

Pray. Bible Study

Each topic is broken down into 3 sections: Discussion Starters, Examining The Word, and Digging Deeper follow-up questions.

We hope you enjoy the movie, and pray that you find this companion Bible Study & Discussion Guide helpful to you. May God bless you as you study His Word!

Discussion Starter: Ask this simple question: "The title of the movie is *Pray*. So what exactly *is* Prayer?" (Let the group share their responses. Most people will instinctively answer that prayer is "talking to God". This answer, however, implies a monologue in which the person talks, and God just listens. Perhaps a better definition is that prayer is "Talking *with* God" as this implies a dialogue in which the person not only talks with God, but actually *listens*. Listening to the "still, small, Voice" of the Lord is an important part of prayer.)

Examining The Word: Ask someone to read aloud **Philippians 4:6-7** "*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*" Optional additional verses: **Ephesians 6:10-18**. Putting on the "full armor of God" certainly includes prayer. "...by prayer and supplication...". We prepare ourselves for the battles of the day by putting on our whole armor, much of which is accomplished through prayer.

Digging Deeper: It's easy to panic when you find yourself in a difficult or traumatic situation. In the movie, Madison finds herself facing several intense and scary situations. On two separate occasions, we notice that she prays for God's help, and on both occasions, we see the Lord answer her cries for help. (In the mall while looking for an open door to escape, and also while trying to start her car in the mall parking lot.) Ask the group: "Can anyone share an instance where they saw God answer a specific prayer?" (Could be healing from an illness, avoiding a major car accident, a family member finally accepting Christ, or perhaps just passing a test or getting an encouraging phone call just when you needed it etc.) Depending on time and length of the responses, you can follow-up by asking: "How did that bolster or increase your faith in God?" (It demonstrated that we can rely on Him, and that He will "never leave us nor forsake us.")

Discussion Starter: The movie opened with the definition of the word "Miracle". Have you (or someone you've known) ever witnessed or experienced an actual "Miracle"? Encourage them to share their story. After enough responses have been shared, ask them, "Can anyone remember the Bible Verse that was displayed at the end of the movie?" (see below)

Examining The Word: Ask someone to read aloud **Matthew 19:26**. "*Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."* NIV

Digging Deeper: Some people believe that miracles happen everyday, everywhere, all the time. Others believe that true miracles are very rare, and happen only in extreme

circumstances to bring God glory. In the Bible, we read that Jesus performed many miracles. Do you believe that God still performs miracles today? Why or why not?

Discussion Starter: In the movie, the final climactic chase scene takes place at a Shopping Mall. We hear the words "Worldly" and "Materialistic" used a lot in today's culture. Can someone help define what either of those words mean? (Description or characteristic of someone who embraces or focuses on things of this world, its pleasures and interests rather than the spiritual things of God's Kingdom.)

Examining The Word: Ask someone to read aloud **1 John 2:15-17** *"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If any one loves the world, love for the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world."* **James 4:4** *"Don't you realize that friendship with the world makes you an enemy of God? I say it again: If you want to be a friend of the world, you make yourself an enemy of God."*

Digging Deeper: In the movie, Madison goes to the Mall for a night of shopping. Although she is not necessarily being materialistic in this film, many young people do wrestle with this. What are some "worldly" things that can distract us from serving or following Christ? (money/pursuit of riches, things/possessions, job/career, boyfriend/girlfriend, hobbies or anything that consumes an unhealthy amount of our time & energy etc.)

Discussion Starter: What are some of the different names you've heard for "Satan" or "The Devil"? (Lucifer, the tempter, deceiver, the Accuser, serpent, prince of darkness, the beast, Abaddon, Apollyon, Beelzebub, etc.)

Examining The Word: Ask someone to read aloud **1st Peter 5:8**. *"Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour."* NIV

Digging Deeper: In this movie, how does the Villain mimic the devil in the way he behaves? (Wants to do us harm, pursues us our whole life attempting to snare us in his various traps, tries to make us believe we are alone, wears a mask to hide his true identity, etc.)

Discussion Starter: In the scene with Madison and her boyfriend at the restaurant, Madison is refusing to eat because she wants to lose weight. Often times Hollywood poorly represents what a "healthy" body type would be, leaving young women to believe that a super-skinny size is the only way to be beautiful. What do *you* think is beautiful?

Examining The Word: Have someone read **Jeremiah 1:5** *"Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you..."* and **Psalms 139:13-14** *"For You created my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made..."* Throughout the Bible, God tells us in His word that He created us. Even before we were born God had in mind who we would be. This includes everything from our talents and abilities, likes and dislikes, to our physical appearance. If we say that we are unhappy with ourselves, is that the same as basically telling God that He didn't do a very good job creating us? (see next verses)

Digging Deeper: Have someone read **Romans 9:19-21**. *"But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? Shall what is formed say to Him who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?' Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use?"* Why do you think God created you? What are your gifts/talents? Do you thank God for giving these to you? What do you believe is a healthy lifestyle and healthy appearance? Does our culture think that beauty can come in all shapes and sizes? More importantly, how do you think God feels about this?

Discussion Starter: There is a scene in the hotel hallway where Madison's friend, Robert, says he likes her ring. Madison replies "Thanks! True love waits, baby." How do you define "true love"?

Examining the Word: Read **1 Cor.6:12-20**. In our society today there seems to be an attitude of "everyone is doing it". In mainstream movies and TV shows we see people living together and having sex, sometimes even with multiple partners. However, we rarely see the consequences of these actions. The Bible is very clear about God's standard for purity, and that is that sex outside of marriage is not His will. Period. God expects us to have the self-control it takes to be able to wait until marriage. Sex was created to be a beautiful, intimate time for a man and woman in a marriage relationship. Anything outside of this distorts what God had in mind, and can bring serious consequences to the participants.

Digging Deeper: What are some consequences of ignoring God's standards and having premarital sex? (disease, pregnancy, guilt, problems for future relationships, low self-image, low standards). God loves us so much that He wants us to be blessed with healthy relationships and He wants to protect us from pain and regret. He knows that the consequences of disobedience can cause all kinds of problems, the least of these, are stress and excess "drama" in your life. Read the following questions to the group and have them answer True or False.

1. Committing to sexual purity before God honors Him and empowers myself to be in control of my own body. (True)
2. Surrounding myself with like-minded friends who have also committed to purity can help me stick to my commitment. (True)
3. God's Word says that sex outside of marriage is fine as long as I'm really in love. (False)
4. I believe that my future spouse is worth waiting for. (True)
5. It's wise to begin praying today for the sexual purity of the spouse God has already picked out for me. (Hopefully True)
6. Talking openly to a potential boyfriend/girlfriend before seriously dating will help lessen the pressure and stress of possible expectations in this area of my relationship. (True)
