

Leader's Prep Guide

The Leader's Prep Guide is a one-page glimpse of the stuff you need to know to begin preparing to teach the Large Group Session.

Session Overview

The Session Overview is a glance at some of the big picture details of each session.

- **Session Title:** Talk The Talk
- **Session Purpose:** To teach students that prayer is more than habit or ritual. It's more than a formality. It's the language of our relationship with God.
- **Main Scriptures:** Psalm 63:1-3, Psalm 6, Psalm 5:3
- **Supplemental Scriptures:** Psalm 143:8, Psalm 86:8-10
- **Session Snapshot:** This outline will serve to introduce the idea that prayer is the language of our relationship with God. Using David's words from various psalms, this outline will help your students understand the biblical case for prayer as well as some "big picture" understandings of what prayer accomplishes. ***The "why" and the "how" of prayer will be covered in the Pause Small Group Session 2.*** The idea behind this outline is not only to challenge and inform, but also to set up the practical application happening in the Small Group time.

Session Specifics

Session Specifics are just that: important aspects of the session outline that you need to keep in mind as you prepare.

Details on Large Group Session Outlines

- Here's the overall flow of each Large Group Session. (This way you'll know where you're headed as you think about tailoring this outline to fit your needs.)
 - **Session 1:** Theme pitch: Why it's so important that we seek to know God more
 - **Session 2:** The importance of prayer in our lives
 - **Session 3:** Why knowing the Bible is vital to our relationship with God
 - **Session 4:** Examining God's call on our lives

A note about Small Groups

- In Small Group Session 2, students will be learning Christ's model for prayer as Jesus told the disciples in Matthew 6:9-13.
 - Students will really be going deep into the "why" and "how" of prayer in their Small Group time, especially as it pertains to prayer's role in hitting pause.
 - You can feel comfortable taking a "big picture" look at prayer in this Large Group time.
- You can allude to the Matthew 6 passage if you choose. But mostly just keep it in mind, so if you "freelance" a bit you won't steal any of the Small Group Leader's thunder.

DETAILED Large Group Speaker Outline: Session 2: Talk the Talk

This DETAILED outline is specifically designed to give lots of tools to craft a great Large Group talk. For every talking point, we've provided some optional content for you to use if you choose. (If you'd like a more streamlined outline, please see the **SIMPLE Large Group Speaker Outline**.)

Session Intro

In this section you'll see some **suggestions** to help you intro the session. Use as is, add to them, or come up with your own!

• Intro Option 1: "Cellular Revolution"

- You'll be showing a portion of two YouTube clips as a way of comparing and contrasting them with one another.
 - You'll show the first minute of this clip:
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZE3OKrHIDM>
 - And you'll show as much of this clip as you'd like, simply to make your point:
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7In9CRLISBU>
- **Arrange to** show both clips.
- Lead up to the clip by explaining to students that the hyper-connected world they've grown up in still feels relatively new (and a little confusing) to many people. And there's a reason for that. Explain that not too long ago, the idea of everyone having a cell phone in their pocket was unheard of.
 - **Say something like:** *Don't believe me? Just watch this!*
 - Then, play the first video (the old cell phone video) stopping it at the one-minute mark.
 - Jokingly ask if anyone knows when the coming "cellular revolution" is going to happen.
- Then, explain to students that they shouldn't get too comfortable. The moment they think they have seen it all is the moment they start looking like the people in the video. Explain that there are things happening in the field of communication that are flat out amazing. **
 - Then, play the second video (the NOKIA® commercial). Let it play until you feel the contrast is effectively made.
 - Ask who would pre-order this phone today if they could.
- **Then, say something like:** *The very nature of our communication is changing, and changing dramatically. The way we interact with one another is evolving so fast it's tough to keep up with sometimes. But what about the nature of your communication with God? How do you communicate with Him? What's that experience like? Are you slowed down by an approach that hasn't been updated lately? Or is your communication with God up-to-date and fresh? Let's examine the ins and outs of communicating with God, especially as it pertains to the Pause.*

• Intro Option 2: Pause Intro

- Explain to students that they're now in the midst of this journey to discover what it means to hit pause and seek God.
- Explain that you're going to offer a definition of what it means to hit pause, and that this definition will help guide the next couple of discussions.
 - **Say something like:** *To hit pause means to seek God in silence and solitude through prayer and Bible study.*
 - Remind students that they've already talked about what it means to make time in their life to seek God in silence and solitude.
 - Explain that in this session, you'll be talking about this next part of the definition, seeking God in prayer.

Bible Study

In this section you'll find the heart of your Large Group Session content, the Bible Study. This section gives three Teaching Points with supporting, optional content suggestions. All of the optional content is designed to help you **customize** how you will teach the session. Teach it as is or tailor it to allow for your personality and experience.

Teaching Point 1: Prayer is the language of our relationship with God.

- Explain to students that this statement may seem at first to be self-explanatory or overly simplistic.
- Yet, if they think about *how* and *when* people pray, it's safe to say that for many Christ-followers, prayer is less about relationship and more about what they need.
- In this scenario, God is too often their "genie in a bottle."
 - They rub the magic lamp when they're in need of a holy helping hand, and expect God to pop out and grant a wish!
 - What's more, if many Christ-followers were honest, they'd admit that they talk to God when they need something from Him and largely ignore the conversation when they don't.
- Explain to students this is not how prayer is supposed to be.
- Explain that the Bible paints a picture where prayer is a vibrant dialogue.
 - Nowhere is that more evident than in Psalms.
 - Explain that you're about to look at three snapshots from Psalms that show how prayer truly is the language of our relationship.
- Instruct students to turn to Psalm 63:1-3. (The focus is on 63:1-3, though you could certainly read the entire chapter.)
- Explain that in this psalm, David was in the midst of a tough time. He was on the run, in the wilderness. He was understandably fearful. Let's look at his words.
 - **Read Psalm 63:1-3 aloud.**
 - **Then, say something like:** *David was alone and scared. And in this prayer, he cried out to God. Look at what he said in these first three verses. David was praising God, lifting up a joyful proclamation of God's glory! He was speaking love and praise to God simply because He was God. Look at what David was not saying. Even in the midst of a trial, David wasn't asking God for anything! He wasn't bargaining with God. He wasn't blaming God. In a time of great distress, David was simply talking to God, communicating to Him how wonderful and mighty He is. So, one aspect of prayer in relationship is telling God how awesome He is.*
- Next, explain to students that while we didn't see David asking God for stuff, that doesn't mean it's not a part of communicating with God.
- It's absolutely OK to ask God for things! Remind students that Scripture says we should approach God with our needs and that we should *expect* God to answer our prayers.
 - Lead students to see this example of David's asking God for help and healing.
- **Instruct students to flip over to Psalm 6.**
- Explain that this is another time we see David in a tight spot.
- Some people think he might have had a serious illness. Regardless, David was crying out to God in prayer.
 - **Read aloud all of Psalm 6.**
 - **Then say something like:** *Those first three lines are intense! David was pouring his guts out to God. Other than a brief moment in verse 4 where David turned his attention to God's character, all he was doing was professing over and over again how bad things were and how God was his hope. But something cool happened in verse 11. In the midst of his troubles, David expressed hope in the outcome. This hope was based on who God is and how God had worked in David's life. David can be hopeful because David knows God.*
- Explain that even in bringing a need before God in prayer, David showed us how it could be done within and because of relationship. The foundation of their relationship informed his prayers!
- Finally, explain to students that if prayer was the language of relationship, then like every other relationship, it had to be a two-way street.
- Explain that if we're going to talk to God, we must listen for Him to talk back.
- Instruct students to turn to Psalm 5:3.
 - **Read aloud Psalm 5:3.**

- **Then, say something like:** Look at the last four words of this verse. In the NIV the last four words are “and wait in expectation.” When David prayed to God, he expected to hear back. You know, just like every other relationship in your life. Now, we could get into how God talks to us. We’ll save that sermon for another day. The point here is that David expected to hear from God! He was actually waiting on God to respond to his prayers! How cool is that?

We’ve provided some options for you to use to supplement this **Teaching Point**, if you choose. Use the ones we’ve provided, or provide your own!

Option 1: What If?

- (It would be great if you could arrange to role-play live with a student before your session. But if you can’t, you can still set up the concept.)
- Ask students how they think it would play out if they communicated with their friends the way we communicate with God.
- **Say something like:** Picture this: You haven’t talked to your best friend in three weeks. He or she has tried to connect with you numerous times, but you’ve been too busy. In fact, you haven’t even apologized. You’ve just ignored him or her. Now, imagine if you suddenly chased them down in the hall and asked him or her to write your book report for you that’s due in five minutes. No small talk. No “How’ve you been?” No “I’m sorry.” Just you begging him or her for help.
 - **Say something like:** How do you think this would work out? Is this any way to treat a friend? Would you be surprised if he or she were upset?
- Explain that we do, in fact, treat God this way. **All the time.** Yet because of His unfailing love, He continues to meet our requests and make Himself known to us.
- But it’s a pretty crummy way to communicate with God. He expects and desires more!

Option 2: Tech Fail

- Ask students to picture that one person in their lives who is awful at communicating via cell phone.
- Ask them to picture this person and to consider the challenges they face when trying to touch base.
 - Maybe this person never answers.
 - Maybe they don’t check their voicemail.
 - Maybe they don’t text or return texts.
 - Maybe they never charge their phone.
- Whatever the case, there are annoying reasons why people are cell phone challenged!
- But, we can take comfort in the fact that God isn’t like this.
 - **Say something like:** Through prayer, God is always accessible to us! He will always take our call. He will never be too far away. And if we keep our eyes and ears open, we’ll find that God will respond to us in His own way and in His own timing.

Transition Statement

We can’t disregard the role of prayer in our relationship with God. It’s vital. It is a two-way means of communication that is just like any other relationship in our lives. To know God, we have to talk to Him. And we have to listen to what He says back. In the Small Group Session 2, you’ll learn more about how to pray. But before we finish this up, we need to look at two more purposes of prayer.

Teaching Point 2: Prayer gets us on God’s page, personally.

- Explain that knowing God is the heart of hitting pause. As you’ve mentioned, and as students will learn more of, we know God through prayer and Bible study. But explain that knowing God is only the beginning.
- Explain that part of knowing God is submitting our lives and our will to His leadership.
 - This submission of our will to God is part of coming into a salvation relationship with Him.
- Explain that knowing God in an atmosphere of submission opens us up to discovering the plan God has for us as individuals.
 - Prayer is vital in this!
- Prayer is one of the key ways we get on the same page with God and His plan for our lives.

- Instruct students to turn to Psalm 143:8.
 - **Read Psalm 143:8 aloud.**
 - **Then, say something like:** *David expressed trust for God in this prayer. But more than that, we see David seeking God's will for his life. Prayer is the way we determine exactly where our lives fit in God's plan. Absent prayer, it's tough to know exactly where God is leading us.*

We've provided some options for you to use to supplement this **Teaching Point**, if you choose. Use the ones we've provided, or provide your own!

Option 1: Prayer Profile: George Mueller

- Tell students the story of George Mueller.
 - Mueller lived pretty much the entire nineteenth century.
 - Born in 1805 in England, Mueller ran a prominent orphanage that cared for over 10,000 orphans over the course of his life.
 - Mueller built half a dozen homes to care for the orphans, suitable for holding dozens and in some cases hundreds of children.
- Explain to students that there's an amazing story behind Mueller's success:
 - Mueller never once asked anyone for a dime of financial support, yet he never went into debt.
- Explain that Mueller was a man of deep and faithful prayer. He prayed constantly for God to meet the needs of the orphans and the orphanages.
- Share that there are quite a few amazing stories that surround Mueller's prayer life.
 - There was the occasion where they had no food and yet said a blessing at meal time anyway. When the blessing ended, there was a knock on the door. Someone had dropped by to donate food.
- Explain that there are tons more stories, some rather mundane, some miraculous. But the point is that Mueller sought God through prayer and trusted God to lead him and his life's work.
 - **Close by saying something like this:** *History has shown that George Mueller was an intelligent, diligent, and visionary leader. He could have applied his skills many different fields. And even if he had chosen to work with orphans, he could have fallen into the trap of trying to do it under his own power and understanding. But he chose to always come before God in prayer, trusting God to provide for his and his ministry's needs. In doing so, Mueller brought his life completely in line with God's plan and purpose. Prayer was the chief means of accomplishing this.*

Option 2: Best Example

- There's a profound example of this from Scripture, one that is powerfully instructive.
 - Remind students of the story of Jesus praying in the garden shortly before His arrest.
 - Luke wrote that Jesus was greatly distraught. As God, He knew what was coming. He could "see" the cross. And as a human, Jesus knew the pain and anguish that was coming.
- Explain that Jesus makes an amazing statement in Luke 22:42.
- **Read or have a student read Luke 22:42.**
- Explain to students that Jesus was telling God that He didn't want to go through the spiritual and physical suffering that was coming. But, Jesus professed to God His desire to get on God the Father's page.
 - **Say something like:** *Jesus said to God in prayer, "Your will be done." In other words, Jesus was using prayer to get Him on God's page. And if it's good enough for Jesus, it's got to be good enough for us.*

Transition Statement

Prayer is the language of our relationship with God, and our purpose as Christ-followers is to serve God in and through our relationship. But prayer does more. Let's go to our final teaching point.

Teaching Point 3: Prayer gets us on God's page, globally.

- Help students understand that prayer is also the means by which we get on God's plan in a global perspective.
- Instruct students to turn to Psalm 86:8-10.
 - **Read Psalm 86:8-10 aloud.**
 - **Then, say something like:** These words from David are prophetic. In fact, they point to what we can read today in the Book of Revelation. In Revelation, we read that God will one day usher in an eternity where people from every nation and every people group will gather in an eternal worship service with Him at the center! David's passion about God's mission on this earth speaks to what prayer does in our lives! Prayer gets us on board with God's mission that's working all around us. When we're communicating with God in relationship, we're closely in tune with what He's doing in the world. And like David, we'll begin to desire that God's will be done in our communities, in our country, and throughout the world.

Transition Statement

Part of serving God in relationship is being passionate about wanting to join God's work in the world around us. Prayer opens up our awareness of where God is working. And when we're walking in relationship with God, we desire to be where He is.

CLOSING

- Explain to students that they'll have some time to go a little deeper in the "why" and the "how" of prayer in their Small Group time. But the main takeaway from this session is that prayer is deeply personal.
 - It's not ritual.
 - It's not a formality.
 - It's not a security blanket or a good luck charm.
- Remind students that prayer is a vital part of hitting pause, and is indeed God's plan for us to live in communication with Him.