



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

# Mission of God: How to Pray

Bible Reading: Ephesians 1:15-18a

[Watch LIVESTREAM here at 10am](#)

[Join our post-sermon discussion on Zoom at 11am](#)

[Join our citKids Connect discussion at 11am](#)

## I. Give Thanks For God's Work (Eph. 1:15-16)

- A. Paul prays based on God's work (1:3-14)
- B. Based on evidence in the believers (v. 15)
  1. Your faith in the Lord Jesus
  2. Your love for all God's people
- C. Giving thanks to God the Father (v. 16)
  1. When you see God at work in people's lives, give him thanks
  2. Make this your new habit as you pray

## II. Prayer & the Trinity

- A. To Whom should we pray? "*Whenever you pray, say, 'Father...'*" (Luke 11:2)
- B. Pray along with the 'grain' of the Trinity (Eph. 2:18)
  - "We have an invitation to pray...to the Father, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit. This ...means praying 'with the grain instead of against it.' Wood has grain...[With] prayer this grain is [the Trinity], running from the Spirit through the Son to the Father..." –Fred Sanders
- C. Prayer—joining the Trinity's conversation (Jn. 11:42; Rom. 8:15-16)
  1. Within the Trinity—the Son's eternal 'asking' of the Father (Jn. 11:42)
  2. We're invited to join the Trinity's eternal conversation (Rom. 8:15-16)
- D. Pray—Ask the Father in the Son's name (Jn. 16:23)

### III. Paul's Request: For Them "*To Know God Better*" (Eph. 1:17-18a)

- A. Prayer is addressed to God the Father (Eph. 1:17; 3:14; Luke 11:1-2)
  - 1. We acknowledge & affirm that we are God's children (Eph. 1:5; Jn. 1:12)
  - 2. We align with God's mission (Gal. 4:6)
- B. Prayer is not merely about crisis management
  - 1. Jesus' general instructions on how to pray—the 'Lord's Prayer' (Luke 11:2-4)
  - 2. We often just focus our prayer on our concerns
- C. Pray to know God better—"*so that you may know*" (1:18a)
  - "The first part of the prayer invokes the triune God as the source of the believers' spiritual experience, which is summarized here as 'know[ing] him [God]'."—Michael Gorman
- D. Prayer for new insight (v. 17b-18a)
  - 1. Pray for spiritual wisdom & for deeper understanding of God (vv. 17b-18a)
  - 2. Pray that the eyes of your heart would be enlightened (v. 18a)
    - "To be 'enlightened'...is *not merely to have access to information, but to participate fully*...in the 'biblical' sense of first-hand experience."—Michael Gorman