



# Pray with...

## Week 1: Pray with Expectation

*Find the message podcasts and group guides in this series at [actschurchlakeway.com/sermons](http://actschurchlakeway.com/sermons) or the ACTS Lakeway app, available for download in the app store for your phone or tablet.*

### Big Idea from the Message

We are told in 1 Thessalonians 5:17 to pray 'without ceasing.' This leaves us trying to find out what are we to pray with? In this series, we look to answer this question beginning in this week with understanding that we are to pray with expectation. This expectation is for God to do mighty things in and through the lives of those belonging to the Kingdom of God.

### Connect

1. Who is the best listener you know? What makes them so good at it and what is the benefit to having someone like this in your life?

### Discuss

2. As we enter into this new series tackling the topic of prayer, how would you describe your prayer life today? What is working and what are areas of weakness?

Read 1 John 5:13-15

1. How does the author describe how we are to approach God in prayer? What does it look like to have this approach in prayer?
2. We can find this confidence in the acknowledgment that God not only hears, but acts on our prayers. This is what our expectation is to be. Do you think most people

Read Jeremiah 29:11-14

3. Verse 11 is a very famous verse that is used in many settings. It is interesting what we see in verse 12 because we find a promise of God to listen to us. How does this promise impact our prayer life?

4. A research study on the effectiveness of listening discovered that the average person listens at only about a 25% efficiency rate. Why do you think this is the case? Does our culture help or hurt this? Was that number higher, lower, or right around what you would expect?
5. In Jeremiah we find the promise of God to always listen to us in prayer. The question then becomes, do we always listen to God? How can we gauge our ability to hear God in our prayer life? In what ways can we set ourselves up to become better listeners?

## Live It Out

6. We have read in this study that we are to approach God in prayer with confidence. We have also heard the promise that God will always hear our prayers. The question we then are left with this week is what is our expectation in prayer. Specifically, when you pray, do you pray in expectation of God to act? If so, how does that change how you pray? If not, what would change in your prayer life if you did?
7. For the times when we pray without expectation of God to now just hear prayer but to also act on it, why is that the case? What causes someone to have that posture?

Read Psalm 5:1-8, 12

8. This Psalm was on the card that was handed out on Sunday morning. What does verse 3 show us in how we are to pray and pray with expectations? How might God be working through your prayers already in this season of life?

## Lifting it up

Part of the prayer life of a Christian is to know that we are instructed to lay our desires and hopes before God in prayer. We also know that God will always hear our prayers and respond in kind. That does not always mean the prayer is answered exactly as we wished.

- When is a time you had a prayer request that God answered in the manner you had hoped for? Praise God for that time when your will was lined up with the will of God.
- When is a time you had a prayer request that God answered but not in the way you were hoping for? Praise God that while He was listening to you, God ultimately knew what was best as an example of His provision in our life.
- What is a prayer request you have put before God recently that is yet to be answered? Praise God, knowing full well that He has heard you. Pray that your ears can be open to hear His response and your eyes can be open to see Him at work.