

February 28, 2021

### 13. Prayer and Holiness— John 17:17-19

My mom had a lot to say about prayer. If you are happy, pray and give God thanks and praise for your happiness. If you are sad, pray to take your sadness away. If you are hurt, pray to take your pain away. If you are sick, pray for healing. If you are tired, pray so you can find rest. If you are scared, pray. If you are weak, pray. She would go on and on.

I didn't get it. Why should I talk to myself or someone else when I didn't know if God was really listening or willing to help me? But I began to understand as I engaged in my home congregation at the age of 16 and became active in the church. I started to understand the importance of prayer when we gathered as a youth group to pray three days a week from 5 to 6 a.m. before school. Prayers did change my life.

Then I had a very bad accident, and doctors didn't know what to do. After a week in the hospital, they sent me home to die. So my mom gathered the entire congregation and urged them to pray and fast for a miracle. God in his divine grace listened to the prayers of my parents and the entire congregation who surrounding my bed. Children, youth, and adults laid hands on me, fasted, and fervently prayed. Guess what? The miracle happened, and I'm here many years later, sharing my story with all of you.

Millions of people in Latin America where I am from, around the world, and here in the United States and Canada are devoted to prayer. Some pray because of their lack of resources, medical insurance, or a job. Prayer is the only way to keep their hope alive. They pray unceasingly, day after day, for their families' needs—a reality for thousands of immigrant brothers and sisters who constantly worry about hunger, sickness, violence, persecution, homelessness, thirst, justice, and medical care, so much so that they have fled their countries. Their faith and prayer connect them with our God as they seek divine protection and provision.

Many immigrants manage to cross to the other side, many die trying, and others are left behind. Some are caught and deported. Many are marked for life, but what most of them would agree on is that without God's help and the power of prayer, it would not have been possible to make the journey in the first place.

Yes, prayer is powerful, and through prayer we become closer to God. We become holy people who are set apart from evil. Lives and communities continue to be transformed.

As we walk into this Lenten season, let us remember that Jesus Christ intercedes with the Father for us. Let us draw close to God through prayer. Let's allow God to draw close and sanctify us for the transformation of our society in a world where there is room for everyone to live with dignity.

Blessings!  
Andrew Bodden, [AndrewBodden@mcc.org](mailto:AndrewBodden@mcc.org)

**We are grateful to Andrew Bodden** for sharing his insights, testimony, and real-life experiences of sisters and brothers in the church as related to this quarter's study.

**Rachel Wallace**, pastor of Eigenheim Mennonite Church in rural Saskatchewan, will be our **S&L Online** writer for *Living for God*, Spring 2021 study. Join us!

*Looking for participant guide page numbers in the leader guide? The page numbers in the leader guide work for both guides.*

## Resources for this session

- *These teaching videos are great for leader preparation or introducing each weekly session. Marnie Klassen, a fifth-year Bible student at Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, Manitoba, is the presenter for unit 3, Our Holy God. The videos are free and available on [MennoMedia's YouTube channel](#).*
- A **Salt & Light Reproducible** for this session is available at [www.MennoMedia.org/SL](http://www.MennoMedia.org/SL).
- Sarah McLachlan, "Prayer of St. Francis," YouTube, December 19, 2013, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=agPnMxp5Occ&ab\\_channel=TheOfficialSarahMcLachlan](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=agPnMxp5Occ&ab_channel=TheOfficialSarahMcLachlan).