



one thing  
for the  
World  
Moving out in prayer

## Study Guide

This workbook contains information and activities to help you make the most of the course.



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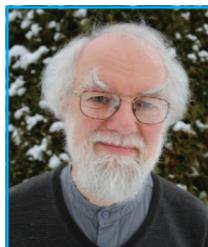
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# Introduction

Welcome to the 'One Thing' Prayer School series. We're delighted that you're joining us on this journey of learning more about prayer. We'll be reflecting together on how prayer shapes our own lives, and how it impacts our churches and communities. As you use this material, our prayer is that you will be encouraged and informed, challenged and inspired.

Why 'One Thing'? There are certain things we know we need to prioritise in life, but all too often busyness takes over, unexpected things happen, and before we know it, we've run out of time to do that 'one thing' we always meant to do. The writer of Psalm 27 probably knew what it was like to be busy and distracted, but he also knew what mattered most of all to him. He wasn't going to let anything else get in the way of the one thing he was pursuing: to dwell in God's temple all the days of his life.

In our first series, 'One Thing for Us', we explored how we can put prayer at the centre of everything: how we can hear God's voice, build prayer rhythms and navigate the obstacles that get in the way of prayer in our everyday lives. In our second series, 'One Thing for the Church', we explored how we grow in prayer together as communities of faith, putting that ultimate conversation with God himself right at the heart of our church life together. In this third series, 'One Thing for the World', we take a look at the link between prayer and mission: why is prayer so important when it comes to spreading the good news of Jesus Christ, and how can we make sure that our outreach and social action are soaked in prayer?

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# Getting the most out of 'One Thing for the World'

The course consists of six recorded sessions, each lasting between 50 and 60 minutes. Each session consists of a 30- to 40-minute teaching seminar, interspersed with interviews with people whose stories illustrate the theme of the teaching. Each session also includes 'Pause Points' – moments when you are invited to pause the recording and spend time in discussion or reflection.

To get the best out of 'One Thing for the World', we recommend that you use the recorded sessions in conjunction with this Study Guide. It contains all the discussion questions for each session, as well as suggestions for other exercises you might like to do, to help you explore the themes more fully.

## Group Settings/Leader

If you intend to use 'One Thing for the World' in a group setting, we would strongly recommend that the group leader watch the recorded sessions first, and read the relevant section of this Guide before running each of the sessions, so as to choose suitable activities and discussion questions in advance.



Leader-guided  
activities are indicated  
by the symbol above.

## Recorded Sessions

This Guide contains an outline for each recorded session, giving you a running order, along with timings for each item. Each outline also gives a suggested structure for using the material with a group: recommended timings for opening worship, Pause Point discussions and closing prayer. Items which form part of the recording are shown in normal font, whereas items which are suggested as *group activities* are shown in *italicised font*.

## Questions

The Guide includes the discussion questions suggested in the recorded sessions, but it also includes some extra questions which you may find it useful to use in addition to, or instead of, the ones suggested in the teaching. It also gives suggestions of activities you could use with the group for each session. These are of course only recommendations, and we hope you will feel free to adapt them as you need to, or make up your own. You will be unlikely to have time to do all the suggested activities, so choose the ones which you feel best suit the group.

## Timings

Though it takes less than an hour to watch each of the recorded sessions straight through, we strongly recommend that you set aside a minimum of two hours for each one. This gives time for discussion, reflection and prayer, and makes the learning experience richer.

You may even find that you want to split each session into two parts, so as to give more time for conversation on each topic. A line part-way down the session outline for each session gives an indication as to where you should split each one.

Though it is not necessary for everyone in your group to have a copy of this Study Guide whilst following the course, it is possible to download a pdf version from our website, should you wish to make it available to them. You can find a link to download the Study Guide, along with more 'one thing' resources by visiting The Salvation Army's 'One Thing' page at:

[www.salvationarmy.org.uk/one-thing](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/one-thing)

In previous 'One Thing' seasons we have travelled to different locations to film the teaching, but for this season, most of the teaching was filmed at our 'One Thing Prayer and Mission Conference' at The Salvation Army's William Booth Memorial Training College in Denmark Hill, London. It is interspersed with stories and interviews filmed on location around the country.



Discussion questions are indicated by the symbol above.



# Session 1

## Building God's Kingdom

In 1721, a wealthy young Count called Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf welcomed a small band of Christian refugees to set up home on his land in Saxony. He was a man of faith, and he wanted his estate to become a place of Christian community, so he renamed it Herrnhut, which means 'the Lord's Watch'. After just five years, this newly-founded community was nearly cracking apart under the strain of dissension and in-fighting. Something had to change, so Zinzendorf called them to prayer, and in 1727, the Moravian community at Herrnhut began a non-stop prayer meeting which lasted over one hundred years.

Prayer really did change everything. Revival came, the arguing stopped, and unbelievers found Jesus. By all accounts, it was a remarkable time. Zinzendorf himself wrote that: 'the whole place represented truly a visible habitation of God among men.'

But wonderful as that season of revival must have been, there was something more to come. In the early 1730s, Herrnhut sent out its first missionaries, to take the good news of Jesus to a slave community in the West Indies. By the end of that century-long prayer meeting, hundreds of Moravian missionaries had left that peaceful corner of modern-day Germany, to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

Prayer isn't just talking to God. Prayer is worshipping him, listening to him, pushing our preoccupations aside and letting his priorities shape us. In fact, prayer is one of the most dangerous occupations on earth, because the one you pray to might just call you to go and be the answer to your prayers.

# Session 1

## Outline

<i>Welcome and Worship</i>	20 Mins
Presenter's Introduction	3.5 Mins
Talk Part 1: Introduction (Phil Garnham)	5 Mins
Story: Darryn Hook and Carol	3.5 Mins
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
<i>Pause Point 1</i>	5 Mins
Story: Naomi Brehm	2.5 Mins
Talk Part 2: Kingdom People	7 Mins
Story: Naomi Brehm	2 Mins
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
<i>Pause Point 2</i>	10 Mins
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Talk Part 3: Kingdoms Collide	8.5 Mins
Story: Kathy Taylor	2 Mins
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
<i>Pause Point 3</i>	10 Mins
Story: Kathy Taylor	3 Mins
Talk Part 4: Kingdom Value	7 Mins
Story: Darryn Hook	2 Mins
Presenter's Link	1 Min
<i>Pause Point 4</i>	20 Mins
Story: Kathy Taylor	1 Min
Talk Part 5: Kingdom Life	2 Mins
Story: Darryn Hook and Trevor Gray	4.5 Min
Presenter's Conclusion	1 Min

# Session 1

## Building God's Kingdom – Activities

### Scriptures in the Teaching

Genesis 1:27, John 1:14, Matthew 6:9-10, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 2:2, 1 Peter 2:9, Romans 14:17, Galatians 3:28, Matthew 5:44, Mark 12:41-44, Luke 17:20-21,



### Discussion Questions

1. Talk about a time when someone has made you feel welcome and valued.
2. What kind of mission is your church doing? How is that mission supported in prayer?
3. Where are the 'rubbish dumps' in our society? What would it look like for God's kingdom to come to those places?
4. Spend time in prayer, naming those in your local community who aren't noticed.
5. What can we do to make sure we're hearing the stories of those whom society ignores or devalues today?
6. If we know we are the 'basilikos' (royalty in God's kingdom), how might it change the way we live our everyday lives?
7. Why do you think God has made prayer such an important part of building his kingdom?



### 1. Adopted into Royalty

*In this session, we explore something of what it means to be the 'basilikos' – the family of Christ the King. Invite the group to spend some time in silence, reflecting on what it might mean to be adopted into 'royalty'. If we know we are sons and daughters of a king, how might that shape the way we see ourselves and others?*

*Give opportunity for people to share their thoughts and ideas, and then spend time in praise and worship.*



## 2. Rubbish Dumps

*The first-century church got a reputation for being a compassionate community who would value those whom the rest of society rejected, even rescuing babies from rubbish dumps.*

*Collect about 30 pieces of rubbish (preferably relatively clean), pile them up in the middle of the room, and give each member of the group a marker pen.*

*Invite the group to think about people who are rejected or devalued in our 21<sup>st</sup>-century society. Who are the ones who get left on the 'rubbish dump', so to speak? As they think of particular people or people-groups, invite them to choose a piece of rubbish, and to write the name of that person or group on it.*

*Then invite the group to pray. Take the pieces of rubbish which have been written on, and distribute them among the group, so that each person has at least one. Play some music and encourage everyone simply to hold the rubbish in their hands as they listen, as a demonstration of God's compassion for those who are 'thrown away' by our society.*

*When the music finishes, invite people to speak out prayers for the people/groups written on their pieces of rubbish.*

*If you have someone particularly creative or artistic in the group, you could ask them to take the pieces of rubbish away and make something beautiful out of them, as a reminder that every human being has radical dignity in God's eyes.*



## 3. Praying the Kingdom

*The heart of all mission-centred prayer is the cry for God's kingdom to be established here on earth as it is in heaven. Invite group members to name people or situations which need prayer at the moment. As each one is spoken out, the rest of the group responds by saying together these words from the prayer Jesus taught:*

*'Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.'*



## Session 2

# Prayer as Mission

The Bible tells us over and over again that God is love, and if God is love, then it stands to reason that relationships matter to him. If all he'd wanted us to do was to adopt a moral code or a set of doctrines, he could have stuck to writing on stone tablets, but that wasn't what he wanted. His eternal, unchanging desire is for relationship with us, and that's why he came to live among us.

In our last session, we began to explore what mission is. We reflected on the fact that we are God's Kingdom people, called to be good news to the world around us; and we talked about the importance of supporting our mission with faithful, fervent prayer, since it's only God's power that can save people and set them free.

In this session, we examine the idea of prayer as mission. We're quite used to praying for our mission endeavours, but what happens when prayer itself becomes our main mission endeavour? What if, instead of trying to persuade people to believe in Jesus, we simply introduce them to him? What if, instead of just telling them about him, we offer to pray with them, making space for him to speak to them by his Spirit? It's something we call 'the encounter paradigm'. A 'paradigm' is a model or a pattern. So the encounter paradigm is a model or pattern of mission which has encounter with Jesus at its heart.

Mission is breaking the astonishing news to people that God wants to be their father and their friend. And, if you want to try out the 'encounter paradigm', it's inviting them to stop for a few minutes while you pray and ask the Holy Spirit to make his presence known to them.



# Session 2

## Outline

<i>Welcome and Worship</i>	15 Mins
Presenter's Intro	1.5 Mins
Story: Phil Togwell	3 Mins
Talk Part 1: Introduction (Xander Coleman)	7.5 Mins
Presenter's Link	1 Min
<i>Pause Point 1</i>	10 Mins
Story: Phil Togwell	3.5 Mins
Talk part 2: The Encounter Paradigm (1)	7.5 Mins
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
<i>Pause Point 2</i>	5 Mins
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Story: Vanessa Coleman	2 Mins
Talk Part 3: The Encounter Paradigm (2)	5 Mins
Story: Prezza Duncan	4.5 Mins
Talk Part 4: The Encounter Paradigm (3)	3.5 Mins
Presenter's Link	1 Min
<i>Pause Point 3</i>	10 Mins
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
Story: Vanessa Coleman	4 Mins
Talk Part 5: Practical Helps	9 Mins
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
<i>Pause Point 4</i>	10 Mins
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
Story: Phil Togwell	3 Mins
<i>Discussion and Prayer</i>	15 Mins

# Session 2

## Prayer as Mission – Activities

### Scriptures in the Teaching

Mark 2:1-12, 2 Corinthians 4:4,



### Discussion Questions

1. Talk about a time when you encountered Jesus.
2. Who are you ‘praying through the roof’ to Jesus?
3. Have you taken risks to share Jesus? Have you entrusted someone to God and seen him do a miracle?
4. How do you get the right balance of boldness and sensitivity when you share your faith?
5. What would it be like for someone who’s not a Christian to come to church with you? Are there things that would make it difficult for them to encounter Jesus? What would most help them to encounter him?
6. Have you ever asked someone if you can pray with them? What was the response?
7. Where else in the New Testament do you see the ‘encounter paradigm’ at work?



### 1. Practising the Encounter Paradigm

*The best way to start using the ‘encounter paradigm’ is to practise on someone you know. Invite the group to split into pairs, designating a Person A and a Person B in each pair.*

*Firstly, Person A will ask their partner: ‘Is there anything I can pray for you?’*

*Person B will share an area of need they’d like prayer for, and Person A will pray for them. Then the pair swap over, and Person B prays for Person A.*

*When it's your turn to pray, take it slowly, and don't be afraid to leave silences. Don't feel you have to rush out an impressive prayer. Take time to think about what you're asking for – to listen to God and to let the Spirit shape your prayer. The aim of this kind of prayer is to make space for the person you're praying for to meet with God. Your job is simply to accompany them. Above all, remember that, no matter what we're praying for, our spoken prayers should always remind people that God loves them.*

*When you've finished praying, ask your partner whether they heard God speaking to them or sensed his presence in some way.*



## **2. The Tile Activity**

*The teaching in this session focuses on the story of the friends who broke through a house roof to get their paralysed friend to Jesus. If you're praying for a friend of yours to come to faith, then you'll know there are all kinds of blockages which can get in the way of them meeting with Jesus. This exercise provides a creative way of praying for those blockages to be removed.*

*Find some ceramic floor-tiles (enough for each person in the group to have one), and wrap each one in paper. Give each member of the group a tile, and ask them to think about someone they're praying for at the moment – someone who doesn't yet know Jesus. Invite them to write on the paper-wrapped tile some of the blockages which are stopping their friend from encountering him.*

*Then place the tiles on the floor in the middle of the room and pass a hammer around the group. Invite each person to smash up their tile. This is what you might call an 'action prayer'. You're praying for those blockages to be removed, but instead of using words, you're using the physical action of smashing the tile.*

*(NB. Tiles must be wrapped in paper or plastic for safety reasons, so that splinters don't break loose and cause injury.)*

For more about Prayer Spaces in Schools, visit [www.prayerspacesinschools.com](http://www.prayerspacesinschools.com)

For more about Healing on the Streets, visit [www.healingonthestreets.com](http://www.healingonthestreets.com)



## Session 3

# Prayer and Social Justice

In 1996, The international leadership of the Salvation Army set up a ‘Spiritual Life Commission’, to do a kind of spiritual health-check. Their job was to call Salvation Army churches all over the world to a deeper, richer spiritual life, and to make some suggestions as to how they might get there. Their report was a series of rallying calls, challenging salvationists all over the world to draw nearer to God, to fight harder in prayer and to be bolder in mission. One of the calls they issued, the ‘Call to War’, starts like this:

“We call Salvationists worldwide to join spiritual battle on the grounds of a sober reading of Scripture, a conviction of the triumph of Christ, the inviolable freedom and dignity of persons, and a commitment to the redemption of the world in all its dimensions—physical, spiritual, social, economic, and political.”

It was a challenge to think big when it comes to spiritual life. Prayer is meant to be a source of strength and refreshment in our own lives, but it’s also meant to rewire the social, economic and political systems of our society.



# Session 3

## Outline

<i>Welcome and Worship</i>	10 Mins
Presenter's Intro	2 Mins
Story: Naomi Clifton	2 Mins
Talk part 1: Introduction (Naomi Clifton)	2.5 Mins
Story: John Clifton	2.5 Mins
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
<i>Pause Point 1</i>	5 Mins
Story: Pana Simon	2.5 Mins
Talk part 2: Walking Humbly – Lament	7 Mins
<i>Pause Point 2</i>	10 mins
Story: Naomi Clifton, Andy Flannagan	3 Mins
Talk Part 3: Loving Mercy – Compassion	5.5 Mins
Story: Andy Flannagan	1.5 Mins
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<i>Pause Point 3</i>	10 Mins
Talk Part 4: Acting Justly – Fighting for Justice	6 Mins
Story: Kerstin Kahn, John Clifton, Andy Flannagan	5 Mins
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
<i>Pause Point 4</i>	5 Mins
Talk Part 5: Integrating prayer, compassion and justice	4 Mins
Story: Pana Simon, John Clifton, Andy Flannagan	3 Mins
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
<i>Pause Point 5</i>	5 Mins
Story: Naomi Clifton, Andy Flannagan	6.5 Mins
<i>Pause Point 6</i>	5 Mins
<i>Discussion and Prayer</i>	10 Mins

## Session 3

# Prayer and Social Justice – Activities

### Scriptures in the Teaching

Micah 6:8, Psalm 88, Jeremiah 29:4-14, John 10:10.



### Discussion Questions

1. Do you know of a group or project working to rebuild people's lives in your local community?
2. Read Psalm 88. Can you think of people who might be praying these words today?
3. What are the injustices which you observe in your local community? Why are they happening?
4. Who are the truth-seekers and truth-speakers in your local community?
5. What stops you praying for politics and politicians? What would make it easier to do?
6. Is God calling you to be the answer to your own prayers?
7. Social justice is about speaking out and taking action. Why is prayer so important in the fight against injustice?
8. What would help you to pray more about social justice? What would help your church to pray more about it?



### 1. Bitter Lament

*Lament was an integral part of the Passover meal for the Israelites. They would eat bitter herbs and drink salt water, to remind them of the pain and tears of grief. Why not use that centuries-old tradition to help you lament the injustices you see around you? Give each person a small amount of horseradish sauce on a cracker biscuit, or a small cup of bitter lemon drink. As you eat or drink together, invite each person to savour the uncomfortable flavours and think about situations around them which seem unfair, unjust or impossible to resolve. Invite them to pray aloud if they feel comfortable doing so.*



## 2. Action Prayer

*When we're praying about social justice issues, it can be helpful to do activities which take us beyond words. These issues are often complex and hard to make sense of, and formulating spoken prayers can be difficult. Instead, why not use some action prayers:*

- *Cut a length of string for each person, and tie knots in it. Then invite them to untie the knots as an act of prayer. As they work at each knot, ask them to call to mind a particular social justice issue (human trafficking, debt crisis, knife crime etc). The painstaking act of loosening the knots becomes a wordless prayer for God to untangle these complex issues which blight so many lives.*
- *In this session, Naomi talks about a 'ribbon tree'. If you're praying about a particular injustice, why not bring in a small tree (real or artificial), and give everyone a piece of ribbon. Then invite them to tie their ribbon to a branch of the tree as a prayer for someone whose life has been affected by that particular injustice.*
- *Make up a bag of essentials for someone who's sleeping rough. You'll need a large bag or rucksack, and a range of items such as socks, shower gel, tinned food (ring-pull tins only) etc. You could ask your group to bring the items themselves. Put the empty bag in the middle of the room and lay the items around it. Invite each person to put one item into the bag, as an act of prayer for the person who will receive it. People might also like to speak out prayers as they put the items in to the bag.*



## 3. Supporting the Truth-speakers

*Is there someone in your church or local community who's campaigning on a particular social justice issue at the moment? Why not invite them over and find out about their campaign so you can pray for them?*



#### 4. Praying for Politicians

*It can be hard to pray for people we don't know, but it gets easier when we can see their faces. Print off names and photos of the members of your local Council and put them all up on a wall where the group can see them. Then invite people to pray for individual Councillors by name. In due course, you might even choose to contact councillors to ask them if they have specific issues they'd like you to pray about. Having prayed for the local Council, you could move further afield, praying in the same way for the County Council or the Prime Minister and Cabinet.*



## Session 4

# Does prayer work?

Have you ever wondered whether prayer actually changes things? As Christians, we're taught from day 1 that prayer is important and powerful, but how much time do we invest in trying to understand what it is, why we do it and how it works. In this session, we'll be putting prayer under the microscope of theology, in a bid to discover more about how and why it works.

We should add a note of warning though, before we begin. Prayer ... that sacred exchange between God and human beings ... is a complicated topic. You'll have far more questions by the end of the session than you did at the start, but that's no bad thing. Trying to understand the ways and workings of an infinite God is always going to leave us painfully aware of all that we don't know and can't yet understand, but in the midst of all the not-knowing, hold fast to the truth that we are immensely privileged to be able to connect with a living, loving God in prayer, in order that we might help to build his kingdom here on earth.

Our hope and prayer is that, as you stretch your brain around the topic, you will be awe-struck again at the intricate complexity of this most mysterious gift.

# Session 4

## Outline

<i>Welcome and Worship</i>	15 Mins
Presenter's Introduction	2 Mins
Story: Christine Lee, Mark Williamson	4 Mins
Talk Part 1: What changes when we pray? (1) (Mel Jones)	7 Mins
Story: Mark Williamson	1 Min
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
<i>Pause Point 1</i>	10 Mins
Story: Christine Lee, Abi	4 Mins
Talk Part 2: Does God change his mind? (1)	3 Mins
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
<i>Pause Point 2</i>	10 Mins
Story: Mark Williamson	2 Mins
Talk Part 3: Does God change his mind? (2)	5 Mins
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Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
Story: Olu	3 Mins
Presenter's Link	1 Min
<i>Pause Point 3</i>	10 Mins
Talk Part 4: Does God change his mind? (3)	5 Mins
Story: Edward Borrett	1 Min
Talk Part 5: What changes when we pray? (2)	4 Mins
Story: Edward Borrett	1.5 Mins
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
<i>Pause Point 4</i>	10 Mins
Story: Christine Lee	2 Mins
Talk Part 6: What changes when we pray? (3)	3 Mins
Story: Mark Williamson	3 Mins
Presenter's Conclusion	0.5 Mins
<i>Discussion and Prayer</i>	10 mins

## Session 4

# Does prayer work? – Activities

### Scriptures in the Teaching

Acts 12:1-17, 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, Matthew 26:39, Genesis 18:16-33, James 1:17, Hebrews 13:8, Hebrews 6:17, Matthew 6:10, Luke 8:43-48, John 13:8-9, Ephesians 1:19



### Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever prayed for something and found yourself personally changed?
2. When you pray, is it God, you or the situation that changes?
3. How do we help people to find God even when he's not answering their prayers the way they'd like him to?
4. Do you know anyone who's come to faith as a result of a miracle?
5. Read the story in Genesis 18:16-33, where Abraham pleads with God for Sodom. What do you think was happening in that conversation? Did God change his mind?
6. If each person needs to make their own choice to follow Jesus, what role does prayer play in that process? Can praying for them make any difference to whether they choose Jesus or not? If so, why?
7. Prayer is a complex mystery, but is there a simple truth which you like to keep in mind, to help you understand why and how prayer works? If so, what is it?



### 1. Lessons in Prayer

Ask each of the group to reflect on how they first learnt about prayer. Were there certain people who taught them to pray? Were there particular situations where they learnt something about what prayer is or how it works?

Take time to hear one another's stories, then give thanks to God together for the many ways in which his Spirit has already led you into prayer.



## 2. God can ...

*When we pray for a person or situation, we all too often start out by looking at the problem and trying to imagine what the best solution would be. But prayer is not a problem-solving exercise; it is the act of inviting our infinitely wise, ever-creating God to intervene. It stands to reason then that his way of 'solving the problem' may look very different to ours.*

*Invite a member of the group to give a brief outline of a situation they're praying for at the moment. Then have a time of prayer which focuses on God and his character, rather than on the situation itself. Invite each person in the group to begin their prayer: 'Thank you God that you can ...', and then to go on and pray for the situation in the light of what God can do.*

*For instance, if the situation involves a relative who is unwell, one person in the group might pray: 'thank you God that you can heal', while someone else might pray: 'thankyou God that you can give strength during treatment', and someone else might pray: 'thank you God that you can make your presence felt in the darkest times'.*

*Instead of just praying a 'solution' prayer ('Lord please heal so-and-so'), the situation is bathed in 'God can' prayers – prayers which call on the creative goodness of God, and which bring light and hope, no matter what the eventual outcome may be.*





### 3. Prayer Weaving

*Whether we can make logical sense of prayer or not, the most important thing is that we hold on to the truth that God is not a disinterested bystander who has already made all the important decisions, then left us alone to live out the consequences. He is close; he is passionately interested; he calls us to pray because he wants us to know that he is present with us in all things, at all times.*

*Give each member of the group three cords, ribbons or pieces of string, each of a different colour. One represents God, one represents us (the person praying), and the third represents the situation we're praying for. Play some music softly in the background, and invite each person to plait, knot or weave the three strands together. That simple action becomes the prayer – the bringing together of God, ourselves and the situation we're praying for – and the intertwined strands serve as a visual reminder that God is intimately involved in our lives and the things we pray for.*



## Session 5

# Prayer and Transformation

Prayer is many things. It's the precious gift of deep conversation with God, and it's the pouring out of our hearts in praise and longing, but if you look carefully at what Jesus said about prayer during his ministry on earth, you can't escape the idea that prayer is also meant to bring transformation. Whether he's challenging his disciples to infuse their prayers with the faith that moves mountains, or whether he's reciting his oft-repeated promise that the Father will do whatever we ask in his name, the vast majority of Jesus' references to prayer are about seeing things change.

Prayer is the partnership by which we work with God to see his kingdom come on earth. Mission is vital, but mission without prayer will always fall short. Only when we pray do our mission efforts reach their full potential, because prayer is the real agent of transformation. As a church, we have at times been guilty of diluting prayer – seeing it as nothing more than a harmless ritual – yet it is the most powerful tool God has ever placed into the hands of humankind. When we pray, people, places and situations are transformed.

In our last session we unpacked some of the theology around how prayer works. In this session, we turn our attention from the workings of prayer to the effects of prayer. What happens when God's Kingdom people take prayer seriously? What happens when churches commit to praying for their local neighbourhood? What happens when we invite God to do the impossible in the lives of the people around us?

# Session 5

## Outline

<i>Welcome and Worship</i>	15 Mins
Presenter's Introduction	1 Min
Story: Kathryn Blowers and Rebekah Brettle	4 Mins
Talk Part 1: Introduction (Lyndall Bywater)	4 Mins
Story: Magdalena	1 Min
Presenter's Link	1.5 Mins
<i>Pause Point 1</i>	5 Mins
Talk Part 2: Asking for the Extraordinary	8 Mins
Story: Robert and Kevin Rac	4 Mins
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
<i>Pause Point 2</i>	10 Mins
Story: Kathryn Blowers	2.5 Mins
Talk Part 3: Stand against the Unacceptable (1)	5 Mins
Story: Kathryn Blowers	1 Min
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Talk Part 4: Stand against the Unacceptable (2)	1.5 Mins
Story: Rebekah Brettle	2.5 Mins
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
<i>Pause Point 3</i>	10 Mins
Story: Patrik and Enrico Herak	4 Mins
Talk Part 5: Believe in the Happy Ending	7.5 Mins
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
<i>Pause Point 4</i>	10 Mins
Story: Kathryn Blowers and Rebekah Brettle	4.5 Mins
Presenter's Conclusion	0.5 Mins
<i>Discussion and Prayer</i>	15 Mins

## Session 5

# Prayer and Transformation – Activities

### Scriptures in the Teaching

Matthew 16:18-19, John 14:12-14, Luke 10:19, James 4:7-8, Matthew 11:2-6, 2 Kings 6:15-20, John 18:36



### Discussion Questions

1. Think of a situation you long to see change. Ask God to give you the key.
2. What's the most surprising answer to prayer you've ever had?
3. What do you see around you that's 'unacceptable'? How can you stand against it in a loving way?
4. What happy endings are the churches in your community involved in writing?
5. What do you think Jesus meant when he said that 'the gates of hades' would not overcome the church (Matthew 16:18)?
6. Jesus talked about us 'binding and loosing' (Matthew 16:19). What do you think he meant, and how could we as churches make better use of the authority he has given us in prayer to impact our communities?
7. What do God's 'happy endings' look like, in a world where so much is still broken and imperfect?



## 1. Asking for the Unexpected

*Think about life in the neighbourhood where you live. What are the problems? What encouraging signs of hope do you see around you? One of the main purposes of miracles is that they catch people's attention and cause them to think about God. As you reflect on life in your local community, can you think of a miracle which would surprise and bless people? If you need some inspiration, why not go out on a prayer walk together*

*Conclude your reflections by agreeing together on one miracle which you're going to ask God to do in your neighbourhood. But remember: God might just ask you to be the answer to your prayers in some way.*



## 2. Stand against the Unacceptable

*When we combine prayer and action, we are turning the ignition key for God's kingdom to come. And our actions don't need to be huge or heroic. Small acts of resistance, coupled with prayer, can block the enemy's path and keep hope alive.*

*Talk together about the small things which you as individuals could do to 'stand against the unacceptable'. What unacceptable things would you like to make a stand against? What small habits of resistance could you develop in your everyday lives?*

*Prayer and action go hand in hand, so having each thought of an action or habit you'd like to adopt, think of some creative ideas to help you keep praying regularly for the issue you're standing against. For instance, your new habit might be to only buy ethically-sourced clothing, so your prayer practice might be that, each time you get dressed, you pray for those in developing countries who are being exploited by the clothes-making industry. Alternatively, your habit might be to refuse to speak negatively about your work colleagues, and your prayer practice might be to find a gap in your work schedule each day and spend five minutes in prayer for one of those colleagues.*



### 3. Believe in the Happy Ending

*Hopelessness is one of the enemy's most effective and destructive tools. Perhaps that's why a few words of hope can completely change someone's day. Could you work together as a group to take words of hope to the people living in your neighbourhood? For instance, you could bake cupcakes and give them out to people in your local High Street. Since food given in this way must always be accompanied by a list of ingredients, you could give each person an ingredient card with an encouraging quote or Scripture verse on the back.*

*If cupcakes aren't your thing, there are lots of other ways to share hope: offering free hugs; putting out a couple of chairs and offering to listen to anyone who wants to talk; signing up to have a stall at a local psychic fair, and offering free prayer; visiting a local nursing home to play music or sing hymns.*

*Why not spend some time praying and talking together as a group, and see where God's Spirit leads you? Between you, you have a vast array of gifts and talents to use, and you also have the keys to the Kingdom, which means you can help people discover the good news that God has a happy ending for their story.*

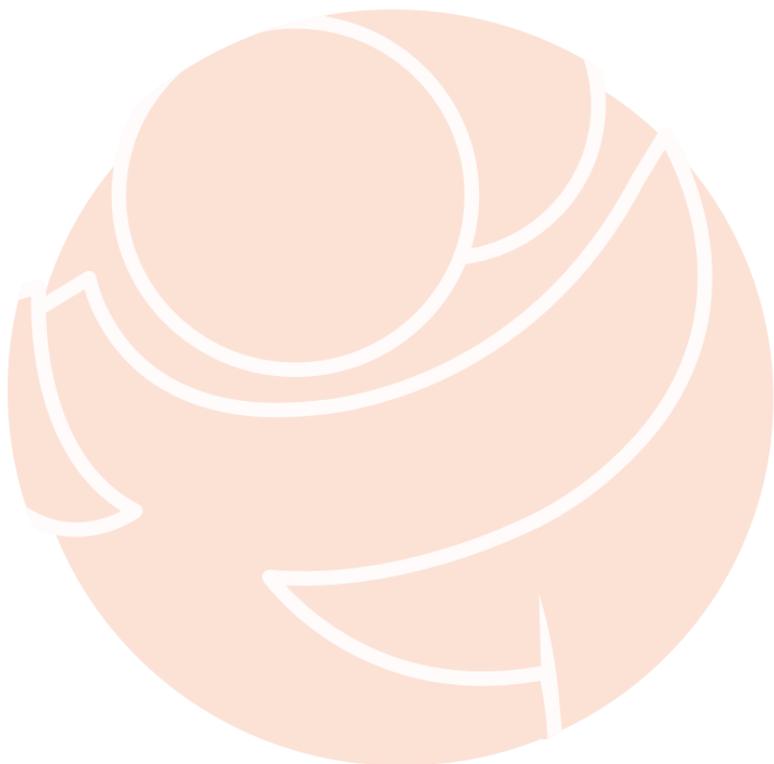


## Session 6

# The Wonder of Prayer

This final session is a little different to the other 18 we've made. It's a bit of a retrospective, looking back over some of the key themes we've explored throughout the 3 seasons, and it's packed with inspiration, to fire you up as you go forward from here. Instead of having one main block of teaching, we've asked a whole host of people to talk to us about why prayer is so important to them. Some may be familiar to you, and some probably won't, but together they serve up a feast of wisdom and wonder.

It's a longer session, so we recommend you set aside two evenings, or perhaps have breakfast and spend the morning together.



# Session 6

## Outline

<i>Welcome and Worship</i>	15 mins
Presenter's Introduction	2.5 mins

### **Section 1: Adventurous Conversation**

Story: Danielle Strickland, Jonathan Oloyede, Rowan Williams and Clive Adams	9 Mins
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
<i>Pause Point 1</i>	10 Mins

### **Section 2: When prayer is hard**

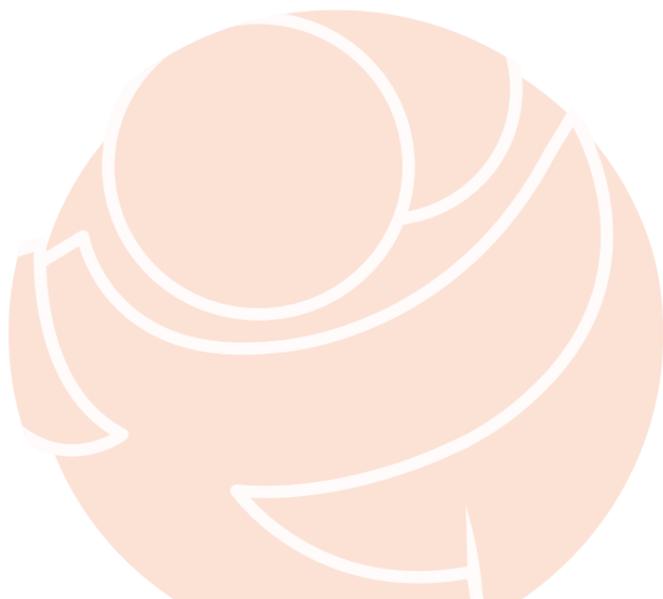
Presenter's Link	1.5 Mins
Story: Rowan Williams and Holly Anderson	8 Mins
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
<i>Pause Point 2</i>	10 Mins
Prayer and Reflection (Rowan Williams)	3 Mins

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### **Section 3: Together for Transformation**

Presenter's Link	.5 Mins
Story: Clive Adams, Danielle Strickland, Charlie Coombs and Jonathan Oloyede	9.5 Mins
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins

<i>Pause Point 3</i>	<i>10 Mins</i>
Prayer and Reflection (Danielle Strickland)	2 Mins
<b>Section 3: Raising a Praying Generation</b>	
Presenter's Link	1 Min
Story: Phil Togwell, Danielle Strickland and Holly Anderson	7 Mins
Presenter's Link	0.5 Mins
<i>Pause Point 4</i>	<i>10 Mins</i>
Story: Charlie Coombs, Rowan Williams, Christian Handley, Edward Borrett, Jonathan Oloyede and Pete Greig	9 Mins
Presenter's Link	1 Min
<i>Pause Point 5</i>	<i>10 Mins</i>
Presenter's Conclusion	0.5 Mins
Story: Pete Greig and Naomi Clifton	2 Mins
Vision Poem	5 Mins
<i>Discussion and Prayer</i>	<i>15 mins</i>



## Session 6

# The Wonder of Prayer – Activities



### Discussion Questions

1. What are your conversations with God like? What surprises you most about how he speaks to you?
2. What's the toughest thing you've ever journeyed through? How did your prayer life change?
3. Have you ever seen united prayer change a situation?
4. How do we teach children and young people to pray?
5. Spend some time praying for the children and young people God has put around you.
6. What do you do when you need to rediscover the wonder of prayer? How do you keep your prayer life fresh?
7. What helps you to keep spending time in prayer, even when it's hard and you feel dry? What helps you maintain your prayer discipline?
8. What could you do in your area to encourage churches to stand together in united prayer?
8. What do you think most puts young people off prayer?
10. What do you think would change in your local area if young people prayed more?



### 1. Reflections on One Thing

*Whether you've watched the whole One Thing Prayer School or just this season, invite each person in the group to reflect on what they've learnt:*

- *Is there one particular encouragement you want to remember from the series?*
- *Have you felt challenged to do things differently in prayer, and if so, what have you changed, and what difference has it made?*

- *Has the series given you ideas about how you'd like to see prayer develop in your church? If so, what would you like to see happen?*
- *What do you think the biggest obstacle to prayer is in your church?*
- *What could churches do to link prayer and mission together more strongly in your local area?*
- *The responsibility to champion prayer rests on all of us. What one thing are you going to do to encourage others to pray?*



## 2. The 'One Thing' Bible Study

*There are several famous occurrences of the phrase 'one thing' in the New Testament. Read these passages together and discuss what they teach us about the things we should prioritise in our lives. (If your group is large enough, you might want to split into three smaller groups, each taking one of the passages.)*

*Luke 10:38-42, Luke 18:18-23, Philippians 3:8-14*



## 3. Growing in God

*Nature is a great source of inspiration when it comes to thinking about prayer. In his interview, Dr Rowan Williams talks about St Teresa of Avila and her analogy of prayer as being like cultivating a garden. Use either of the following exercises to get your group thinking about what stage of growth their prayer lives are at:*

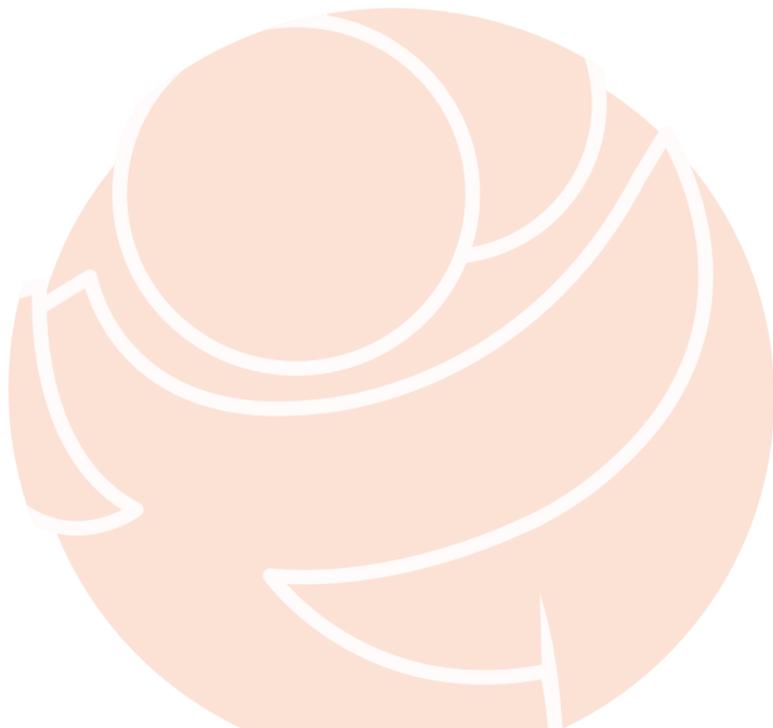
*\* Go out to a nearby park or garden and invite everyone to spend 10 minutes or so looking at the plants and flowers growing there. Encourage them to listen to God as they look around. What is he saying about prayer in their lives and how they might cultivate it more?*

*\* If going out isn't possible, buy each person a pot-plant. Encourage them to listen to God as they look around. What is he saying about prayer in their lives and how they might cultivate it more? They can then keep the plant as a reminder of what God has said to them through the One Thing Prayer School.*



#### **4. Moving Forward Together**

*Before you finish this final session, ask the group to get into twos and to pray for each other. Then ask them to commit to praying for that person daily over the next few weeks, that they will continue to go from strength to strength in their prayer life.*



## Credits and Acknowledgements

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- To The Salvation Army's William Booth Memorial Training College for hosting the 'One Thing Prayer and Mission Conference'.

### 'One Thing' Prayer School

*If you haven't seen them already, why not watch Season 1, 'One thing for Us: Bringing personal prayer to life', and Season 2, 'One Thing for the Church: Growing prayer together'.*



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