

God Time – Jesus Our Intercessor

Monday: John 14:12-14

Tuesday: John 15:7-8

Wednesday: John 16:23-24

Thursday: Luke 18:1-8

Friday: John 15:1-7

Keep It Active

1. Work on memorizing the memory verse for this week.
2. Prayer is about reaching the right destination. Take note of where it is taking you this week to share with the group next week.

Diving Deeper

How to pray for one another.

Romans 8:26

Prayer can be powerful. It is the one thing that we can do for one another, and when we do it out of love, it is a demonstration of our love to God. The beauty about prayer is that it is not dependent upon our thoughts or our words, but rather the interceding power of the Holy Spirit who provides the words when we cannot. The Spirit is there for us in our moments of weakness. *“We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.” (Romans 8:26)*

To pray for one another means that we must be aligned with Jesus, recognize the challenges and needs of others, and allow the Holy Spirit to work in us as we pray for God to intervene. In Luke 22:32, we see this in action as Jesus tells Simon that He has prayed for him, “that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.” Why was Jesus praying that Simon’s faith not fail? Jesus was not questioning Simon’s faith or His love, because He knew that Simon was a trusted disciple. But He knew that Satan would attack, and He wanted Simon to know that he would stumble. “Simon,

Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat.” (Luke 22:31) So, knowing this, what does Jesus do for Simon? He prays for Simon that his faith would not fail; that even though he would deny Jesus he would turn back. Jesus is encouraging Simon so that when that time came and he did fail, he would know what to do to overcome Satan. There are two truths that we need to understand. First, the devil is our adversary. He prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. (1Peter 5:8) But Simon does not comprehend the seriousness of the events headed his way. He is confident that he will not fail and tells Jesus that he is ready for whatever comes even if it means following Him to prison or to death. Satan is ready to sift Simon. The devil is ready to turn Simon upside down and shake him to pieces. Sifting is an agricultural term that means to put the grain in a sifter and shake out the hulls and chaff that could not be used. Satan doesn't sift to get rid of the bad, he sifts to get rid of the wheat – the good. The second truth is that Jesus is our advocate. He intercedes and prays for us. Take note, however, that it was not the sifting that Jesus was concerned about. It was Simon's faith. He did not want Simon's faith to fail. If his faith failed what would have been the consequences? The other disciples would have been discouraged and disheartened which would have been exactly what Satan was seeking. He wanted Simon (i) to remember his brothers and strengthen them by turning back (repenting) and showing them that his faith is solid even as he was being sifted and (ii) that he has an advocate in Jesus who can intercede on our behalf and restore us when we stumble. Our failures are not final with God for He is always there helping us and encouraging us to keep the faith and in that same way, we should also pray for our brothers and sisters always encouraging them to stay strong so that their faith will not fail.

1. When you pray do you turn inward to allow the Holy Spirit to guide you?
2. How do you know when the Spirit is guiding your prayer as opposed to when you are praying just to be heard?
3. Do you use prayer to build up others around you?
4. When you are affected by the actions of another, do you let the situation define you or do you turn to prayer for help? Who do you pray for, yourself or for your brother or sister?

