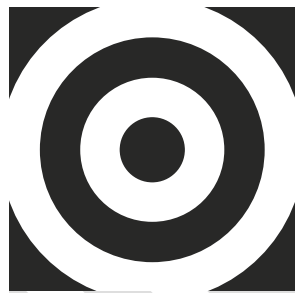


ORIGINS

THE BASICS OF
HOW TO PRAY



— 24-7 PRAYER —
YOUTH

ORIGINS CONTENTS

3	Introduction	
4	What is Origins?	
6	SESSION 1	Why Pray?
12	SESSION 2	Who Do We Pray To?
16	SESSION 3	P – Pause
21	SESSION 4	R – Rejoice
26	SESSION 5	A – Ask
30	SESSION 6	Y – Yes
34	SESSION 7	E – Endure
39	SESSION 8	R – Repeat

INTRODUCTIONS

ORIGINS

In the gospel of Luke, one of Jesus' disciples asks Him to teach them something. In fact, it's the only time they specifically ask Jesus to teach them anything.

The disciple asks, "Lord, teach us to pray." (Luke 1:11)

The disciples didn't ask Jesus to teach them how to:

- ▶ do miracles
- ▶ raise the dead
- ▶ walk on water

They asked Him to teach them to pray.

When it comes to prayer, we all have questions. So, we've put together this youth prayer course, Origins, which seeks to answer the following:

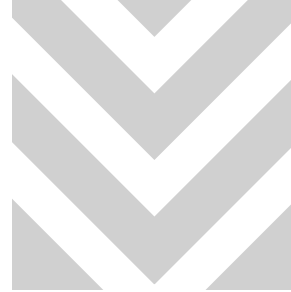
- ▶ **1 What is prayer and how do you do it?**
- ▶ **2 Why is prayer so important?**
- ▶ **3 How can young people who are relatively new to Christian faith begin to develop a regular prayer life?**

Over the years 24-7 Prayer has expanded and grown around the world with:

- ▶ Prayer rooms full of people engaging in praying 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in over half the nations on earth.
- ▶ Free prayer resources like the Lectio 365 app, helping over 170,000 monthly users to pray day and night.
- ▶ Prayer Spaces in thousands of schools internationally.
- ▶ Mission and justice hubs around the world, as well as 24-7 communities cropping up here, there, and everywhere. You can find out more at 24-7prayer.com/communities

We are utterly convinced that prayer is the cornerstone of cultivating a personal and vibrant relationship with Jesus. And prayer is the ignition point for joining in with God's mission in our neighborhoods!

So we've created this fully revised version of Origins, a prayer course for young people to begin a journey of prayer.



WHAT IS ORIGINS?

Origins is a 24-7 Prayer resource for 11 to 16 year-olds who are relatively new to Christian faith. It will help them learn the basics of how to pray and draw closer to God.

Life as a Christian starts with a conversation with Christ. Origins will help young people to start the journey of developing a consistent conversation with Jesus.

Looking through the Bible and through history, it's clear that stories of individuals with a deep faith and strong walk with God always started and continued with regular, honest, and open communication with God. Many of them were teenagers like the disciples, or young adults like the leaders of the great revivals around the world, such as Evan Roberts and John Wesley.

In almost every case, the origins of their miraculous stories are in prayer. And we know that every great move of God originates with a great move of prayer. From this place of origin, who knows what amazing adventures God will take us on?

What fruit could come from young people being awakened and equipped in prayer?



RUNNING ORIGINS

We want Origins to be as easy as possible for you to run in your context.

1 Follow the Origins course

Each session is designed to be run in 45 minutes and follows the same format each time:



Aim

what each session will lead to



Get Started

an introductory thought or discussion question



Go Deeper

a short piece of teaching on the week's theme



Encounter

an interactive activity to do as a group



Action Point

Something to do during the week



There's also a short video for each session you can use for the 'Go Deeper' and 'Encounter' sections, or use the script yourself.



24-7prayer.com/origins-videos

We've made it easy by telling you when to play the video content in each session

2 Create your own Origins course

If you've got a different amount of time, or if you fancy getting creative, you can use the video content (available at 24-7prayer.com/origins-videos) and themes of each session to build a course that works for you.

Got questions?

Drop us an email: Youth@24-7prayer.com

SESSION 1 WHY PRAY?

1 - □ - □ - □ - □ - □ - □ - □ - □

★ Aim

The aim for our first session is to discover why we pray, and to have a go at praying.



GET STARTED

First, watch this



Why Pray with Pete Greig

[youtube.com/watch?v=QVHUx_EJnUs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QVHUx_EJnUs)



In the video it says:

“Real prayer is a two-way conversation between you and God.”

We all have different experiences with prayer, and we’re going to **discuss these now**:

Ask the group... ↘

- ✔ **Q. What do you think prayer is?**
- ✔ **Q. Why is prayer important?**
- ✔ **Q. Have you prayed before? What was your experience?**



Our experiences of prayer are varied. **Here are some common prayer experiences:**

“ I enjoy praying with friends

“ Sometimes I pretend to pray to make my church friends or parents happy, but I struggle to really believe in it

“ I think prayer is boring

“ I’ve never thought about praying

“ Sometimes I feel too bad to pray or disappointed that it didn’t “work” last time

“ I don’t believe that prayer works

“ I’ve heard miracle stories about how prayer has changed things, I’d love to see that

“ I love prayer

“ I find prayer exciting

“ After I talk to God about the things I’m worried about, I feel peaceful.

“ I want to pray but don’t know how

“ I have prayed and God has answered my prayer, or I’ve heard His voice

Most Christians have felt many of these different things about prayer before; even people who have been Christians for a long time!

Ask the group

Q. Time to be vulnerable: which one of the above experiences do you feel most closely describes how you feel about prayer at the moment?



Youth leader tip

You could print these different statements out and stick them in different parts of the room or on the floor. Encourage your group to pick up or walk to the one that feels most relevant to them.

Print-friendly statements available at:
24-7prayer.com/podcast/origins-why-pray





GO DEEPER

Watch the video session or use this script for the 'Go Deeper' and 'Encounter' sections.



Session 1: Why Pray?

24-7prayer.com/podcast/origins-why-pray



☰ Prayer is a response to love

The main reason we pray is because Jesus invites us into relationship with Him. Our prayer and our relationship with God should always be in response to God acting first.

In **Luke 5**, Jesus saw a tax collector called Matthew and said to him, "*Follow me.*" Jesus gave this invitation to someone who, at the time, most people didn't like and He did it before Matthew did anything for Jesus. In the same way, Jesus sees you. He sees you where you're at. He knows you, loves you just the way you are, and invites you into relationship with Him.



Right now, before you've got it all figured out, before you behave, before you've understood everything, Jesus says, "Follow me." And in following Jesus, He will lead us into life His way.

You may have already decided to follow Jesus or maybe you're new to this whole thing. No matter what situation you're in, it's important for you to know right at the beginning of this prayer course that:

prayer is a response to a loving God who always sees you and is always reaching out to you with His love and grace.

Jesus also says in **Luke 5** that He didn't come to save the saint but instead the sinner. What does He mean by that? Jesus had no problem with saying things as they were. **Jesus could see the issues, the mess, the chaos, the sin. Yet, His purpose was always to save the world.**



**HE CAME
TO GIVE
US LIFE**

Jesus saves us from sin. Sin is not only breaking God's commandments, but also refusing God's goodness and love in our lives by our active choices to not follow Him.

Sin is a downward spiral which the Bible says ultimately leads us to death. Sin tries to steal, kill, and destroy us but Jesus said in **John 10:10** that He came to give us life in all its fullness.

We can experience this life full of God's love when we decide to follow Jesus and turn away from our sin (sometimes we use the word repent) because of Jesus' death on the cross and His resurrection. He died and came back to life so that we too can turn away from sin, die to our old life, and start our new life with Him. He raises us up into newness of life, just as He rose from the dead.

1 John 4:19 says, "*We love because He first loved us.*" So, our response to follow Jesus only comes after He gives us an invitation. And prayer is no different, we pray as a response to Him first reaching out to us.

We pray because He saved us.

We pray because He changes us.

We pray because He sustains us.

We pray because He is faithful, even when we're faithless.

We pray because He is good, even when we're not.

We pray as a response to God first reaching out to us.



ENCOUNTER

Imagination is a powerful thing. It's how people create video games, apps, songs, and movies.

In every session of Origins, we're going to do a prayer exercise so we can experience Jesus in a deeper way.

In this section, we recognise that the Bible is more than words on a page but God's word which brings life to us. **Hebrews 4:12** says, "*For the word of God is alive and active,*" and we want this life to be real in every area of our lives.



Prayer exercise

Read out these steps to the group

- 1 We're going to sit quietly and close our eyes as we listen to a passage of the Bible together.
- 2 We'll read and listen to it a couple of times.
- 3 We'll open our imagination to focus on Jesus and see what Jesus might want us to experience through His word.
- 4 As you listen to the passage, imagine you can see everything that's happening.



Youth leader tip

You might like to pray before you read the passage and invite the Holy Spirit to speak.

You could pray this

"Father, thank you for the Bible.

Jesus, thank you for coming to the world to save us.

Holy Spirit, speak to us as we read your word."

Read the below passage out loud for the group

READ

Luke 5:27-32:

After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. "Follow me," Jesus said to him, and Levi got up, left everything and followed him.

Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but those who are ill. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

We're going to read and listen to the passage again. This time, place yourself in the story.

Maybe you could be one of the characters or a bystander. Maybe you're watching from a bird's eye view. Imagine the hustle and bustle of the crowds, a busy town, many people flocking to see what was going on, the reaction to Jesus' words.

✔ **Q. What can you see?**

✔ **Q. How do you feel?**

✔ **Q. What do you hear?**

Read Luke 5:27-32 again (page 10)



RESPONSE

Let's share how we found this experience:

Read out the following questions to the group 

- ✔ **Q. Did you feel or sense anything as you imagined yourself in the story? Was there a word or phrase that jumped out at you? Share any reflections you have.**
- ✔ **Q. Why do you think the Pharisees were questioning Jesus and wondering why He was hanging out with sinners?**
- ✔ **Q. What do you think about Jesus' response?**

★ Action point

This week, start to write out a heartfelt prayer to God. Remember what we've learned today, **prayer is our response to God's love**. So with this in mind, write a prayer to God in your own words.

If it helps, you could use the following points:

- ✔ **Thank God for His love and Him first reaching out to you.**
- ✔ **Ask for strength to live for Jesus in every area of your life.**
- ✔ **Ask for forgiveness for the times when you lose sight of God.**
- ✔ **Finishing by listing all the good things God has done for you.**

END OF SESSION

SESSION 2

WHO DO WE PRAY TO?

■ - 2 - □ - □ - □ - □ - □ - □

★ Aim

The aim for this session is to focus on who we, as Christians, pray to and why that's important.

Before you begin...

You'll need pens, paper, and a chair



GET STARTED

We all go through tough times in life. But when life hits rock bottom, God can become the bed rock of our life. This is often why we as humans do things like talk to ourselves when we're alone. We have this innate desire to outwardly express internal feelings. Why? Because God made us and that means we have a longing within us to connect with Him, even in our darkest moments.

That's why we might feel an urge to pray when everything is going wrong or a crisis happens in the world, it's the fingerprint of God within us reaching out to our maker and asking for help.

But prayer only really works if it's to a God who is personal enough to listen to us and a God who is powerful enough to answer.

Jesus shows us that prayer must be directed to the God who doesn't stand at a distance, but who comes close to listen and know us.

Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me."*

In other words, Jesus is saying that *He* alone gives us access to connect with the God who made us and the One we should direct our prayers to.

Jesus has given us access to connect with the One who made us and wants the best for us.





GO DEEPER

Watch the video session or use this script for the 'Go Deeper' and 'Encounter' sections.



Session 2: Who do we pray to?

24-7prayer.com/podcast/origins-who-do-we-pray-to



☰ God of the Promise

If you've been around church or been a Christian for a little while, you may have heard or read **Jeremiah 29:11**. It's a wonderful verse. It says:

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Jeremiah 29:11 is a beautiful verse but not many know what God says this in **Jeremiah 29:12-13**: *"Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."*

There is a strong connection between seeking God in prayer and discovering God's plan for your life.

Unfortunately, sometimes people want the promises of God without the God of the promise. Many want the plan without the prayer.



God is not a vending machine that we go to in order to get what we want. He loves us and longs to be in relationship with us but sometimes we treat prayer a bit like a shopping list.

In this Origins prayer course, we want you to know that **loving God for God alone, and not just His promises, is a key foundation of prayer.**

If you really love someone, you love them for who they are and not just for what they can do for you.

In this session we're looking at the question "who do we pray to?"



Without knowing who you're praying to, prayer can become misdirected. You end up feeling like you're just talking into the air. Or you're just saying a wish list to a divine being you're not even sure exists.

God's not necessarily interested in rituals and requests as much as He wants to know you.

So, when you discover that you're praying to God who is holy and powerful, full of grace and truth, and the One who has a good plan for you and wants to spend time with you, prayer becomes a blessing, not a burden.

The essence of prayer is talking and listening to God and through prayer, we discover that God wants to talk and listen to us.



ENCOUNTER

Galatians 1:11-12 says, *"I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ."*

Paul, who wrote this, had his own dramatic revelation or light bulb moment that completely changed his life and led him to an unshakable faith in Jesus.

So, when Paul says here that the gospel is a *"revelation of Jesus"*, he's saying that the essence of the message of Jesus can only be found in an encounter with Jesus.

This is how we come to know who Jesus really is. And this revelation is what ultimately sparks a relationship with God, which is the foundation of prayer.

So, we're going to try a prayer exercise so we can experience Jesus in a deeper way.



Youth leader tip

Young people will need pens and paper for this, and even coloured pens if they want to be more creative. You may want to ask young people to be calm and have a quieter moment. You may also want to pray and ask Holy Spirit to come.



Prayer exercise

1 Place a chair in the middle of the room.

2 Stick on some quiet worship music.

We're going to close our eyes and imagine that Jesus is sitting in the chair. Try asking Jesus the following questions and write or draw what you're hearing, seeing, or feeling:



Youth leader tip

This might feel like a new or unusual experience for some members of your group, especially if they're new to Christianity. We suggest explaining to the group that Jesus will only say things that are loving, encouraging and in line with what He's said in the Bible already.

Q. Jesus, what is one thing you want me to know?

Q. Jesus, can you show me how much you love me right now?

★ Action point

Since we're praying to the One who has our best interests in mind, one of the best things we can do is prioritise prayer. So, sit down and chat with two or three people about some practical things you can do this week to help you to prioritise prayer more.

For example, you could:

- Set an app limit on the app you use the most and use the extra time to practice talking to God.
- Before you play a video game (or do something you love), read a few verses from the Bible and pray that they would become real in your life. Try and make it a habit to pray before play.
- While you're getting ready for school or on your journey to school, put some Christian music on and focus your mind on God at the start of your day.



SESSION 3 PAUSE

■-■-3-□-□-□-□-□

★ Aim

The aim for this session is to learn how to pause and be still in prayer.



GET STARTED

Quick Recap

We've spoken about why we pray. We pray because God loves us and wants to lead us through our lives in His love. We've also looked at who we pray to. We pray to the God who made the whole world and holds us in His hands; He's the One who knows what's best for us. Now we're going to look at how to pray!

In his book *How to Pray*, author Pete Greig introduces a helpful model for prayer. He uses an acronym: **P. R. A. Y.** It stands for:

- ▶ **Pause**
- ▶ **Rejoice & Reflect**
- ▶ **Ask**
- ▶ **Yes**

For the Origins prayer course, we've also added **E for Endure**, and **R for Repeat** but we'll talk about these later.



For now, P. R. A. Y. is a useful tool to help us engage with God. It's certainly not the only way, but it's a good way to get started.

In Session 3 of Origins we're focusing on P: pausing in prayer.

**“To start we must stop.
To move forward we must pause.
This is the first step in a deeper prayer life:
put down your wish-list and wait.”**

(Pete Greig, How To Pray)

The Bible says, in **Psalms 46:10**, *“Be still and know that I am God.”* Simply put, we're not just being still for the sake of relaxing our bodies but replenishing our souls. We don't recentre our scattered senses on thin air but upon the presence of God.

After much activity with His disciples, Jesus said, *“Come with Me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”* (**Mark 6:31**).

Discuss the following questions in a group:

- **Q. Do you often find life busy, hectic and/or stressful?**
- **Q. Do you find being still hard? If so, why?
If not, what helps you to be still?**
- **Q. How do you think being still will benefit you?**



GO DEEPER

Watch the video session or use this script for the 'Go Deeper' and 'Encounter' sections.



Session 3: Pause

24-7prayer.com/podcast/origins-pause



Peace In the Storm

We live in a world that often feels very unpeaceful. It can be stressful, anxiety-inducing, perplexing, and overwhelming. And yet, as Christians, we believe in a God who speaks directly into chaos.

One of the places in the Bible where we see this so wonderfully portrayed is in the Gospels when Jesus is asleep on the boat during a storm.

Mark 4:38-40 says:

"But Jesus was on the boat, asleep on a pillow. And the disciples awoke Him and said to Him, 'Teacher, do you not care that we are dying?'"

Then Jesus arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Peace, be still!' And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. But He said to them, 'Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?'"



Here we see Jesus being still in the midst of a storm so ferocious that seasoned fishermen thought they were going to die. The disciples woke Jesus up with their cries and Jesus spoke three powerful words, "*peace, be still.*" The winds ceased and great calm came.

"*Be still.*" Sound familiar? They're same words we read in **Psalm 46.**

Being still in the presence of God helps us to "be still" during the storms of life.



Power to calm the storms of our lives comes from pausing in the presence of God.

Jesus was there in the storm, so He knows all about the storms that come in life. But He also knew how to overcome the storms, not by resting alone but resting in the knowledge of God who has the power to make all storms cease. As the Psalmist says, "*be still and know that I am God.*"

You can never truly be still without truly knowing God.

Being still without knowing is simply relaxing. This isn't bad, but it's not going to help you when the storms of life are raging. But being still and knowing God, well, that's revolutionary.

I rest in the God who has forgiven my past, is with me in the present, and has secured my future. My soul is safe within the arms of my Saviour, so I rest in the confidence that one day this storm will pass.



I also stand with Jesus and speak peace over my life, commanding the storms around me to be still.



ENCOUNTER

In his book, *Be Still*, Brian Heasley highlights how **the inactivity of being still requires the activity of stopping what you're doing**, coming away from distraction, and taking on a posture which helps us to relax.

Brian likes to sit in the same chair in his house to be still before God. Could you find your own special chair? Is there a peaceful place where you could sit and be still with God?

The Bible commands us to "be still" seven times - that's one for every day of the week. This is a practice which we should try and do daily.

We live in a 5G, superfast, instant download generation that wants everything here and now. There are things of God that are urgent, but He is not rash. He can move swiftly and suddenly but He never rushes, nor is He reckless.

So in slowing down and being still in God's presence, by pausing in prayer, we are bringing ourselves into alignment with God's rhythm and heartbeat.

So, we're going to have a "be still" moment now...



Youth leader tip

Because this will be more of a quieter, reflective moment you may want to set expectations by asking people to be calm and quiet, and asking that people respect each other's time with God. We also recommend praying before you start.

Prayer exercise

- 1 **We're going to put on some reflective music**
youtube.com/watch?v=Xx1MjhzKcYw

 We suggest



- **2 We're going to sit comfortably with our eyes closed and fix our minds on who God is for a few minutes.**
- **3 We'll feedback together as a group about how we found it.**

Bonus content!

Top Tips to Slow Down

The author John Mark Comer suggests some helpful ways to slow down and pause:

- **1** Parent your phone: put it to bed before you and make it sleep in.
- **2** Keep your phone off until after your morning quiet time.
- **3** Set a time and time limits for screen time, that way you're in control.
- **4** Single-task, not multi-task.
- **5** Walk slower.
- **6** Try journaling – writing your prayers and thoughts to God.
- **7** Take regular time to be still and pause (daily if you can).

★ Action point

It's important to remember that we're not saying become lazy and binge out on Netflix. In fact, it's quite the opposite. We're saying reorient your activity into things that nourish your soul rather than simply entertain your mind.

Try to incorporate the prayer exercise we did today into your daily rhythm:

- **Put on some Christian meditative music or try silence.**
- **Lie down or sit comfortably with your eyes closed.**
- **Focus on who God is and fix your mind on Jesus.**
- **Spend around 3-5 minutes doing this every day.**

END OF SESSION

SESSION 4 REJOICE & REFLECT

■-■-■-4-□-□-□-□

★ Aim

The aim for this session is to learn how to rejoice over the good that God has done and reflect on Scripture as we pray.

Before you begin...

You'll need each person to have a physical Bible, paper and pens for this session. You might also want to ask a young person to be ready to share a story of how God has done something good in their life.



GET STARTED

Psalm 23 is a wonderful Psalm for Rejoicing and Reflecting. In just 6 verses, there are at least 11 promises that God brings when we focus on Him.

There are plenty of things we can rejoice about in our lives, but we can also rejoice amid difficulties we face too.

Rejoicing in God's good gifts doesn't ignore the pain and suffering we also experience in life. In fact, it confronts it head on and says that even in the midst of pain, God is with us, and He knows how to turn the mess of life into a message of hope.

"...He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters, He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me." – Psalm 23:2-4

Notice how many times it says "He". "He makes me, He leads me, He refreshes, He guides..." We are comforted in our pain when we spend time with the Comforter, Jesus. We are healed when we spend time with the Healer.



▶ **Q Has there been a time in your life where you can look back on and see that God comforted, helped or guided you?**

A little explanation

↪ **Revelation 19:10** says, "*the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*" In other words, if you share something that Jesus has done in your life (a testimony), you're also saying He can do it in someone else's life too.

Ask the group

▶ **Q Is anyone brave enough to share a good thing that God has done in their life? It could be recently, or in the past...**



Youth leader tip

You may want to invite the young person you prepared earlier to share first or to share if no one else will. You may also want to share something yourself to get the ball rolling...



GO DEEPER

Watch the video session or use this script for the 'Go Deeper' and 'Encounter' sections.



Session 4: Rejoice & Reflect
24-7prayer.com/podcast/origins-rejoice-and-reflect



Attitude of Gratitude

As human beings we can be quite forgetful at times, particularly about things we are most familiar with. How many times do you misplace your keys, phone, or bag?

There can be a link between familiarity and forgetfulness.

And we can also do this with God. **Psalm 103:2** says, *"Let all that I am praise the Lord; may I never forget the good things he does for me."* When we forget all the good things that God has done for us, we often lose the ability to rejoice.

James 1:17 says, *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights..."* Since every good thing in our lives is from God, it's important to count the blessings in our lives and thank God for each one.



In 2019, a neuroscience study ¹ was conducted about the effect that being thankful can have on our brains:

It concluded that "besides enhancing self-love and empathy, gratitude significantly impacts on body functions and psychological conditions like stress, anxiety, and depression."

As cheesy as it sounds, we need to cultivate an attitude of gratitude. When we do that, as this study shows, gratitude silences worry and gives room for joy.

Let's try another cheesy but true phrase, your attitude determines your altitude! If we're consumed with worry, it can hold us back from reaching the heights God has called us to in our lives.



2 Timothy 1:7 says, *"God has not given you a spirit of fear but of power, love and a sound mind."* The Bible also says, *"perfect love casts out fear."* (**1 John 4:18**) So when we rejoice in God's perfect love, and we're thankful for the things that our God has given us because of His great love, we're making room for God in our lives. We're allowing peace, grace, and faith to reign in our hearts rather than fear and worry.

When we rejoice in God's goodness it produces in us a confident and faith-filled attitude because we've seen God do it before. Therefore, we can trust He will do it again.

¹ <https://positivepsychology.com/neuroscience-of-gratitude/>





ENCOUNTER

We're going to spend some time focusing on **Psalm 23** in a deeper way. This is a type of prayer that many Christians have done for many years. We're praying the words of the Bible as we reflect on what they say and mean for us. We're asking God to make them a reality in our lives.



Youth leader tip

Make sure, if you can, that young people have a physical Bible so they don't get distracted by their phones. You might want to pray before going into this experience.

Step 1

Reading Psalm 23

- 1 We're going to sit in quiet (or with some reflective music) and read through Psalm 23 a couple of times on our own
- 2 Every time we read the Psalm, we're going to see if God is highlighting a particular word or phrase and then we're going to write it down



Youth leader tip

You might prefer to paint the words or draw images on a large mural which the whole group can look at afterwards.

Now, we're going to ask God to tell us why He was highlighting those words and what they mean for us today.

Step 2

Listening to God

- 1 We're going to be still for a few moments and listen to God.
- 2 If you get an impression, picture or thought, you could write it down or spend some time later praying into it. This may well be God speaking to you in different ways.
- 3 Remember, God will only say things that build you up to be more like Jesus; it's normally encouraging, but it could also be challenging. Either way, it will always be in line with what He's already said in the Bible.



★ Action point

This week, put together images of what you're thankful for. You could cut out some pictures or words from magazines and/or newspapers that represent things you're thankful for and stick them together on a sheet of paper. Or you could make a photo album on your phone of everything you're thankful for.

It could be an exciting thing that has happened recently, or it could be something as simple like a roof over your head, food on the table or the breath in your lungs.

Any time you feel worried or stressed this week, you can look back over these thankful images!

END OF SESSION

SESSION 5

ASK

■-■-■-■-5-□-□-□

★ Aim

The aim for this session is to focus on what it means to ask for our needs in prayer.



GET STARTED

In **Luke 11:1** the disciples come to Jesus and say, "teach us how to pray." It's the only time in the Bible where the disciples ask Jesus to teach them how to do something.

They didn't ask Jesus to teach them how to walk on water or raise the dead but to teach them how to talk to God. They knew that prayer was key to everything Jesus did and said.

Jesus' response was a wonderful teaching on prayer which includes the Lord's prayer, the importance of not giving up in prayer, and how we need to remember that God is a good Father who wants to give good gifts to those who ask in prayer.

In the Lord's prayer, Jesus teaches us to ask. In the prayer there are seven different requests.

He asks for:

God's Kingdom (His rule and reign) to come.

God's will to be done.

Daily bread (our everyday needs).

Forgiveness for our sin.

Help to forgive others.

Guidance to not be led into temptation.

Freedom from evil forces.



It's more than ok to ask for things in prayer: Jesus teaches us to do it. In fact, the requests Jesus tells us to make in the Lord's prayer cover almost every area of our lives.

Discuss

- Q Has anyone ever asked for anything in prayer before and seen it happen? Share your story.**



Youth leader **tip**

You may want to start by sharing your own story if others aren't ready.



GO DEEPER

Watch the video session or use this script for the 'Go Deeper' and 'Encounter' sections.



Session 5: Ask
24-7prayer.com/podcast/origins-ask



From pain to **prayer**

During the Covid-19 pandemic a lot of people turned to prayer for the first time. In March 2020, people were googling prayer more than ever before. At 24-7 Prayer, we saw an increase in traffic to our website and the use of our resources.

We often see hashtags of pray for a certain country or person begin to arise in times of tragedy. What we see is people coming together in pain and turning to prayer.

Prayer is a human recognition and realisation of a divine need.

**TURNING
TO PRAYER
IN PAIN**



**GOD
WANTS
TO HEAR**

In the Gospels there's a story of a man who is often referred to as blind Bartimaeus. He hears the commotion around him about someone called Jesus who apparently heals people. He begins to shout out, "*Son of David, have mercy on me.*" **(Mark 10:47)**

Jesus responds to him by asking, "*what would you like me to do for you?*" What a strange question! He's blind. Surely, it's obvious...

But like many of our problems and circumstances in life, God wants to hear what we would like Him to do.

God wants us to articulate our problems because it builds relationship between us and Him, which is the ultimate goal of prayer.

God is not a vending machine and prayer is not the money to get whatever we want. He is relational and wants to have friendship and connection with us beyond simply providing for our needs.

As we pray, we often find that God's presence is the ultimate answer to our needs, as we begin to realise that He is our deepest need.

In His presence we receive peace in the midst of the wildest storms, hope in the face of despair and uncertainty, and love that warms our hearts and becomes our most reliable strength in our deepest weaknesses.



ENCOUNTER

Some of us may think God is too busy with all the big stuff in the world to answer our seemingly insignificant needs. But if our God really is the Creator of this vast universe we occupy and the One who can work incredible miracles, **He is more than able to handle carrying all of that while caring for each one of us.**

Before we name our needs, it's always good to give some of the heightened feelings we're carrying to God. Sometimes needs cause stress, frustration, and worry, but right now, we're going to give that to God.

We're going to take Vitamin C tablets and watch them dissolve into water as a sign of giving our disappointments to God and allowing Him to take over:



Prayer exercise

- **1 As I take this tablet, I imagine all my disappointments, worries or fears.**
- **2 As I drop it into the water, I give them to God.**

Now, we're going to pray this prayer:

PRAY

God,

I give to you all my worries, fears, hopes, dreams, needs, and wants.

I cast my cares on You, for You care for me.

Thank You Jesus, that You are above it all, and yet in it all. You are bigger than my needs and yet You provide for my every need.

Thank You that nothing is too hard for You, and yet nothing is too small for You.

I give my needs over to You now and commit them to Your care.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Now, there are many ways we can pray for our needs but one way of praying is **prayer walking**. It helps to focus our minds on the activity of walking whilst talking to God, like you would with a friend on a walk.

Maybe you could turn your walk to school or college into a prayer walk where you talk to God. You could put some worship music on in your earphones and have that time for you and Him.

Or maybe you could suggest going on a prayer walk as a youth group so you can pray for God's peace and power to reign over the area where you live.

★ Action point

This week, maybe you could try going on a prayer walk.

If that's not possible, take 5 minutes out of your week to do the following:

- **Get some post-it notes or create a wallpaper for your phone.**
- **On the notes or wallpaper, write down some things you want to see answers through prayer.**
- **Every time you see it, pray until something changes**

END OF SESSION

SESSION 6

YES

■-■-■-■-■-6-□-□

★ Aim

The aim for this session is learning how to say yes to God in prayer, no matter the cost.



GET STARTED

What does the Christian faith ultimately boil down to?

Is it beliefs that we hold in our hearts?

Is it emotions we feel from spiritual experiences?

Is it a decision that we made one time in our lives to follow a way of life?

This is not always the easiest question to answer. Of course, the Christian faith is fully centred on the person of Jesus. You could say though, on the human side (that's our part to play in it) that the Christian faith could be summed up in a single word:

“Yes.”

It's our yes to God in response to His yes to us.

1 John 4:19 says, “*we love because He first loved us.*” And as we focus in this session on what it means for us to say yes to God in prayer, we must never forget that it's only ever because He first said yes to us.



When we're mindful of this, it also makes it easier to say yes to God's will and purposes through prayer, even if that means making some difficult decisions.

If we know that God loves us, and He wants the best for us, then we can have full confidence in our yes to Him.



GO DEEPER

Watch the video session or use this script for the 'Go Deeper' and 'Encounter' sections.



Session 6: Yes

24-7prayer.com/podcast/origins-yes



Resounding yes

A lot of the time, our desires are not in line with God's will and purposes which can make prayer frustrating when we don't get what we want. And that is why saying yes to God when we pray is so vital. We're submitting our desires to God and allowing Him, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to align our hearts with His.

Jesus prayed, "*Your Kingdom come, Your will be done.*" Prayer is not about us getting God to bend His will to ours, it's about us learning to bend to God's will.

When we pray, God points us to His Word and propels us into His world.

As we pray, He changes our heart to be more like His. Often we become the answers to our own prayers by activating outside of us what God is stirring inside of us.

2 Chronicles 7:14 says, "*If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.*"

**ALIGN OUR
HEARTS
WITH GOD**





**SEEK
GOD'S
FACE**

We all want what comes after the “then” here. We all want God to hear our prayers and transform our world, but how many of us are willing to do the first part? It says to seek God’s face so that we can truly know Him. This is the heart of prayer but how many of us just want God’s hand so He can give us something?

This is why we say yes, or more commonly, amen, when we close prayers. It’s a way of saying to God, “no matter what, I will follow you.”

There’s a song by Ramp Worship called “*Resounding Yes*,” and some of the lyrics speak particularly powerfully into this:

**“There’s a yes in my heart that carries through eternity,
Simple obedience changes history.”**

It’s easy to think that God might be looking for superhuman, extraordinary people. But when you look through the Bible, God used some very ordinary men and women to do incredible things. God is simply looking for those who are willing to say yes, a continual, resounding yes to His purposes.



ENCOUNTER

Now we’re going to spend some time saying yes to Jesus through something called a prayer of relinquishment. This is simply us saying yes to God in prayer and surrendering control of our lives over to Him.

Together, we’ll pray this prayer:



Youth leader tip

This can be done in a few different ways: out loud together, individually in the quiet, or by saying “amen” at the end as you read the prayer



Now, we're going to pray this prayer:



PRAY

Father, you are God of all, and I submit to you. Jesus, you are Lord of my life and give my heart to you.

Holy Spirit, lead and guide me to the places, people, and purposes you have for me. I surrender to you now.

Amen.

I once heard a story about a young person from Northern Ireland who was desperate to say yes to Jesus consistently. He was inspired by a man named Rodney Smith, a great revivalist who preached to tens of thousands of people and saw many people follow Jesus. It's said that Rodney Smith saw all the needs around him but he felt like he was powerless to change them. He realised that if he could give himself fully to God then perhaps God would use him to change what was around him. So instead of trying to run around fixing all the problems around him, he drew a circle on the ground, stood inside it and said "God, change everything inside this circle." As he began to do this regularly, he started to see how the change in him caused major change around him.

This young person in Northern Ireland heard this story and got some duct tape out, taped a square on to the floor and every morning got on his knees in that square and prayed that same prayer. He too began to see changes around him and within him.

In today's session, we've thought about the challenge of developing a daily yes with God: a set time and set place every day where we can give ourselves wholeheartedly to God.

Maybe you could write your own specific prayer of relinquishment. You can make it personal to your own life. Think about the areas that you might want to give to God, or the things He's asked you to do that you need to say "yes" to.

★ Action point

Try praying this prayer of relinquishment, maybe on your knees in your own set place, at the start of each day this week:

Father, you are God of all, and I submit to you.

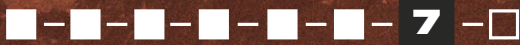
Jesus, you are Lord of my life and give my heart to you.

Holy Spirit, lead and guide me to the places, people, and purposes you have for me. I surrender to you now.

Amen.

END OF SESSION

SESSION 7 ENDURE



★ Aim

The aim for this session is to focus on not giving up in prayer.

Before you begin...

You'll need paper, pens and a bin or shredder for this session



GET STARTED

Prayer can be hard sometimes. Especially when we don't see the answers we want straight away.

Many people use a traffic light system to understand some of the different ways that God answers prayer:

Red

The answer may be no. So, maybe it's time to stop asking for that thing but continue praying. It's a good time to reflect and rethink where we're at with God and if He may be leading us in a different direction.

Amber

The answer may be wait. What we're praying for may be right, but we may need to wait for God's timing, which is always perfect. It's important in this time to ask God, "what would you like me to do while I'm waiting?"

Green

The answer may be "go." It can be helpful to think about the answer as go rather than yes. Of course, God may intervene on our behalf with a big miraculous yes as He performs miracles on our behalf. But when God gives the green light, it's often an invitation for us to act on what He says.

Discuss as a group 

Spend a few moments in your group discussing any answered prayer you have seen.

(It doesn't have to be spectacular miracles; it can just be the simple things of life).



GO DEEPER

Watch the video session or use this script for the 'Go Deeper' and 'Encounter' sections.



Session 7: Endure

24-7prayer.com/podcast/origins-endure



God always hears our prayers

**“Every prayer for today is a seed for tomorrow,
Keep praying, keep praying,
Hold on to the faith and the blessing will follow,
Keep praying, keep praying.”**

(Maverick City, Keep Praying)

God never forgets our prayers, even if we do. God hears us and knows how and when is best to respond. Prayer can most simply be defined as God listening to us.

No matter what is going on in our lives, God is always listening and always working for good on our behalf. So even though we may not always get what we want, that doesn't mean God isn't answering our prayers.

With the traffic light system we looked at earlier, it's encouraging to see that for each signal there is an answer and an outcome. **Even though we may not see answers in the moment, here are some truths we know happen when we pray:**

God hears us

God is listening

God cares

We grow in relationship with our Father

Without faith it's impossible to please God, so God is pleased by our faith outworked through prayer

We become more aware of God's presence

We grow in our understanding of God

We are shifting things in the spiritual realm

God is working all things for the good of those who love Him.

Sometimes it's easier to focus on what's not happening when we pray but we must remind ourselves that **James 5:16** says, "*The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.*"

One of the key components of prayer is persistence; to keep praying and never give up. When Jacob was wrestling with God both physically and spiritually in prayer he said, "*I'm not letting go of you until you bless me.*" **Jeremiah 29:13** also says, "*you will find Me,*" says the Lord, "*when you seek Me with all your heart.*"

In **Luke 11**, Jesus tells a story about a persistent friend who keeps asking his friend for bread until he gets what he wants. Jesus tells us to pray in this way. But why?

Why does God want us to keep on praying? The Bible tells us He knows what we're going to pray before we say it (**Matt 6:8**). There are many reasons why we need to persist in prayer, but the most important one is that His presence is the ultimate answer to our prayers.

Persisting in prayer teaches us to rely on and trust in God. It's where we feel His closeness and gain the confidence to face our fears. It's where we experience His love which removes our fears. And it's where we are healed from our pain. It's also where we become faithful and consistent people that God can rely on to look after what He wants to give us.

God is good and He answers every prayer, maybe not always with what we want but always with His very close presence. That's why, immediately after the story of the friend needing bread where Jesus tells us to be persistent in prayer, Jesus reminds us of this:





**THE
HOLY
SPIRIT
GUIDES**

"If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him."

(Luke 11:11-13)

Notice here that Jesus says that God will give us the Holy Spirit, God's very close and very real presence in our lives, guiding us, leading us, and showing us how we're meant to live and what we should be praying for.



ENCOUNTER

Persisting in prayer helps us trust in God no matter what life throws at us. But sometimes in life, it's the unknown that we're not so confident about. What could happen? What if I mess it up? What if it all goes wrong?

Unfortunately, we live in a society where many are fearful of the future and fear often holds us back from the good future God promised us.

Let's spend a few moments thinking about what is holding us back in our lives. It could be a fear of:

Rejection

Uncertainty

Pain

Sickness

Failure

The unknown

Whatever the fear, the Bible promises us that *"perfect love drives out all fear."* **(1 John 4:18)** So we're going to spend some time receiving and experiencing the love of God.

Prayer exercise

- 1 Write down any prayers or worries on your mind.
- 2 Give them to God by binning or shredding them, as a sign that it's with God now and you no longer need to carry them.



★ Action point

This week, if the issue arises or the worry comes back, remind yourself that you've let it go, and let God take over in that situation.

As we finish, we're going to be encouraged by some promises from the Bible:



Youth leader tip

You might like to get different young people to read these out

**“You are fearfully and wonderfully made.”
(Psalm 139:14).**

“In this we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us.” (1 John 3:16).

**“Nothing can separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
(Romans 8:39).**

“God demonstrated His love for us in this: whilst we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8).

END OF SESSION

SESSION 8 REPEAT

■-■-■-■-■-■-■-8

★ Aim

The aim for this session is to focus on repeating good prayer practices consistently.

Before you begin...

For this session you'll need some envelopes, Vitamin C tablets and cups of water



GET STARTED

Pete Greig says,

“when you pray, keep it simple, keep it real and keep it up.”

Here are some top tips for sticking with prayer and not giving up.

Keep It Simple

- ✔ It's ok to pray in your normal voice, as you normally talk.
- ✔ Don't overcomplicate things: this is about relationship, not getting everything right.
- ✔ It's ok to be direct with God and tell Him what you want to see happen.



Keep it real

- ✔ **Pray about the things that are on your heart and say how you feel.**
- ✔ **Say what you want to say, not what you think God or anyone around you wants to hear.**
- ✔ **Don't be afraid of saying exactly how you feel - God is big enough to handle it.**
- ✔ **God wants to hear from the real you: you can pray when you're angry, happy or anything in between**

Keep it up

- ✔ **Prayer can feel hard, but we must remember that our feelings don't change the simple truth that prayer is powerful, and it works.**
- ✔ **The Bible tells us many times that persistence in prayer is often needed for a breakthrough to happen. It's good to remember that persistence breaks resistance.**
- ✔ **God's not looking for spectacular, superhuman people. Many people He used in the Bible were completely ordinary, but He's looking for those who are consistently available. He's looking for pursuit not perfection, so keep on praying.**



GO DEEPER

Watch the video session or use this script for the 'Go Deeper' and 'Encounter' sections.



Session 8: Repeat
24-7prayer.com/podcast/origins-repeat



Passionate people change the world

You may have heard it said before that it's not always the richest, most beautiful, and intelligent people who change the world. More often than not, it's passionate people.



How do you measure passion? Passion can look different for so many people. For some, it's expressed through bold and fearless loudness whilst others are cool, calm and collected. Both have an inner passion that drives them to do what they do. However, one thing which differentiates a passionate person is consistency.

If you're truly passionate about something, you will show up day in, day out until you see your dream come to pass. Passion is a parent or guardian who will wake up through the night to nurse a crying baby without fail. Passion is a sports person who disciplines themselves to train their body day in and day out.

When it comes to the Bible, we learn about Daniel, whose passion for God was expressed through consistent, daily prayer, three times a day. He was so consistent that it seems as if everyone around him knew that's what Daniel did every day.

A decree had gone out in the city where Daniel lived to outlaw all worship of God. This decree was influenced by some men who wanted Daniel out of the political picture as he was gaining too much of the influence these men so desperately craved. They knew this decree would catch Daniel out because they knew he would never miss a prayer time.

In a world full of celebrities, we must not get distracted from the simple call to be consistent with God. God is not looking for perfection, but He loves pursuit.

Evan Roberts is well known for helping spearhead the Welsh Revival; a mighty move of God in Wales where over 100,000 gave their lives to Jesus in a matter of months! Evan Roberts wasn't a super spectacular human being, but he was devoted to what God wanted to do with his life. So devoted, in fact, that he said, "I will never miss a prayer meeting!"



God is much more interested in consistency than spectacular performance. Repeat the simple practices of prayer, reading the Bible and maybe continuing some of the exercises you've learned on this course.

Spiritual maturity is not the occasional practice of spectacular things, but the consistent application of elementary things.

A professional footballer, as talented as they are, still has to practice the most basic elements of their game: passing, dribbling, running, shooting etc. The same is true with Christianity. Christians who simply pray, read their Bible, and live it out can become some of the most passionate world-changers to ever exist.



ENCOUNTER

We're going to be courageous in prayer and write down some big, bold prayers:

Prayer exercise

- 1 **Take a piece of paper and write down 3 or more big but specific prayers – things that would be truly miraculous if they happened. Maybe the healing of a family member who's sick, or peace for a friend who is struggling to find peace - things that only God could do.**
- 2 **Put the paper in an envelope and seal it.**
- 3 **Write today's date on the front and your name.**
- 4 **We'll revisit these envelopes in six months and see what God has done in this time.**
- 5 **Keep the envelopes at church or youth group till 6 months from today.**
- 6 **In 6 months, your youth leader (who has cleverly set a reminder in their phone calendar) will remind you to open your envelope up and you can see what God has done.**





Youth leader tip

Remember to set a reminder on your phone or in your diary to revisit the envelopes!

An extra challenge

Finally, we want to give you a big challenge at the end of this course. We want you to think about doing a **24-7 Prayer Room** with your youth group. It will be a big task but one that will bring about amazing changes in your lives.

A 24-7 Prayer Room is where you make a space for 1 hour prayer slots throughout a 24 hour period so that there is constant prayer happening for perhaps a day or a week. Some people have even done a month or longer! You can each sign up to a slot to pray for 1 hour or more. If you run a 24-7 Prayer Room, share your stories with us about how it's gone by emailing youth@24-7prayer.com

Some of the things we've learnt in this course can be helpful but what will change you the most is when you encounter Jesus for yourself.

It's incredible what we've seen happen over the years at 24-7 Prayer when people have done this in their church or youth group, in fact, it's how our whole movement began, with a group of young people, just like you, getting passionate for prayer.

You're the next generation and we believe that if you get a heart for prayer, then you can change the world.

Discover more

Find out more about prayer rooms at 24-7prayer.com/how-to-run-a-prayer-room

★ Action point

Spend some time discussing as a group some of the main things you loved learning on the Origins course. Don't forget to find us and tell us your story:

[Instagram](#) and [Tik Tok](#) @247prayeryouth. [YouTube](#) @247Prayer

This week:

- **Spend some time with God for a few minutes asking Him to give you the strength to be a consistent person of prayer.**
- **Find a time and space each day that you can carve out to be with God. Set an alarm or reminder if that helps. Tell a friend you're doing it so they can help remind you.**

END OF SESSION



ORIGINS

THE BASICS OF
HOW TO PRAY

Youth@24-7prayer.com

24-7prayer.com



[@247prayeryouth](#)

[@247Prayer](#)



— 24-7 PRAYER —
YOUTH

Registered Charity: 1091413 Company No.: 04176643

Copyright © 2022 24-7 Prayer. All rights reserved.

