look like?

The Greek word for *devotion* Paul uses is *proskartereo* in these verses. The word is used ten times in the New Testament; five of them are associated with prayer and five are not. To help us understand this type of prayer devotion, let's look at how the verb is used each time.

In the verses below, the translation of *proskartereo* is in bold. Notice how it is used. Under each verse, make a note about what this teaches us concerning being devoted to prayer and discuss your observations the next time you meet as a group.

- All these were **continually united** in prayer, along with the women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, and His brothers (Acts 1:14, HCSB).
- And they **devoted** themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to the prayers (Acts 2:42, HCSB).
- But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the preaching ministry (Acts 6:4, HCSB).
- Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; be **persistent** in prayer (Rom.12:12, HCSB).
- Devote yourselves to prayer; stay alert in it with thanksgiving (Col. 4:2, HCSB).

After studying the above verses, how would you describe what it means to be devoted to prayer?

What have been the major prayer catalysts in your personal life? In other words, what things have caused you to become more devoted to prayer?

What would need to change in your life for you to be more devoted to prayer?

If it meant positively transforming your life and empowering your spiritual impact on others, would you be willing to make those changes?

In addition to the verses that used *proskartereo* ("devoted") concerning prayer, there are five other usages of the word in the New Testament. Studying these verses can actually help us get a better handle on how to become devoted to prayer.

- In the verses below, the usage of *proskartareo* is in bold. Beside each verse, make notes of how this helps you better understand being "devoted" to prayer.
- Then He told His disciples to have a small boat ready for Him, so the crowd would not crush Him (Mark 3:9, HCSB).
- Then even Simon himself believed. And after he was baptized, he went around constantly with Philip and was astounded as he observed the signs and great miracles that were being performed (Acts 8:13).
- When the angel who spoke to him had gone, he called two of his household slaves and a devout soldier, who was one of those who **attended** him (Acts 10:7).
- And for this reason you pay taxes, since the authorities are God's public servants, **continually attending** to these tasks (Rom. 13:6, HCSB).

Out of these verses, what helps you most concerning being devoted to prayer?

Devotion involves committing to something consistently and frequently. To be consistently devoted to prayer, we have to train ourselves in this practice. It does not come naturally. We must train ourselves to be in constant communion with God.

Stop now to pray and ask God for help to repurpose your life as one who is devoted to prayer.

DAY 4

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

When most people think of Jesus' prayer life, they default to the teaching we commonly refer to as the Lord's Prayer. While we will dive deep into this pivotal prayer template later in this study, Jesus' prayer ministry was not isolated to this famous teaching. In fact, His entire ministry was saturated in prayer.

- Read the following passages that describe the prayer life of Jesus. Under each verse, make notes of what impacts you concerning His example.
- [Early stages of ministry] In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there (Mark 1:35).
- [Before making the selection of the twelve disciples] It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God (Luke 6:12).
- [After feeding the 5,000] After He had sent the crowds away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray; and when it was evening, He was there alone (Matt. 14:23).
- [Before His crucifixion] And He came out and proceeded as was His custom to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed Him. When He arrived at the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and began to pray (Luke 22:39-41).

What are some of the aspects of Jesus' prayer life that impact you most?

At what times of day did Jesus pray?

In what kinds of situations did Jesus set aside time to pray?

Not only did Jesus teach on the importance of prayer, He modeled this devotion to prayer.

Have you ever wondered why Jesus needed to pray? If Jesus was God, why did He need to take time to pray?

Although Jesus was fully God while He was on earth, Scripture also teaches that He "kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" (Luke 2:52). Prayer was Jesus' communication to God the Father while He lived on earth. Prayer was His means, along with the Holy Spirit, of knowing and carrying out God's will. Prayer was a vital part of the intimate fellowship between God the Father and Christ His Son.

Think of the most important relationship in your life. How strong would that relationship be if the communication between you stopped today?

Based on Jesus' prayer life, what is the primary function of prayer?

If Jesus, the Son of God, was constantly dependent upon the Father through prayer, how could we possibly think it is not necessary for us?

As you close today, pray and ask God to show you some changes you need to make to become more consistent and dependent upon Him in prayer. (Hint: Being a part of this study is a huge step in the right direction. God will be faithful as you work to become devoted to prayer.)

PRAYER STRATEGY TARGET

It is our hope and prayer that you dive deep into the topic of prayer though this Bible Study. We have a feeling that you are hoping and praying the same thing. God will be faithful as you focus on this over these next eight weeks. It is also our prayer, though, that you leave at the end of this study with a firm grasp on how to pray for those around you—your friends, family members, the lost, those in authority over you, and more—in a strategic way.

To do that, we have developed a sort of road map—in the form of a Prayer Strategy Target.



We will work through this target together over the coming weeks in each "Day 5" of our homework. By the end of the study you will know how to utilize this target and pray specifically and strategically for others.

We want to start today with the vertical and horizontal lines on the target. They represent the cross. Prayer begins with the cross of Jesus Christ.

The cross allows us access to the Father.

John 14:6 says:

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

Our relationship to God through Jesus is the key to healthy and effective prayers. We need to be vertically aligned with God through the cross before we can do anything else.

As Scripture says, "He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:5-7).

With this in mind, it is important to make sure we submit to God's plan and are saved God's way through Jesus, not on our own. Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). Salvation comes from the Lord, not man. It is a spiritual transformation God brings about within someone's heart and life. No individual or church can manufacture it. But God does it as we repent and trust Christ alone by faith.

We understand that in this Bible study setting we are speaking to all different kinds of people. Non-believers, seekers, new believers, seasoned Christians, wayward Christians —you name it. No matter where you are, though, take a moment and stop and evaluate your relationship with Jesus.

If you aren't certain of your relationship to God through Jesus, would you reach out to your small group leader or someone on your church staff to begin to talk this out with them? They will be honored to help you.

If you've repented and trusted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, this is the foundation for a strong prayer life. If you are clear in your heart that you have salvation, would you consider praying and thanking God for this incredible gift? Also, ask God if there are specific areas of your relationship with Him that might need a tune up. Allow Him to work and write out any notes or prayers on that topic below.

Now do something that might not seem so obvious. Pray about your prayer life. Write out a description of the kind of prayer warrior you desire to become. Then pray over each aspect and ask God to make that a reality in you.

May God do a great and lasting work in your heart and draw you deeper and closer into a loving relationship with Him like never before!

THE WAR IS REAL. IT'S TIME TO FIGHT IN PRAYER.

"THE PRAYER OF A RIGHTEOUS PERSON IS POWERFUL AND EFFECTIVE." – JAMES 5:16B (NIV)

Are you ready to take your prayer life to the next level? Do you want to experience the joy of answered prayer on a regular basis? This Bible study is designed to help believers become more devoted to prayer and to faithfully and effectively wield the weapon of prayer in the battles and seasons of life.

Through eight weeks of scriptural study, you will:

- Discover what prayer is and various types of prayer;
- · Gain understanding on how and why God wants us to pray;
- Learn to respond in prayer during spiritual warfare;
- Discover truths about God that will help you pray in faith;
- Develop targeted prayer strategies for your life.

Prayer should be your first plan of attack for all of life's conflicts and your ready defense against the Enemy. It's time to learn how to fight the battles with the right weapons—to pray in greater faith and walk in greater victory.

ALSO AVAILABLE

LEADER KIT (Item 005644094) includes a Bible study book, two DVDs with eight teaching sessions, and *The Battle Plan for Prayer* book

CASE LOT of 10 Battle Plan for Prayer Bible Study books (Item 005772120)

DOWNLOADS E-book, video sessions, and promotional content at LifeWay.com/BattlePlan

"DEVOTE YOURSELVES TO PRAYER; Stay Alert in it with thanksgiving." – Colossians 4:2 (HCSB)





