**THE KEY TO A VIBRANT AND POWERFUL PRAYER LIFE**

**Hebrews 4:12**

*“For the word of God is living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”* (Hebrews 4:12)

**THE BIG IDEA: Praying the Bible brings freshness and focus to our prayer life and leads us to pray God’s will in all things.**

**PRAYING THE BIBLE FOLLOWS PRECEDENT**

* **Jesus and the early church prayed Scripture giving us examples of the importance of praying the Bible.**
* *“About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out with a loud voice, ‘Elí, Elí, lemá sabachtháni?’ that is, ‘My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?’”* (Matthew 27:46 quoting Psalm 22:1)
* **In His darkest and most difficult moment on the cross Jesus recited Scripture from God’s word in His prayer.**
* *“Why do the Gentiles rage and the peoples plot futile things? 26 The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers assemble together against the Lord and against his Messiah.”* (Acts 4:26 quoting Psalm 2:1-2)
* **If we are to follow the examples of Jesus and others in the Bible then we should be committed to praying the Bible.**

**PRAYING THE BIBLE FOSTERS FOCUS**

* *”Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light on my path.”* (Psalm 119:105)
* **Praying through the Scriptures drowns out distractions and fixes our focus on that which is most important.**
* **You will bever run out of things to pray about when you pray through the Bible, especially the Psalms.**

**PRAYING THE BIBLE FORGES DEPTH**

* *“Therefore, let us leave the elementary teaching about Christ and go on to maturity…”* (Hebrews 6:1a)
* **Without a plan for prayer we end up praying the same things resulting in a weak and mundane prayer life.**
* “If you are seeking to live under the lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of God’s Word (the Bible), confessing known sin and fighting the lifelong tendency to sin instead of excusing it, then the problem of boredom in prayer is not you; rather, it is you method. - Donald Whitney
* **Praying the Bible will take you deeper in your prayer life than you ever imagined.**

**PRAYING THE BIBLE FRAMES INTENT**

* *“For the word of God is living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”* (Hebrews 4:12)
* **Allowing yourself to be led by the Spirit of God as you pray through Scripture will shift your intentions from your will to the will of God.**
* *“Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.”* (Romans 12:2)

**CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION**

**Icebreaker:**

* If you could learn any language, which language would you learn and why?

**Start thinking:**

* Other than the examples given in the sermon, can you give other examples of people in the Bible praying Scriptures? (Can use Google)
* What has been your experience when praying without praying Scripture? (i.e. Boredom, Repetition, Frustration, Distraction) Explain.
* How can praying Scripture help you overcome these challenges?

**Start sharing. Discuss in depth to create openness***.*

* Why is praying the Bible such an important part of our prayer life? Be specific and give examples.
* What is the best book in the Bible to start your “Praying the Bible” plan? Why?
* What steps can you take to ensure that you get on a plan for Praying the Bible and stay on the plan?
* Take 5 minutes towards the end of the Group time to pray through a Psalm. You may want to spread out and pray softly, or silently.

**Start praying. Be bold, and pray specifically.**

* Heavenly Father, My desire is to deepen my prayer life as I learn to pray Your Word. Teach me how to pray as I commit to praying the Bible. Grow me as I learn to pray Your will. In Jesus’ Name. - Amen

**Start digging. Read Scripture and meditate on it.**

Psalm 119 Psalm 23 Hebrews 4:12 Hebrews 5:12-14