

# DISCIPLES PRAY IN JESUS' NAME

**YEAR: TRANSFORM / FOCUS: LIVING IN PURSUIT / SERIES: DISCIPLE**

## **BIG TRUTH: DISCIPLES PRAY IN JESUS' NAME**

Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1; John 1:12-13; 1 John 5:13-15; John 15:11; 16:24

## **BIBLE VERSE: JOHN 16:23-24**

*"In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, He will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full."*

## **BIG IDEAS**

- We pray in Jesus' name because He is our advocate before the Father.
- We pray in Jesus' name to submit to God and His purposes.
- We pray in Jesus' name so that our joy may be full in Him.

## **BIBLE PASSAGE: JOHN 14:12-13, 16:23-24, 17:9-13**

## **TRANSFORM - LIVING IN PURSUIT**

In High School, the Transform Year is an exploration of what it looks like to have transformed influence as we seek to live for a Kingdom that is greater than our own. First, we recognize that we will never be transformed if we are not Living for Jesus. To do this, we must first know who Jesus is by looking at who He says He is (John 8:58), and then look at what the Bible says about how in Him, we live by faith (James 1:6). Next, we recognize that to have transformed influence means that we must live as disciples in pursuit of Christ and His Kingdom over ourselves and our own kingdoms.

## **SERIES AIMS**



### **Every student should know that...**

- Jesus is the only source of life
- God's Word is authoritative and applicable for all of life
- To follow Jesus is to pursue a life of sacrifice and surrender



### **Every student should feel...**

- Thankful for the triune God who is worthy
- Convicted of how deception has led them to disobedience
- Responsible to use their influence to live for Jesus alone



### **Every student should strive to...**

- Read through the gospel of John
- Memorize the Bible verse each week
- Implement regular rhythms of prayer and fasting throughout the semester



### **Every student should want to...**

- Pursue obedience even when faith is a struggle
- Grow in living in step with the Holy Spirit
- Live their lives to glorify God the Father

## **GUIDES AND WORKOUTS**

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week's Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.



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**Disciples pray in the power of the Holy Spirit.**

*"Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, He will give it to you."*

- When Jesus prepared His disciples for His departure from earth, He promised them that He would send them one who would be their helper. The Helper is the Holy Spirit, or the third person of the Trinity. This person helps Jesus' disciples as they pray.
- When a disciple of Jesus prays, he or she prays in the power of the Holy Spirit who lives inside of them. It is the Spirit who works inside of them to guide them and help them understand what they should pray. It is the Spirit who helps them understand what God desires and aligns their hearts with His.

**Disciples pray in and under the authority of Jesus' name.**

*"Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, He will give it to you."*

- No follower of Jesus has the ability to pray in their own power. The power a believer has is from the Holy Spirit that he or she receives at salvation. When the Spirit works inside of a disciple, He guides them to do the will of God. In prayer, the Spirit guides them to pray in the name of Jesus because Jesus' name has power and authority.
- God the Father has given Jesus' name authority. The disciple prays in and under this authority by recognizing that this authority exists and that it is not his or hers. We do nothing in our own authority, but only in the authority of Jesus.

**Disciples pray for and delight in what Jesus' desires.**

*"Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full."*

- Praying in Jesus' name is more than tacking the words onto the end of our prayers. It is a heart that is aligned with the desires of the Son of God. A disciple prays for the things that Jesus desires. He or she does this because they are pursuing God and know what He desires.
- A disciple also delights in the things that Jesus' desires. When God answers their prayers, they find joy because God's will is being done on earth as it is in heaven. This brings joy to the true disciple.

## BIG IDEA #1: WE PRAY IN JESUS' NAME BECAUSE HE IS OUR ADVOCATE BEFORE THE FATHER.<sup>1</sup>

### [ THIS ]

An advocate is a person who pleads the cause of another before a judge. An advocate is a person who works on behalf of another to defend them and work to maintain their innocence. Jesus is the advocate of every disciple who follows Him. In Romans 8:34, Paul describes Jesus as our intercessor, or advocate. Every person who repents and believes in Him gains an advocate. Jesus is the only One who can advocate for us because He is the only sinless man who can stand before God who is the rightful judge of all. After Jesus' resurrection, He ascended into heaven and now sits next to the Father at His right hand serving as our advocate and intercessor. He pleads our case of innocence before the Father and declares us justified because of the blood He shed on the cross for us. Hebrews 7:25 also speaks of Jesus' interceding on the behalf of those who seek salvation in Him.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**Read Hebrews 7:25. How is Jesus the advocate of those who seek Him for salvation?**

Hebrews 7:25 helps us understand that it is only because of Jesus that we have salvation. Jesus first intercedes or advocates for us by taking our place on the cross. Because He stands before the Father blameless and His righteousness is applied to us, He can plead our case before the Father.

### [ THIS ]

We pray in the name of Jesus and not in the name of the Holy Spirit or in the name of God the Father because it is Jesus who is chosen as the Savior and Advocate for those who believe. It is Jesus who sits beside the Father to intercede for us. 1 John 2:1 shows us that in our sin, we do not have to despair because we have an advocate in Jesus and He is righteous. Though we cannot stand before God in our own power, or by ourselves, and expect to receive anything other than condemnation, Jesus can stand next to the Father and plead our case for us so that we can receive forgiveness. Because He is our advocate, when we pray, we pray in a way that aligns with Jesus' character and His will. This is praying in His name. He makes it possible for us to do this. Without His advocacy on our behalf on the cross and before the Father, we would not be able to pray at all.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**Does praying in Jesus' name mean saying His name or does it mean something more? Explain.**

Romans 8:34, 1 John 5:14, and Colossians 3:17 show us that praying in Jesus' name is more than just saying His name. It involves our heart and recognizing the work that Jesus has done on the cross and the work that He does now in heaven. When we pray, we pray in His name knowing that He is the One who does the work.

**How does it encourage you to know that when you pray, you have Jesus as your advocate?**

We can approach the throne of God with confidence because Jesus is our advocate. Hebrews 4:16 teaches us that because of Jesus we can draw near to God with confidence of not facing judgment and knowing He will hear our prayers. 1 Timothy 2:5 and Luke 11:9 also remind us that Jesus works on our behalf when we pray.

1. Romans 8:34: Jesus intercedes for us as the Father's right hand.

**BIG IDEA #2: WE PRAY IN JESUS' NAME TO SUBMIT TO GOD AND HIS PURPOSES.<sup>2</sup>****[ THIS ]**

In John 14:12-13, Jesus tells His disciples that those who have believed in Him will do the works He has done and even greater works than He. As He taught them, He was preparing them for His departure from this world. In doing so, He taught them the importance of submitting to God and His purposes. When a person comes to Jesus in saving faith, he or she is submitting to God's will and plan. Praying is a submission to God's purposes and plans because it is God's will that His disciples pray. By engaging in the act of praying, we are submitting to God's plan for His people. John 1:12-13 reminds us that everyone who believes in Jesus becomes God's child. By becoming God's son or daughter, we join with Him in His plan for this world and the next. When we pray, our actions show that our hearts are submitting to Him and acknowledging that His way is best.

**[ THEREFORE ]**

**How is the act of praying a sign that we are submitting to God's purposes?**

Throughout Scripture, God tells His people to pray. Romans 12:12, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, and Colossians 4:2 are just a few of the Scriptures that teach us to pray without ceasing. When we obey this command to pray, we are submitting to God's purpose for us by showing that we know His way is best.

**[ THIS ]**

How we pray matters. When we pray, we submit to God's plan by praying in His Son's name because He has told us to do so. Throughout the New Testament, we are told to ask and work in the name of Jesus. God has chosen His Son as the means of salvation for the world. 1 John 5:13-15 reminds us that it is through Jesus that God gives us eternal life and when we ask for anything according to His will, we receive it. Because it is God's plan for His people to pray in Jesus' name, when we do so, we are submitting to Him. By acknowledging through our prayers that it is the work and power of Jesus that enables us to approach the throne of God, we submit to God's purpose for the world. When we pray in Jesus' name, we are praying according to His desires and He desires what the Father desires.

**[ THEREFORE ]**

**How have your prayers been spent asking for things that satisfy your will and purposes rather than God's?**

Prayer can be seen as a way to ask God for the things that we want. We can tack on Jesus' name somewhere in our prayers and make it seem that we are praying in His name. Psalm 37:4 teaches us that the truth is that those who delight in the Lord are the ones who pray in Jesus' name. John 14:3 and 15:7 show us that praying according to God's will means seeking Jesus and abiding in Him daily that we might desire what He desires.

**How do distractions and selfishness keep you from praying in Jesus' name?**

1 Peter 5:7 reminds us to cast our anxieties and cares on Jesus. When we do not, our prayers can be hindered, or we become distracted to the point of not praying. Luke 18:1 shows us that it is possible for us to lose heart when we pray because we do not receive an answer right away. This can lead us to stop praying. We can also pray for our own will to be done or for things that bring us glory instead of things that bring God glory.

2. 1 John 5:13-15: When we pray according to God's will, we pray submitting to His purposes.

**BIG IDEA #3: WE PRAY IN JESUS' NAME SO THAT OUR JOY MAY BE FULL IN HIM.<sup>3</sup>****[ THIS ]**

Joy, according to the world, can be defined as a source or cause of delight. We find joy in many things in this world, but that joy isn't lasting. This isn't true joy. Throughout God's Word, we are taught to find true joy in Jesus because this type of joy is everlasting. Praying in the name of Jesus is a means of finding joy in Him. In John 16:23-24, Jesus tells His disciples to ask for things in His name so that they will receive it, and in receiving it, they would experience joy. This means that first we have to learn how to center our prayers around the will of God. We have to adjust our prayer life to focus on a pursuit of God and His will. We can't use prayer as something we resort to when we've exhausted all other resources. Praying in Jesus' name also means evaluating our hearts for wrong motives and desires. We can't just launch into prayer, asking God for this and that and then end our list of requests with "if it's your will". This isn't praying in Jesus' name and this type of prayer will not give us the type of joy Jesus was speaking of. A right perspective and heart attitude is necessary to pray in Jesus' name correctly.

**[ THEREFORE ]**

**What types of prayers are characteristic of a wrong heart motive?**

In James 4:2-4, James identifies a heart attitude that is contrary to praying in Jesus' name. This type of heart seeks the promotion of self and the fulfillment of selfish desires. When we do not even pause to consider what God's will might be but launch into a prayer that is only seeking what we presume is best, we are seeking God with the wrong heart motive and not praying in Jesus' name.

**[ THIS ]**

While it is not wrong to ask God for things through prayer, a heart of submission is the right position to have before Him always. Jesus exemplifies this type of prayer best in His prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane in Matthew 26:36-45. Jesus knows the Father's will and asks for the cup of wrath to pass from Him, but He does so, submitting to the Father's will. When we pray in Jesus' name, we may ask for things that we wish to happen, but we do so with a heart that desires the will of God more than we want our wishes to be granted. It is when we arrive at this place that we find great joy in having these prayers answered. We will find joy in seeing God's will done on earth. This is the joy that Jesus speaks of in John 16:23-24. Disciples have full joy when they see God's plans and purposes carried out on earth, especially when they have joined with Him in praying for these things to be done. When we pray for a lost person to come to faith and they do, we experience great joy. When we ask God to provide for a ministry we are involved in and He does, we experience great joy to see His name made famous.

**[ THEREFORE ]**

**What can you learn from Jesus' example of praying the Father's will be done in Matthew 26:36-45?**

Hebrews 12:2 tells us that Jesus continued on the path to the cross because of the joy set before Him. We can pray in Jesus' name, even if it brings trials and hardships because we can trust that there is joy in knowing that God's will is done on the earth.

**What wrong motives do you need to repent of to help you pray more faithfully in Jesus' name?**

Our passions and desires for earthly things keep us from praying in Jesus' name. Instead, we pray benign prayers that seem safe to us. Luke 14:33 shows us that anyone who is not willing to die to himself isn't willing to be a disciple of Jesus.

3. John 15:11: When we abide in Jesus and keep His commandments, He abides in us and our joy is complete.