



Vision:

Prayer is the lifeblood of the Christian faith--but many followers of Jesus still struggle to make prayer part of their daily lives. In *Pray First*, participants will learn how to make prayer a first response, rather than a last resort. During a 13-week Small Group Semester, participants will:

- gain the understanding and tools to make prayer exciting--and bring the joy back into their time with God;
- take a journey through the prayers of the Bible, which reveal how to make prayer more personal and powerful;
- learn about fasting, an often overlooked but powerful discipline that's a vital companion to prayer; and
- follow proven, biblically grounded methods for making prayer a priority, not an afterthought.

Why:

"Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples."" - Luke 11:1 ESV

We exist to Reach people where they are and Connect them to everything God has for their life.

Pray First will equip participants to develop a personal lifestyle of prayer. Those interested in being on the Prayer Team will take steps to cultivate a lifestyle of effective prayer in order to serve on a team committed to praying for the fulfillment of the mission of Action Church.

Wins:

- Members will understand prayer as the first line of defense, not a last resort.
- Participants will be equipped in the area of prayer in order to serve their homes, work places, communities, and our church.
- New members for Prayer Teams.

Small-Group Structure

Participants will need the Pray First [Study Guide](#) and are also encouraged to purchase the *Pray First* book. Those who want to be on the prayer team are required to read the *Pray First* book.

Preparing for your group meetings:

- See page 153 in your *Pray First Study Guide*
- Video Week Agenda on page 155 in *Pray First Study Guide*

Weekly Plan:

Week	Book Chapter
1	Welcome & Video #1 - <i>The 5 P's of Prayer</i> Resource: Church Center app
2	Discussion Week on Personal Study Days 1-5
3	Video #2 - <i>The Lord's Prayer</i> Resource: The Lord's Prayer
4	Discussion Week on Personal Study Days 1-5
5	Tabernacle Prayer Video & Discussion Guide Resource: Tabernacle Prayer
6	Prayer Video #3 - <i>The Prayer of Jabez</i> Resource: The Prayer of Jabez
7	Discussion Week on Personal Study Days 1-5
8	Video #4 - <i>Praying the Names of God</i>
9	Discussion Week on Personal Study Days 1-5
10	Video #5 - <i>My Prayer for You</i> & complete Spiritual Gifts Test on their own this week
11	Discussion Week on Personal Study Days 1-5 & Understanding Spiritual Gifts
12	Video #6 - <i>Prayer & Fasting</i> Resource: Warfare Prayers
13	Discussion Week on Personal Study Days 1-5 & Next Steps Resource: Pray First App

Sample Agenda for Discussion Weeks below:

Time	Activity
7PM	Gather
7:10PM	Opening Prayer & Worship
7:15PM	<i>Pray First</i> Personal Study Discussion
8:00PM	Prayer Practice (use Prayer Models)
8:15PM	Next Steps
8:20PM	Closing Prayers
8:30PM	End Group

Gather

- This is your group's time for fellowship. It allows them time to arrive and get ready for the group.

Opening Prayer & Worship

- A time to prepare your participants' hearts and minds for your meeting. This is a time to set all distractions aside in order to prepare to hear from God.

Pray First Personal Study Discussion

- Guide the group in discussion based on the week's reading. See below for the 70/30 rule.

Resources

- Additional prayer resources to support the week's video/discussion. Share with participants in Church Center

Prayer Practice

- Break up into smaller groups or in pairs and use this time to practice some of the prayer models being learned in *Pray First*. This will help participants become comfortable using prayer models and also praying out loud.

Next Steps

- Provide group members a next step each week i.e. attend Action Steps, Serve Saturday, monthly Morning Prayer, Encounter Night, baptism, join the Prayer Team, pray out loud for someone, etc.

Closing Prayer

- Include time here to take prayer requests; encourage participants to take their next step by leading prayer.

Leading Your Group

1. Pray daily for the members of your group.
2. Partner with a co-leader to help share the responsibility of caring for and leading your group.
3. Connect with group members between weekly meetings through phone, email, text, social media, or face-to-face. Encourage group members to connect with each other throughout the week as well.
4. Respect people's time by beginning and ending your group on time.
5. Invite group members to attend church services and events together like Morning Prayer, Encounter, Serve Saturdays, and conferences and events.

How to create healthy group dynamics:

- Set expectations.
 - A key to helping people feel comfortable in your group is to let them know what to expect. Take time to share how the group will flow from week to week. This can include things like explaining the times you will begin and end the group, how discussion or group activities will happen, and how group members can share prayer requests or best engage in the group.
- Follow the 70/30 rule.
 - Give the members of your group room to speak up instead of doing all the talking yourself. About 70% of talking should come from members and 30% from the leader. The *Pray First* curriculum does not require you to reteach it but rather facilitate conversation through the discussion questions.
- Keep discussion positive.
 - If conversation takes a negative or destructive turn, guide it back to a healthy place. If someone needs to talk about a sensitive or complex issue, you can follow up with them after the group or call your coach to help you respond well.
- Respect boundaries.
 - Men should minister to men and women should minister to women. A couple may minister to a single person. We want to maintain integrity and purity in our Small Groups. These boundaries will help protect the leaders and group members from entering into an uncomfortable or inappropriate situation.

Prayer Team Opportunities

Sunday Services

Monthly Morning Prayer

Encounter Nights

21 Days of Prayer

Freedom Conference

Marriage Night Event

Church Wide Fast

Resources:

- *Pray First* Book & Study Guide:
- Participants will need the [Study Guide](#) and are also encouraged to purchase the *Pray First* book. Those who want to be on the prayer team are required to read the *Pray First* book.
- [Churchsource.com](https://www.churchsource.com) - for additional book purchases at lowest cost
- Pray First App -
 - Start Praying Biblical Models of Prayer
 - Follow along with self-guided plans
 - Explore guided audio plans
 - Create a personalized prayer list
 - Listen to worship music

Website: <https://www.theactionchurch.com/prayer>