

8-SESSION BIBLE STUDY FOR TEEN GIRLS

JOSEPHINE D. ROSE

# Talking *to* God

A Bible Study on Prayer

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A Bible Study on Prayer

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## About the Author

**JOSEPHINE D. ROSE** is a writer, teacher, and speaker with a background in psychology and biblical studies. Many of her greatest lessons were learned in the “school of suffering,” where seven years of chronic illness confined her to bed. During this time, God drew her into deeper intimacy with Him, and she found His Word sufficient for all seasons of life. She loves sharing God’s faithfulness through writing and teaching women.

When she’s not writing or spending time with family, Josephine enjoys curling up with a good book and a cup of coffee.

Connect with her at [josephinedrose.com](http://josephinedrose.com) and on Instagram [@josephinedrose](https://www.instagram.com/josephinedrose).

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John and Sharon Sayger:  
Thank you to my parents, who have modeled what it looks like to follow God and faithfully seek Him in prayer. You are such a gift!

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# Dear Sister,

God is pursuing you! Your decision to study prayer is a response to His love.

When I first came to know God, I hungered to study His Word and would spend all of my spare time digging for treasure. I loved it! But after years of study, I still felt distant from God because I was missing one of the most important parts of the relationship—talking.

Imagine sitting beside a friend every day, reading a letter she wrote for you, and then putting it back on the table without responding or even writing back. I was doing this with God, and it's no wonder I felt like I knew more *about* Him than I knew *Him* through a true relationship.

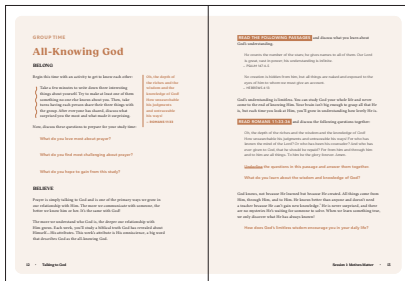
Talking changed everything. I discovered God is someone we can know and grow closer to personally, not just an idea we are trying to understand. I found a Friend! The more time I spent responding to what I saw about Him in the Scriptures, the better and sweeter my relationship with Him became.

Bible studies are a great tool, and I am glad you are here! But I don't want you to just finish this book or learn lots about prayer; I hope you'll grow in your relationship with God. As you walk with God through the next eight sessions, you'll study who He is and what He says about prayer. I pray that each day will deepen your love for God and that in your seeking, you will find Him.

Friend, a wonderful adventure awaits you!

# How To Use

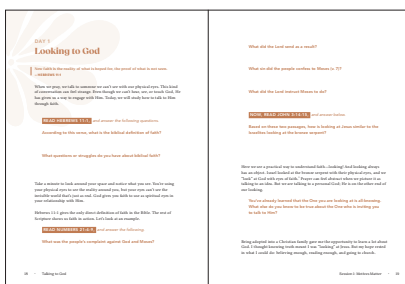
## HERE'S A LOOK AT WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT TO FIND IN THIS STUDY.



### GROUP TIME

Though talking to God can be personal and intimate, learning in community is a valuable gift! I hope you will enjoy gathering with your friends and family to seek God in prayer and Bible study.

Each week, you will be able to share questions, prayer requests, and participate in activities as you learn who God is and how to talk to Him. These group times will begin each week, and you'll have one last group time to end the study together. My prayer is that as you walk this journey with God, you'll have sweet times with others on the path.



### PERSONAL STUDY DAYS

Each session contains three personal study days to help you study what Scripture says about prayer. You will learn from biblical prayers, God's responses, and the Lord's Prayer—the prayer Jesus taught His disciples. Keeping a Bible and something to write with on hand will be helpful. Maybe add highlighters to help your study process.



## **PRAYER CALENDAR**

There are three days of personal study, but I want you to build the habit of talking to God every day. We don't only talk to God while studying; the conversation can continue as we go about our day. I have included a calendar and prompts to help you explore creative ways to pray. Use this on the days when you aren't sitting with your book. We learn to pray by praying!

## **MEMORY VERSE**

As you study the Lord's Prayer, you will memorize it. Memorizing Scripture is a wonderful way to get it into our hearts and not just our heads. When you finish this study, I hope you'll have tasted the sweetness of God's Word and will have this prayer with you forever.

## **MUSIC PLAYLIST**

There is something "sticky" with music. We remember words in melody, and I think God made it that way. I have provided a list of songs on page 154 to help you meditate on the Lord's Prayer throughout this study. I hope you'll find it helpful!

## **ANSWERED PRAYERS**

Recording answered prayers helps our faith grow and motivates us to keep praying. Use this space on page 153 to record when and how God answers throughout this study. I hope this action will inspire you to praise the God who hears and answers.

### **Leading a Group?**

You can find a leader guide on page 156. The leader guide offers several tips and planning instructions. To find additional resources for leaders, visit [lifeway.com/talkingtogod](http://lifeway.com/talkingtogod).



# prayer calendar

Prayer isn't only done with folded hands and bowed heads—we can pray at all times and in different ways. When you are not working through a personal study day, choose one of the prompts from the list and mark it on your calendar. Don't worry about going in order—instead, make it fun and use stickers or other journaling tools!

1. Journal a prayer. Give thanks, share worries, or ask for His help.
2. Pray the Lord's Prayer. Take time to pray slowly and pause after each request to reflect.
3. Write a list of things you need, then thank God for being your provider.
4. Ask God to help you forgive someone and thank Him for forgiving you.
5. Sit in silence for five minutes. This may feel strange at first, but I've found that simply being with God can be restful and sweet. Notice anything He may put on your heart to pray.
6. Spend time talking to God as you take a walk.
7. Confess the ways you desire to be in control, and thank God for being a good King.
8. Choose a psalm to pray back to God. Need help? Start with Psalm 23.
9. Begin your prayer with open hands and surrender your will to His.
10. Make an audio recording of a prayer to God. (This helps me stay focused when I don't want to journal.)
11. Get real with God about your current temptation and ask for His help.
12. Thank God for an unanswered prayer.
13. Pray the armor of God (Eph. 6:14-17).
14. Create a gratitude list of things to give thanks to God for.
15. Choose a person to pray for (either in person or on the phone).
16. Pick a worship song to listen to before or while you pray.
17. Acknowledge the ways you are weak and He is strong.
18. Pray for something you feel anxious about.
19. Reflect on the hope of the gospel, and thank God for His provision.
20. Choose biblical song lyrics or a Scripture passage to prayerfully doodle or hand letter.

[illegible]

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

<sup>9</sup>“Therefore, you should  
pray like this:

Our Father in heaven,  
your name be honored  
as holy.

<sup>10</sup>Your kingdom come.

Your will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.

<sup>11</sup>Give us today our  
daily bread.

<sup>12</sup>And forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven  
our debtors.

<sup>13</sup>And do not bring us  
into temptation,  
but deliver us from the  
evil one.”

**Matthew 6:9-13**



SESSION 1:

# Motives Matter

## GROUP TIME

# All-Knowing God

## BELONG

Begin this time with an activity to get to know each other.

Take a few minutes to write down three interesting things about yourself. Try to make at least one of them something no one else knows about you. Then, take turns having each person share their three things with the group. After everyone has shared, discuss what surprised you the most and what made it surprising.

Now, discuss these questions to prepare for your study time.

Oh, the depth of  
the riches and the  
wisdom and the  
knowledge of God!  
How unsearchable  
his judgments  
and untraceable  
his ways!  
— ROMANS 11:33

What do you love most about prayer?

What do you find most challenging about prayer?

What do you hope to gain from this study?

## BELIEVE

Prayer is simply talking to God and is one of the primary ways we grow in our relationship with Him. The more we communicate with someone, the better we know him or her. It's the same with God!

The more we understand who God is, the deeper our relationship with Him grows. Each week, you'll study a biblical truth God has revealed about Himself—His attributes. This week's attribute is His omniscience, a big word that describes God as the all-knowing God.

**READ THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES,** *and discuss what you learn about God's understanding.*

He counts the number of the stars; he gives names to all of them. Our Lord is great, vast in power; his understanding is infinite.

– PSALM 147:4-5

No creation is hidden from him, but all things are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give an account.

– HEBREWS 4:13

God's understanding is limitless. You can study God your whole life and never come to the end of knowing Him. Your brain isn't big enough to grasp all that He is, but each time you look at Him, you'll grow in understanding how lovely He is.

**READ ROMANS 11:33-36,** *and discuss the following questions together.*

Oh, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments and untraceable his ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor? And who has ever given to God, that he should be repaid? For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen.

Underline the questions in this passage and answer them together.

**What do you learn about the wisdom and knowledge of God?**

God knows, not because He learned but because He created. All things come from Him, through Him, and to Him. He knows better than anyone and doesn't need a teacher because He can't gain new knowledge.<sup>1</sup> He is never surprised, and there are no mysteries He's waiting for someone to solve. When we learn something true, we only discover what He has always known!

**How does God's limitless wisdom encourage you in your daily life?**



When you don't know what to do, God knows the answer. When you are anxious, He knows the solution. God is unmoved by terrible news, trials, or challenging circumstances. He wasn't surprised by what you shared with your group at the beginning of this session. Why? Because He knows. What a comfort we can rest in!

**READ PSALM 131 TOGETHER,** *and discuss the following.*

I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me.  
— PSALM 131:1b (ESV)

**List some ways we try to busy ourselves with things that are too great for us in today's age. What is often the result of seeking distraction in this way?**

We have an endless supply of information at our fingertips. This amount of information is unhealthy for us; we weren't created for it. It often makes us worse, not better.

**Describe the amount of information you consume daily. Where do you get your information and how often?**

**How is the knowledge you are gaining affecting you?**

**How can you create healthy boundaries to embrace your human limitations?**

There are characteristics of God that we can imitate, called communicable attributes. The ones we can't imitate are called incommunicable attributes. Though we often desire it, God's omniscience is something we will never share. We weren't made to know all things.

I feel anxious and exhausted when I take in more information than I can process. I've learned it's healthy only to consume what we can pray for. Any more than that is too much! There is always more to learn—more than what we can use—and it ends up overwhelming us, not helping us.

## PRAY

As we turn our hearts to prayer, answer the following questions together.

**How does the fact that God knows all things comfort you today?**

**How does God's omniscience affect the way you pray?**

Sometimes, I can't even find words to pray because my heart feels so heavy, but I can look to God and say, "Lord, you know." Because He does! You can ask for wisdom and trust that God will give it. But when God withholds things too great and marvelous for you to understand, you can rest as a trusting child in the arms of your omniscient Father.

**"Our comfort lies not in holding all knowledge, but in trusting the One who does."<sup>2</sup>**

**Write Jeremiah 29:12-13 below and answer the following questions. God has listened and will continue to listen to His children when we pray to Him.**

**What might be hindering you from coming to God? From talking to and seeking the One who already knows you?**

Whatever it is, God knows, and He is still calling you to Himself. Will you accept this love from the One who knows you deeply and intimately? "Seek me and find me" is the call.

## Talking to God

Write a letter to God, honestly sharing your thoughts and feelings as you begin this study. Remember, you can't shock or surprise Him. End this group time by sharing prayer requests and giving thanks to the all-knowing God.

**Friend, the omniscient God knew before you were born that you would be sitting where you are with this book, learning about prayer. He is ready to walk you through the next eight weeks. Let's start talking!**

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, leaving small margins at the top and bottom. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

Lord, teach us to pray.

The disciples asked Jesus this when they wanted to understand how to talk to God. Over the next eight weeks, we will learn from Jesus's response, the Lord's Prayer.

This week, we will start with a little prep work. When teaching prayer, Jesus didn't immediately begin with what words to say with our lips; He started with the heart. God is concerned with our desires and motives, not just how well we talk.

As we begin this study, let's prepare our hearts!





## DAY 1

# Looking to God

**Now faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen.**

**– HEBREWS 11:1**

When we pray, we talk to someone we can't see with our physical eyes. This kind of conversation can feel strange. Even though we can't hear, see, or touch God, He has given us a way to engage with Him. Today, we will study how to talk to Him through faith.

**READ HEBREWS 11:1,** *and answer the following questions.*

**According to this verse, what is the biblical definition of faith?**

**What questions or struggles do you have about biblical faith?**

Take a minute to look around your space and notice what you see. You're using your physical eyes to see the reality around you, but your eyes can't see the invisible world that's just as real. God gives you faith to use as spiritual eyes in your relationship with Him.

Hebrews 11:1 gives the only direct definition of faith in the Bible. The rest of Scripture shows us faith in action. Let's look at an example.

**READ NUMBERS 21:4-9,** *and answer the following.*

**What was the people's complaint against God and Moses?**

What did the Lord send as a result?

What sin did the people confess to Moses (v. 7)?

What did the Lord instruct Moses to do?

**NOW, READ JOHN 3:14-15,** *and answer below.*

Based on these two passages, how is looking at Jesus similar to the Israelites looking at the bronze serpent?

Here we see a practical way to understand faith—looking! And looking always has an object. Israel looked at the bronze serpent with their physical eyes, and we “look” at God with eyes of faith.<sup>3</sup> Prayer can feel abstract when we picture it as talking to an idea. But we are talking to a personal God; He is on the other end of our looking.

**You’ve already learned that the One you are looking at is all-knowing. What else do you know to be true about the One who is inviting you to talk to Him?**

Being adopted into a Christian family gave me the opportunity to learn a lot about God. I thought knowing truth meant I was “looking” at Jesus. But my hope rested in what I could do: believing enough, reading enough, and going to church.



Years later, I went to a little church near my college campus. They knew God; I only knew about God, and there's a difference. I asked for help, and this sweet church said, "Look to God." I tried hard, but nothing I did worked. After a long conversation, a woman said, "God is pursuing you. He is drawing you to Himself and will complete the work He has started."

At that moment, I realized a personal God desired me, not a set of facts. I stopped looking at my hands and asked for His help; turning from myself, I looked at Him for the first time. And I'm still looking!

You are also invited to lift your eyes to God today, either for the first time or the hundredth. The way we come to God is the way we continue in God—faith.

**Are you looking to God, or are you looking somewhere else?  
Explain.**

**List any challenges making it difficult to look to Him.**

If you've never truly looked to Jesus, He invites you to turn your eyes to Him. If you belong to Him but have gotten distracted, He invites you to look again. If you are looking at Him right now, He invites you to keep looking. There is much more to see and love about the One looking back!

Looking may feel difficult. That's because it is impossible to know God on our own. But God has made a way for us to grow in faith.

**READ EPHESIANS 2:8-9,** *and answer below.*

**How does this passage describe faith?**

**How might this truth change the way you seek to grow in faith?**

We don't gain or grow in faith by trying harder. We grow in faith by going to the God who gives it. Prayer is talking to an unseen God who we can see through faith. As you continue this study, you will be responding to the One who is pursuing you.

Talking to God	
<b>PREPARE:</b>	Direct your attention to the One you are coming to talk to.
<b>PRAY:</b>	Share any difficulties concerning faith and ask for His help as you look to Him. He is willing to help you pray!
One day, we will all see with unveiled faces, but until then, we behold Him by faith.	

## DAY 2

# Heart Check

Don't be like them, because your Father knows the things you need before you ask him.

– MATTHEW 6:8

Before the Lord's Prayer, Jesus tells us two ways not to pray.

**READ MATTHEW 6:5-8,** *and answer.*

What two groups of people does Jesus say not to pray like?

Describe the prayers of the hypocrites.

The meaning of hypocrisy is similar to an actor you would watch performing in your favorite movie. They do a great job, but it's not who they are when they take off the makeup and costume.

In the passage, the hypocrites are the Pharisees. These well-known teachers did good works, like praying in the synagogue or on street corners, but for the wrong reasons. They wore religious makeup to win the approval of others.

**TURN TO LUKE 18:10-14,** *and read the prayer of the Pharisee and the prayer of the tax collector.*

What similarities do you see between this passage and Matthew 6:5-8?

How do you think humility plays a part in honest prayer?

The Pharisees' goal was acceptance from man, not God, so they prayed proudly and openly. Their motive wasn't to talk to God but to be seen talking to God. It wasn't about a relationship with the Father but about the applause of others.

**How do we wear religious makeup in front of people today?**

**In what ways are you tempted to pretend for people's applause?**

God desires our motives to be pure. Sharing our faith openly can be a great witness and expression of love for God if the goal is God's glory and not ours. We have to ask ourselves, "Why am I doing this?" If it's to be seen, we are seeking the approval of others above God.

The Father welcomes you to remove the makeup and come with your bare face. You don't have to perform for His love.

*Let's look at the second group.* **COMPARE THESE**  
**TRANSLATIONS OF MATTHEW 6:7** *and answer.*

"When you pray, don't babble like the Gentiles, since they imagine they'll be heard for their many words." (CSB)

"And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words." (ESV)

"When you pray, don't babble on and on as the Gentiles do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again." (NLT)

**What do you learn about the prayers of the Gentiles?**

### Can you relate to praying like them? How so?

The second group was the Gentile pagans. These worshipers of false gods believed saying long prayers would make their gods listen. They repeated empty words, thinking it would get their gods to answer.

God isn't a vending machine; prayer isn't like going into a store. It's a real relationship. We already have our Father's attention, and He knows what we need before we ask Him.

Long prayers are great, but they're not necessary. Simple and short prayers work just as well. It's better to pray a few words from the heart than many "empty or meaningless" words.

Think about the freedom Jesus offers and answer the following questions.

**Do you find it difficult to pray when you don't have lots to say?  
Explain.**

**How does Jesus's teaching encourage you to pray when you don't  
have a lot of words?**

We come to our Father through Jesus Christ, not through what we can do. Jesus gives you permission to offer what you have. If you can pray with a few words, that's enough!

**Write Mathew 6:7-8 below and underline why we shouldn't pray  
with many words:**

Think about the person who knows you best. How does this person's understanding of you affect the way you share things with him or her?

Does knowing that God understands your needs motivate you to talk to Him? Why or why not?

God's knowledge should motivate us, not hinder us. We are more likely to freely talk to the person who knows us and our needs best.<sup>4</sup> My mom is the person I am most likely to go to when I need to talk. I know she loves me and that nothing I say will shock her. Her knowing all about me makes going to her easy.

It's the same with God! You don't have to pray with many words to be heard or understood. God knows, and He is waiting for you to come to Him in prayer.

### Talking to God

Lay before God the ways you have sought to win the approval of others instead of resting in Him. After repenting, share with Him what is on your heart and thank Him for His love.

**You are released from the weight to perform for His love. He's only asking you to give Him your real self.**



## DAY THREE

# In Secret

**You satisfy me as with rich food; my mouth will praise you with joyful lips.**

**– PSALM 63:5**

Jesus invites us to humble and honest prayer. When we seek Him, we will receive the best reward!

**READ MATTHEW 6:5-8,** *and answer the following questions.*

**What kind of room does Jesus say to go to?**

**According to this passage, where is the Father found?**

The room referred to in this passage would have been a supply room where the food for animals and farm tools was stored.<sup>5</sup> It was usually the only room that could be locked, making it the perfect private place to talk to God. Instead of standing in the synagogue, Jesus tells us to go to the room with the locked door.<sup>5</sup> This is where the Father is waiting for you and me.

**How do you show up at places when you know someone is eagerly waiting for you?**

**How would you show up to pray if you knew God was already waiting?**

This is the beautiful truth—God is waiting for you. Before you ever lift your gaze to Him in faith, His eyes are on you.

Have you seen those beautiful prayer closets with floor cushions and twinkle lights? I love them! But don't stress if you don't have the perfect picture-worthy spot. We don't "lock the door" to enjoy pretty lights, soft blankets, or glowing candles. We lock the door to talk to God.

You can pray wherever you have privacy and won't be distracted: the bathroom, a closet, or on walks. When we look at Jesus's prayer life, we often see Him going into the desert or wilderness (see Luke 5:16). He went away from people so that He could focus on the Lord. Don't overcomplicate finding privacy.

**What might that quiet space look like for you? Your room? Your closet? The bathroom? Going on a walk? The porch? In bed with headphones on?**

**What doors do you need to close in your next prayer time? List these distractions and think through ways to limit them.**

There is always a way to spend time with God, even if it doesn't seem dreamy and looks more like a room full of farm supplies. The goal is to talk to God; this brings so much freedom.

**REREAD MATTHEW 6:6,** *and answer.*

**Who will reward those who pray in secret?**

**Are you seeking rewards outside of your private room? Explain.**

The best reward comes to those who take time to meet with God in prayer. If you want rewarding prayer, you need secret prayer. It's easy to think the reward is just answers to our prayers. Answered prayers are wonderful, but the gifts from God's hands don't compare to the beauty of His face.

**READ ABOUT THE GOD OF OUR REWARD IN PSALM 63:1-5,**  
*and answer the following.*

**How does the author David describe the land he walked on?**

**Where did David direct His gaze? Why?**

**How does David describe God's love?**

**Have you experienced God in this way? Explain.**

David wrote this song in the wilderness of Judah. If he had looked up from his pen and paper, he would have seen emptiness—no garden, no people. It was a barren place. His physical surroundings reminded him of his spiritual need—his soul longed to delight in God.

Did you notice David didn't say God satisfies like broccoli and green beans? Those nourish our bodies, but most people wouldn't call them satisfying. Where I'm from, we call "rich food" soul food. I think of meals served at a Thanksgiving feast filled with butter, milk, eggs, and cheese—they hug the soul.

God, who meets us in secret, satisfies our souls like a good meal satisfies our bodies. When we experience His faithful love, we find the acceptance our hearts long for. Deep down, we all want to be seen and known; this desire isn't wrong.

What matters is where we go to satisfy it. All earthly sources we try to drink from will leave us thirsty, and all other foods will fail to sustain us. The reward found in meeting with God in prayer fills the soul!

Friend, the God who satisfies like rich food invites you to Himself today!

### **Talking to God**

Share your heart with God. Express any difficulties or troubles you experience in prayer. Repent of any places or people you've tried to use to fill your soul and ask God to satisfy you like rich food.