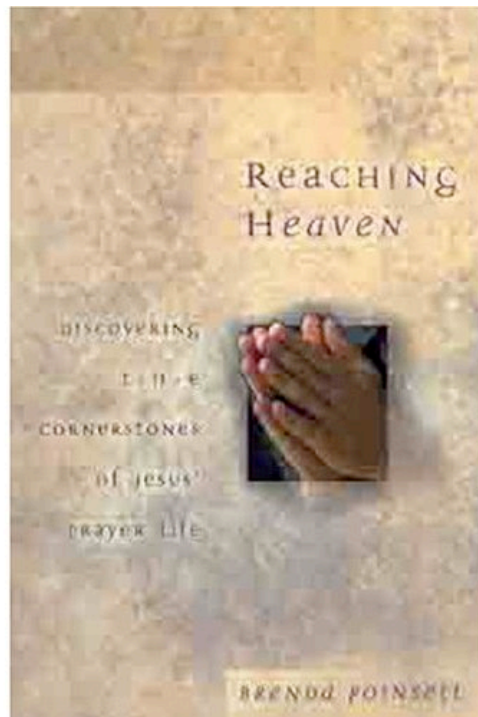


Study Guide  
For

*Reaching Heaven:  
Discovering the Cornerstones  
of Jesus' Prayer Life*

by  
Brenda Poinsett



Questions for Individual and Group Use

## Chapter 1 of *Reaching Heaven*

### Lord, Teach Us to Pray

1. From time to time, we all pick role models to identify with and to imitate. This is one way we learn, grow, and change. Sometimes it's an unconscious choice; other times it is deliberate.

Who has been a role model for you . . .

In your work \_\_\_\_\_

In friendship \_\_\_\_\_

In marriage or being single \_\_\_\_\_

In parenting or grand parenting \_\_\_\_\_

2. We have many possibilities for prayer role models. Who would some of those be? (page 13)

3. What does Jesus provide that no other role model does? (page 13)

4. As divine, what did Jesus perfectly know? (page 13)

5. Why might Jesus' divinity turn some people off so they wouldn't consider Him a role model? (page 13)

6. What kind of stress did Jesus experience that shows His humanity? (page 14)

7. How does Jesus' humanity encourage us to pray like Him? (pages 13-14)

9. When Jesus' prayer is not actually stated in the Bible, how will we determine what He was praying about? (page 14)

10. What three things happened when Jesus prayed at His baptism? (pages 14-15, Luke 3:21).

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

11. To whom did the Jews associate the words “Thou art my beloved Son?” (page 15)
  
12. To whom are the words “in thee I am well pleased” or “in whom My soul delights” referencing? (page 15)
  
13. Before Jesus’ baptism, where was He living and what was He doing? (page 15)
  
14. How did Jesus’ life change dramatically after His baptism? (page 15)
  
15. What kind of questions might Jesus have been asking that prompted Him to leave home and go hear John the Baptist preach? (page 16)
  
16. What direction did God’s audible words give Jesus for His future? (pages 15-17)
  
17. What can we infer about the content of Jesus’ prayer at His baptism by looking at the incident, at what happened before and what happened afterwards? (page 17)
  
18. What might we miss if we don’t believe Jesus needed to pray? (page 17)
  
19. On the other hand, if we believe He needed to pray, what develops between us? (page 17)
  
20. What traits of a role model do we usually try to imitate? (page 18)
  
21. What are the four dominant traits of Jesus’ prayer life? (pages 18-19)
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
  
22. What will we gain when we make Jesus our role model for praying? (page 19)

## Chapter 2 of *Reaching Heaven*

### When You're Feeling Pressured

1. What is your definition of success? Is it connected to size?

A certain *amount* of money.

A *large* house.

A *wide* reputation.

A *huge* following.

By the size measurement, we would judge Jesus' ministry successful when His popularity exploded, but what did He think? Let's find out as we study chapter 2 of *Reaching Heaven*.

2. In the populous city of Capernaum in Galilee, where did Jesus teach on the Sabbath? (Mark 1:21, page 24)

3. What was remarkable about the way He taught? (Mark 1:22, page 24)

4. What was the reaction of the people to the way He taught? (Mark 1:22, page 24)

5. Who created a disturbance while Jesus was teaching in the synagogue? (Mark 1:25-26, page 24)

6. How did Jesus respond to the evil spirit? (Mark 1:26, page 24)

7. What was unusual about the way Jesus' exorcised the demon? (page 24)

8. How did the people react to Jesus' exorcising the demon with words of authority? (page 24).

9. To whose home did Jesus go immediately after the synagogue services? (Mark 1:31, page 25)

10. At Peter and Andrew's home, who was ill? (Mark 1:31, page 25)

11. How did Jesus respond to this illness? (Mark 1:31, page 25).

12. What cumulative effect did the teaching, exorcising, and healing have on the town people? (Mark 1:32-34, page 25)

13. What might the people have been thinking as they brought to Jesus those who were ill and demon-possessed? (page 25)

14. Judging by the number of people who wanted to see Jesus, what might the disciples have been thinking? (pages 25-26)

15. As Jesus assessed his popularity, what important question did He have for God? (page 26)
16. Where did Jesus go to seek God's answer to this question? (Mark 1:35, page 27)
17. What time of day did He seek God's answer? (Mark 1:35) Why this time? (page 27)
18. Why is morning a good time for prayerful solitude?
19. What did Peter and those with him do when they discovered that Jesus had disappeared? (page 27)
20. When the town people found Jesus, what did they try to keep Him from doing? (Luke 4:42, page 28)
21. What did Jesus say decisively and firmly to Peter and his companions? (Mark 1:38, page 28)
22. Through prayerful solitude, what did Jesus come to understand clearly? (page 28)
23. What did Jesus do after he left Capernaum? (Mark 1:39).
24. What three things does solitude do that helps us in seeking God's guidance? (pages 28-31)
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
25. How does solitude facilitate our thinking? (page 29)
26. What goes on around us distracts us, but sometimes what is going on inside us can too. What kind of "inner noises" can distract and interfere with solitude? (pages 29-30)
27. What are three ways you can turn off inner noise? (page 30)
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
28. In light of the success Jesus was experiencing at Capernaum, what would have been a rational, reasonable answer to His question about what to do? (page 31)
29. What insight does God's answer give us about understanding success?

### **Chapter 3 of *Reaching Heaven***

#### **When You Need to Be Replenished**

1. What illness are you most afraid of catching?
2. What disease did no one want to get in Jesus' day? (page 33)
3. How did Jesus respond to a man with a serious case of leprosy? (page 34)
4. After the leper was healed, what did Jesus tell him *not* to do? (page 34)
5. When did the leper do? (page 34)
6. Why did his story spread like wildfire? (page 35)
7. Why were the religious leaders displeased with Jesus' actions? (page 35)
8. How could Jesus have been in trouble for healing this leper? (page 35)
9. What happened to Jesus' popularity at this point? (pages 35-36)
10. How did Jesus respond to the increased popularity? (page 36)
11. Where did He go to pray? (page 36)

12. What did Jesus need from this time of withdrawal in the wilderness? (pages 36-38)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

13. Besides reducing distractions, facilitating thinking and improving our listening, what does solitude also provide? (page 36)

14. Why would Jesus with all the resources of heaven at His disposal need to be refreshed? (pages 36-37)

15. What's one reason why Jesus may have ordered the healed leper to keep quiet? (page 37)

16. What was developing against Jesus that caused Him to be concerned about the crowds surrounding Him? (pages 37-38)

17. How did Jesus *prepare* Himself to resist the people's desire for a military leader and to deal with the increasing opposition? (page 38)

18. Was this prayerful *preparation* a one-time incident or something repeated? (page 38)

19. What are three reasons we may need time apart from people to pray? (page 39)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

20. What do some people find uncomfortable or inconvenient about solitude and silence?

21. What are some places and/or times that we can use to seek rest, refreshment and fortification through prayerful solitude?

## Chapter 4 of *Reaching Heaven*

### When You Have to Decide

1. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being “very difficult” and 1 being “not a problem,” where would you place your decision-making ability?
2. Why are choices sometimes agonizing to make? (page 45)
3. What crisis was developing in Jesus’ life that was going to require a choice? (pages 46-47)
4. What had rules and regulations done to the observance of the Sabbath? (page 46)
5. How did Jesus openly challenge the Sabbath rules and regulations? (pages 46-47)
6. Was this the only time Jesus deliberately broke the Sabbath rules and regulations? (page 47)
7. How did the Scribes and Pharisees react to Jesus’ healing a man on the Sabbath? (page 47)
8. As a result, what did the Scribes and Pharisees begin planning to do? (page 47).
9. When else had Jesus’ life been in danger? (page 47)
10. What did knowing His life was in danger remind Him of? (page 47)
11. If His work was to branch out and go on, what did Jesus need? (page 48)
12. Why was choosing helpers so crucial? (page 48)
13. How long did Jesus prayerfully consider this choice? (page 48)
14. Where did Jesus go to pray about this choice? (pages 48-49)



15. In the last two incidents of Jesus' withdrawal that we studied, where did He go to pray? (Mark 1:35, Luke 5:16)

16. How can *where* we pray enhance or detract from the experience?

17. How can praying on a mountain enhance a prayer experience? (page 49)

18. If you were selecting an ideal place to pray, what would be your preference?

19. What did Jesus seek from God while on the mountain? (page 49)

20. What "work" may be involved in maintaining a vigil of prayer? (page 50)

21. As Jesus did the "work" of prayer, what might have been some of the alternatives He considered? (page 50)

22. How many men did Jesus choose out of His many disciples to be His helpers ? (page 51)

23. What does maintaining a *vigil* of prayer mean? (page 51)

24. To count as a vigil, how long does a chunk of time need to be? (pages 51-52)

25. Why is a vigil sometimes required to receive God's answer? (pages 52-53)

26. What is the most difficult part about maintaining a vigil of prayer?

27. How do we know when to end a vigil of prayer?

## Chapter 5 of *Reaching Heaven*

### When You are Distracted

1. What kind of things distract Christians from doing God's will?
2. Who might be responsible for some of those distractions? (page 55)
3. When Jesus was fasting and hungry, what did Satan try to get Him to do? (page 55)
4. What was one sure way Jesus could get people to follow Him? (page 56)
5. After returning from a training mission, why weren't the apostles able to share their experiences with Jesus? (page 56)
6. Where did Jesus suggest they go so they would be able to talk? (page 56)
7. Who was waiting for Jesus and the apostles at "the lonely place"? (pages 56-57)
8. Instead of being annoyed with the people, how did Jesus respond to the crowd? (page 57)
9. What did the people begin to say after Jesus miraculously fed them with five loaves and two fish? (page 57)
10. Why did the people want a leader like Moses? (page 57)
11. When Jesus perceived that the people wanted to force Him to become king, what 3 actions did He take to deal with this distraction? (page 58)
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
12. How did the people's desire tug at Jesus' heartstrings? (page 59)

13. What interrupted Jesus' night in prayer over this issue? (page 59)
14. How do we know the time spent in prayer was long enough? (pages 59-60)
15. Why did Jesus say the crowd was looking for Him after His prayer vigil? (page 60)
16. Why was Jesus' revelation that He was the "bread of life" a crowd-separator? (page 60)
17. If given a choice, would you rather have spiritual bread or real bread?
18. What insights does this incident in Jesus' life provide us for recognizing and dealing with temptation?
  1. (pages 60-61)
  2. (page 61)
  3. (pages 61-63)
  4. (page 63)
19. How was this time a complex time in Jesus' life? (pages 60-61)
20. Why was this particular spiritual battle a lonely one for Jesus? (page 61)
21. When are some times when we might need to fight spiritual battles alone? (page 61)
22. What steps might we need to take to unwind our complicated lives and seek God's direction?
23. What was imperfect about Jesus' withdrawal for prayer? (page 63)
24. What are some things that can keep our withdrawal times from being perfect? If they are, what should our response be?

## Chapter 6 of *Reaching Heaven*

### Am I Making an Impact?

1. What are some times when Christians might need some reassurance or encouragement?
2. What conditions made Jesus wonder if anyone was catching on to who He was? (page 65)
3. Why was this need for recognition such a *crucial* concern? (pages 64-65)
4. Instead of demanding recognition, what did Jesus do? (page 65)
5. Where did Jesus go to pray? (page 65)
6. How was this prayer withdrawal experience different from His usual practice? (page 65)
7. What are some possible reasons why Jesus took the disciples with Him to pray? (pages 66-67)
8. How can you be alone, but not alone when praying?
9. What are some occasions on which we might want others with us when we pray?
10. After Jesus prayed, He asked the disciples questions. What was the first question He asked them? (page 67)
11. What answers did they give? (page 67)
12. What was the second question Jesus asked the disciples? (page 67)
13. What was Simon Peter's answer? (page 68)

14. How did Jesus feel about Peter's answer? (page 68)
15. In His exultation, what promises did Peter make to Jesus? (page 68)
16. Was God's answer to Jesus' prayer for reassurance a direct or indirect answer? (page 69)
17. Does Jesus' praying in the presence of others negate the value we have noted about praying alone? (page 70)
18. What can happen to our prayer life if we pray the same way in the same circumstances all the time? (page 70)
19. How was God's answer for who the Twelve apostles were to be (see chapter 4) *not* a perfect answer to prayer? (page 71)
20. How was God's answer of reassurance through Peter *not* a perfect answer? (page 71)
21. What kind of answers did God *always* give Jesus? (page 71)
22. How was the choice of the apostles a sufficient answer to prayer? (page 71)
23. How was Peter's confession a sufficient answer for Jesus' need of reassurance? (page 71)
24. What is the difference between a perfect answer to prayer and a sufficient answer?
25. How can this concept of God always answering sufficiently be reassuring to us as we pray? (pages 71,73)
26. God gave Jesus questions to ask to receive an answer to prayer. What kind of tools might God give us to help us experience answers to prayer?

## Chapter 7 of *Reaching Heaven*

### When You Are Discouraged

1. After Peter declared “Thou art the Christ,” what did Jesus begin to do? (page 75)
2. What four plain, matter-of-fact statements did Jesus begin revealing? (page 75)
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
3. In reaction to the idea that Jesus might suffer and die, what did Peter say to Him? (page 76)
4. What was Jesus’ reply to Peter? (page 76)
5. What are three possible reasons why Jesus might have made such a stinging rebuke to Peter? (pages 76-77)
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
6. As Jesus continued to prepare the disciples for the future, what did He say true *followship* meant? (page 77)
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
7. What is your response to what Jesus defined as true *followship*? If you were Peter or one of the other apostles, would you have embraced what Jesus said?
8. About a week after Jesus began His hard, clear teaching, what action did He take? (page 77)

9. Where did He go to pray? (page 77)
10. Who did He take with Him? (page 77)
11. What are three possible reasons why He took Peter, James and John with Him to the mountaintop to pray? (page 77-78)
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
12. What do Peter, James and John do that gives the impression they weren't anticipating anything unusual from this prayer time? (page 78)
13. While Jesus was praying, what happened to His physical appearance? (pages 78-79)
14. What two Old Testament characters appeared to Jesus and talked with Him? (page 79)
15. How did their appearance encourage Jesus? (page 79)
16. While the three were talking, what appeared and covered them with its shadow? (page 79)
17. Who spoke from the cloud and what did He say? (page 79)
18. How did God's audible words help Jesus? (page 79)
19. How did God's words help Peter, James and John? (page 80)
20. What are some times when like Jesus, Peter, James and John we may need a glimpse of glory? (pages 81-82)
21. How large does a glimpse of glory have to be to be encouraging? (pages 82-83)
22. If the glimpse is unusual or spectacular, what might we be tempted to do? (pages 83-84)
23. What assumption might we make after experiencing relief from glimpse of glory? (p. 84)

## Chapter 8 of *Reaching Heaven*

### Recognizing the Ultimate Source

1. What would your friends or family members associate with your praying? Callused knees? Eloquent words? Your conversational style? A certain tone of voice? A certain phrase you use?
  
2. Some of Jesus' disciples associated Him with praying hands and a grateful heart. In fact, it was this association that helped them solve a mystery. What was the mystery? (pages 90-91)
  
3. What were some specific times when Jesus expressed thanksgiving? (pages 91-92)
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
  
4. What was there about Jesus' prayers of thanksgiving that might tempt us to view them as only expected rituals? (pages 93-94)
  
5. Did Jesus pray before every miracle he performed? (page 93)
  
6. When Jesus took the loaves and the fish in His hands and gave thanks, what was He recognizing about God? (page 94)
  
7. When He held the children and blessed them, what was He acknowledging? (page 94)
  
8. When Jesus thanked God for the bread and the wine at the last supper, what was He recognizing? (page 94)
  
9. When he prayed the night before His death (something we'll study in chapters 16 and 17), who did He say gave Him the disciples? (page 94)
  
10. As He ascended into heaven, voicing His final earthly prayer, whom did He bless? (page 94)



11. What or who did Jesus consider to be the Ultimate Source? (page 94)
12. What will we experience if we relate every person, object and event to its Ultimate Source? (pages 95-96)
  - 1.
  - 2.
13. What are some life situations that may keep us from being consciously aware of God's presence? (page 95)
14. What happens to our sense of God's *presence* when we relate every person, thing and event to Him? (page 95)
15. What changes may occur when we have a heightened sense of God's *power*? (pages 95-96)
16. What are some initiatives we can take to develop a grateful heart? (pages 96-98)
  1. (page 96)
  2. (pages 96-97)
  3. (page 97)
  4. (page 98)
17. Does relating every experience to God mean we won't have requests and petitions? (page 97)
18. What can we learn from children that will enrich our prayer life? (page 98).
19. Does thanksgiving come naturally or does it require effort?
20. Is giving thanks dependent on *feeling* thankful?
21. What is God's response to ritual prayers? Does He hear and answer them?

## Chapter 9 of *Reaching Heaven*

### Thanks in Advance

1. Usually we think of giving thanks *after* God has blessed us, but in three incidents, Jesus thanked God *before* the fact of God's blessing. What were those three incidents?

Pages 101-102

Page 103

Page 104

2. How did the *disciples* respond to the hunger needs of over five thousand people? (page 102)

3. How did *Jesus* respond to their needs? (page 102)

4. What prompted a second crowd of over 4000 to gather and to linger around Jesus? (page 103)

5. How did the disciples react to Jesus' desire to feed this crowd? (page 103)

6. Why were Martha and Mary upset with Jesus? (page 104)

7. For what did Jesus give thanks at the tomb of Lazarus? (page 104)

8. Why did the disciples see the feeding of the five thousand and four thousand as impossible? (pages 104-105)

9. How did Jesus' view contrast with that of the disciples'? (page 105)

10. What did Jesus *do* that showed He believed God was going to feed the crowds? (page 105)

11. What kept Martha and Mary from believing the impossible concerning Lazarus? (page 105)

12. How confident was Jesus that God was going to bring Lazarus back to life? (pages 105-106)

13. Why might we be tempted to find no applicability to our prayer life from the feeding of the five thousand, the four thousand and the raising of Lazarus? (page 106)

14. If we view a situation as hopeless, what negative emotions might this stir up? (page 107)
15. If we see a situation as barren of possibilities, what does this say about our view of God? (pages 107-108)
16. When kinds of situations might look as impossible to us as the feeding of the crowds did to the disciples?
17. What did Jesus tell the disciples to do when they didn't see any resources for feeding the crowds? (page 108)
18. What is one thing we can do to see some "loaves and fish" in the midst of what looks like an impossible situation? (page 108)
19. How will recognizing resources affect our hope and faith? (pages 108-109)

**Note to reader: Two errors are in chapter 9 of *Reaching Heaven*.**

One is at the top of page 106 where it says "involved in Jesus' resurrection." This should be "involved in Lazarus' resurrection."

The other error is near the bottom of page 109. The first sentence of the last paragraph ("Give thanks for the items on your resource list") should be italicized so it corresponds with other paragraph headings in the section, "Faith for the Future."

20. Besides seeing available resources, what are four other ways we can strengthen our faith so we can thank God in advance? (pages 109-110)
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
21. If an answer to prayer doesn't readily appear does that mean our faith wasn't sufficient? (page 109, Daniel 10:12)
22. What actions did Jesus take that showed He believed God was going to respond to his prayers? (page 110)

## Chapter 10 of *Reaching Heaven*

### The Trusting Side of Thanks

1. When opposition was keen during Jesus' third year of ministry, Jesus picked seventy men (some Bibles say 72) to go ahead of Him to Judean villages and towns. What instructions did He give these men? (page 115)
2. How were the men to respond if they were not welcomed by the people in the towns they visited? (page 115)
3. What towns were going to be punished severely for rejecting Jesus? (page 115)
4. As people listened to the seventy, who were they also listening to? (Luke 10:16, page 115)
5. What about Jesus' instructions and words might have caused the seventy not to have high expectations for their mission? (page 115)
6. Regardless of their expectations, what happened when the seventy followed Jesus' instructions? (page 115)
7. When they reported their triumphs to Jesus, what did He say? (page 115)
8. Was Satan fully and finally defeated at this time? (page 115)
9. What kind of occasion was this for Jesus? (pages 115-116)
10. In His elation, what prayer did Jesus pray (Luke 10:21)? (page 116)

11. How did Jesus react when the people of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum disregarded his works and didn't repent? (page 116)
12. What was the accent of Jesus' voice as He pronounced woes on the three cities? (page 117)
13. This time, when there was no joy or jubilation present, what did Jesus pray? (Matthew 11:25b-26a, page 117)
14. What dimension does Jesus' expression of gratitude when He was rejected add to the cornerstone of thanksgiving? (page 117)
15. What are some reasons why we might resist giving thanks when difficult things happen? (pages 118-119)
16. Is saying thanks without *feeling* grateful hypocritical or dishonest? (page 118)
17. Who else in the Bible taught the principle of giving thanks in all circumstances? (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, page 119)
18. What is the difference between saying thanks *for* a difficult situation and finding something *in* the situation to be thankful for? (pages 119-120)
19. When our situation is complex, how can we thankfully exercise trust? (page 119)
20. What are some possible results when we thankfully exercise our trust in a difficult situation? (pages 119-121)
21. As powerful a tool as giving thanks during difficult times is, why is it not a remedy that "works" every time for *all* difficulties? (pages 121-122)

## **Chapter 11 of *Reaching Heaven***

### **The Honesty of a Troubled Heart**

1. What is there about experiencing tension that makes it hard to pray?
2. What miracle had Jesus performed that increased the tension He had to deal with? (page 126)
3. What was the atmosphere like in Jerusalem? (page 126)
4. Why did people from Jerusalem rush to the home of Martha, Mary and Lazarus? (page 126)
5. Who else did the chief priests want to have dead besides Jesus? (page 126)
6. On Sunday when Jesus entered Jerusalem, how did people receive Him? (page 126)
7. Why did Jesus weep over Jerusalem? (page 127)
8. Who was watching Jesus when He healed needy people, the blind and the lame at the temple? (page 127)
9. On Monday, when Jesus returned to the temple, what outrageous act did He do? (page 127)
10. What was the reaction of the chief priests, the scribes and other leaders to Jesus' driving out the merchants and customers? (page 127)
11. Who told Jesus' disciples, Philip and Andrew, that they wanted to see Jesus? (page 127)
12. What did the request of the Greeks signal to Jesus? (page 127)
13. What was Jesus' "hour?" (pages 127-128)
14. What did the reality of His death, the hostility of His enemies, the pull of needy people and the frustration of being misunderstood produce in Jesus? (page 128)

15. How did Jesus handle His troubled heart? (page 128)
16. Where did Jesus pray when His heart was troubled and tension wrapped itself around Him? (page 128)
17. How does this prayer experience compare with previous ones? (page 128)
18. What honest admission did Jesus make in this prayer? (pages 128-129)
19. What were two sides of the tension Jesus was experiencing? (page 129)
20. What was Jesus' basic desire? (page 129)
21. What happened immediately after Jesus prayed? (page 129)
22. What did the voice from heaven say? (page 129)
23. Who heard the voice from heaven? (page 129)
24. Whom did Jesus say the voice was for? (page 130)
25. How did the relief Jesus experienced help Him? (page 130)
26. What came between the tension and the triumph? (page 130)
27. What does honest praying do? (page 132)
28. The third cornerstone of Jesus' prayer life is honesty. Why do we need to consider this cornerstone? Aren't all prayers honest prayers?
29. How will knowing Jesus experienced mental and emotional strain help us?

## Chapter 12 of *Reaching Heaven*

### The Cup of Suffering

1. Does the return of a struggle--one that we have already prayed about and received an answer for—mean that prayer was ineffective? (pages 135-137)
2. What task was Jesus given to complete? (page 137)
3. What time element was attached to Jesus' mission? (pages 137-138)
4. How did Jesus' struggle intensify as the cross got closer? (pages 137-138)
5. Why did Jesus resist death? (pages 137-138)
6. While Jesus' stress level changed on Monday, what did not change? (page 138)
7. On Thursday night, where did Jesus go to deal with the stress? (page 138)
8. Who went with Jesus to the Mount of Olives? (page 138)
9. Why did Jesus take the apostles with Him? (page 138)
10. What disciples did Jesus take with Him deeper into the garden? (page 139)
11. As they went deeper into the garden, how did Jesus' emotions change? (page 139)
12. What did Jesus say about His feelings to Peter, James and John? (page 139)
13. What are three possible explanations for Jesus' new level of sorrow? (pages 139-141)
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.



14. What might have kept Jesus from expressing His intense emotions earlier? (page 139)
15. Was Jesus' battle with temptation harder or easier because He was sinless? (page 140)
16. For what did Jesus ask God in the Garden of Gethsemane? (page 141)
17. What escape routes were available to Jesus? (page 141)
18. What made Jesus' struggle so complex? (page 141)
19. How do we know that Jesus' praying in Gethsemane was not short, pithy praying? (page 142)
20. About what did Jesus caution the sleeping disciples? (page 142)
21. Why did an angel appear to Jesus? (page 142)
22. How was Jesus' praying like an athletic contest? (page 142)
23. What physical phenomenon occurred that shows the intensity of Jesus' struggle? (page 142)
24. How did Jesus speak to God during this time of emotional struggle? (pages 142-143)
25. What does Jesus' emotional honesty encourage us to do? (page 143)
26. What is one reason we need to express our emotions in prayer? (page 143)
27. What change is evident in Jesus after His praying in Gethsemane? (pages 143-144)

## Chapter 13 of *Reaching Heaven*

### The Cry of Utter Loneliness

1. Who mocked and jeered Jesus as He hung on the cross? (pages 145-146)
2. What caused the mocking and jeering to cease? (page 146)
3. How long did Jesus hang on the cross in darkness? (page 146)
4. As the agonies of the crucifixion deepened, what did Jesus cry out? (page 146)
5. Why does this prayer puzzle us? (page 146)
6. How does this prayer contrast with His other prayers? (page 146)
7. What factors may explain why this prayer experience was unlike the others? (pages 147-149)
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
8. What did Jesus experience on the cross that He had not experienced before? (page 147)
9. What compounded Jesus' suffering as bearer of the sins of the world? (pages 147-148)
10. Who came to Jesus' mind as He was being ridiculed? (page 148)
11. What is the most acute kind of loneliness? (page 148)
12. What exacerbated the awful loneliness Jesus was experiencing? (pages 148-149)
13. Why did crucifixion cause the victim to experience excruciating pain? (pages 148-149)

14. Why did the Roman soldiers ask Simon of Cyrene to carry Jesus' cross? (pages 148-149)

15. When Jesus felt forsaken by God, whose words did He use to cry out? (page 149) What were those words?

16. What events around the cross show that God didn't forsake Jesus? (pages 150-151)

1.

2.

3.

4.

17. How is Jesus' cry of abandonment both awful and comforting?

18. What victorious shout did Jesus give that shows God strengthened Him and enabled Him to endure the cross? (page 151)

19. What prayer did Jesus pray that shows fellowship between He and the Father had been restored? (page 151)

20. What should the fact that God did not forsake Jesus do for us? (page 151)

21. Do you think less of Jesus or more of Jesus because of His honest prayer from the cross?

22. What does Jesus' honest prayer from the cross encourage us to do when we are baffled by what we are experiencing? (page 152)

23. What will honest praying do? (page 152)

24. What changed for Terrell, Myra, and Rodgers when they honestly prayed? (pages 152-153)

25. Even in the midst of doing right, we can feel forsaken, but does this mean we are forsaken?

## Chapter 14 of *Reaching Heaven*

### The Cost of Intercession

1. What is intercessory prayer?
2. What do you do when you want someone to pray for you?
3. When Jesus was in Perea and Martha and Mary were back in Judea, what message did He receive from them? (page 160)
4. What request did this message imply? (page 160)
5. Why did Jesus say that Lazarus' sickness had happened? (page 160)
6. When Jesus talked of being glorified, what did He often mean? (pages 160-161)
7. Why were the disciples incredulous when Jesus said, "Let us go back to Judea?" (page 161)
8. With what proverb did Jesus respond to the disciples? (page 162)
9. If Jesus' mission was thought of as a whole day, how much time did He have left? (page 162)
10. What did Thomas think would happen to Jesus if He returned to Bethany? (page 162)
11. At Lazarus' tomb, what did Jesus pray? (page 162)
12. What did Jesus call out to Lazarus? (page 162)
13. What two kinds of reactions occurred as a result of this miracle? (page 162)
  - 1.
  - 2.

14. What fear did the members of the Sanhedrin have? (page 162)
  
15. What did Caiaphas, the high priest, suggest they do? (page 163)
  
16. What did praying for Lazarus cost Jesus? (page 163)
  
17. What are some costs we may incur when we pray for others? (pages 163-166)
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  
18. Why does praying for others take time? (page 163)
  
19. Why might “needing time to pray” explain Jesus’ delay in returning to Bethany? (pages 163-164)
  
20. Why is “wrestling” an apt description of intercessory prayer? (page 164)
  
21. How could praying for someone involve an emotional cost? (pages 165-166)
  
22. What are some times when Jesus’ emotions were touched by the needs of others? (page 165)
  
23. If intercession costs time, effort and emotion, then why do it? (pages 166-167)
  
24. What can we expect intercessory prayer to do for *our* faith?
  
25. What can we expect intercessory prayer to do for the faith of others?

## **Chapter 15 of *Reaching Heaven***

### **The Power of Intercession**

1. What qualifications does a person need to have to be a powerful intercessor?
2. How could you tell when someone you know is about to experience Satan's violent shaking?
3. Who was incredulous about Jesus washing the disciples' feet at the Passover meal? (page 172)
4. What wrenching statement did Jesus say to the apostles? (page 172)
5. When Jesus said someone was going to betray Him, what did the apostles wonder? (page 172)
6. How did Jesus identify the betrayer? (page 172)
7. What did Jesus say to Simon Peter? (page 172)
8. What picture did Jesus use to describe Satan's sifting? (page 172)
9. Who in particular would be shaken by the upcoming events? (page 172)
10. What assurance did Jesus offer Simon Peter? (page 173)
11. Why was Peter singled out for prayer? Wasn't Jesus concerned about all the disciples? (page 173)
12. What two words indicate Simon Peter was not going to be defeated by Satan? (page 174)
13. Why would Peter be able to become a strong leader? (page 174)
14. What were some things Peter did that showed he emerged as a strong leader? (page 174)

15. What can happen when a person with intense and vivid faith prays for another person? (page 175)
16. What great statement of commitment did Peter make to Jesus? (page 177)
17. Instead of a commendation, what did Peter hear from Jesus? (page 177)
18. Did Jesus' prediction about Peter come true? (page 177)
19. What might Peter's denial indicate about Jesus' prayer? (page 177)
20. Why do some insist that Jesus' prayer for Peter was not answered? (pages 177-178)
21. Why do others insist that it was an answered prayer? (page 178)
22. What is the realistic way of looking at the answer to Jesus' prayer? (page 178)
23. Why was Jesus so confident that Peter's faith would not fail? (page 178)
24. What verbal confidence did Jesus express to Peter? (page 178)
25. What does "turn back" mean? (page 178)
26. What did Jesus see as Peter's purpose after he turned back? (page 178)
27. Why would Peter's "brothers" need help in the days ahead? (pages 178-179)
28. The long view shows us Jesus' prayer for Peter was answered. How can this insight help us in our praying? (page 179)
29. How can an answer to prayer be a process? (page 179)
30. What paradox must we face honestly to be faithful and effective intercessors? (page 179)

## Chapter 16 of *Reaching Heaven*

### Interceding with Love

1. What concerns might a parent have when a child leaves home to make his way in the world?
2. What concerns might Jesus have had for His disciples as He was preparing for His departure?
3. During the Feast of Unleavened Bread, what two symbols did Jesus encourage His followers to use to remember Him after He was gone? (page 182)
4. How did the disciples and Jesus differ in their awareness of what was happening? (page 182)
5. What was the emotional state of the disciples? (page 182)
6. What responsibility would be theirs after Jesus' death? (pages 182-183)
7. Aware of how the eleven disciples were feeling and yet conscious of what else they needed to know, what were some things Jesus taught them? (page 183)
8. What did Jesus choose to do when He sensed the time for words must finally end? (page 183)
9. In His prayer of commitment, who did Jesus pray for first? (page 183)
10. Why is praying for ourselves a good place for intercessors to begin? (page 183)
11. How did Jesus refer to the disciples in His prayer? (page 184)
12. As Jesus prayed for them, for what four main things did He ask? (pages 184-185)
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.



13. Why was His request for unity so important? (pages 184-185)
  
14. Why did Jesus want them to have joy? (page 185)
  
15. Why didn't Jesus ask God to take the disciples out of the world to protect them from Satan? (page 185)
  
16. Through what did Jesus want the disciples to be consecrated? (page 185)
  
17. How might we take the four things Jesus prayed for His disciples and turn them into similar requests for those we are praying for? Or were those requests only applicable for the disciples?
  
18. How sure was Jesus that God would answer His requests for the disciples to have unity, joy, protection, and consecration? (page 185)
  
19. How does Jesus' manner of praying show confidence in God? (page 186)
  
20. What do Jesus' words reveal about His relationship with God? (page 186)
  
21. Was God the only one who heard Jesus' prayer for His disciples? (page 186)
  
22. How does the ministry of intercession widen by letting others hear us pray? (page 187)
  
23. What are some phrases Jesus used to describe the confidence He had in the disciples? (page 188)
  
24. Why was Jesus' confidence in the disciples remarkable? (pages 188-189)
  
25. Through what kind of eyes was Jesus seeing the disciples? (page 189)
  
26. Does confidence or lack of confidence in people affect our praying or is praying solely about confidence in God?

## **Chapter 17 of *Reaching Heaven***

### **Perpetual Intercession**

1. At what times in your life, do you wish someone was praying for you?
2. Besides the eleven disciples, who else did Jesus pray for before His death? (page 192)
3. For what did Jesus ask for future believers? (page 192)
4. Why did Jesus pray that future believers would be one? (page 192)
5. How can unity help with getting across the messages that God sent Jesus and that God loves men and women? (pages 192-193)
6. What horizontal connection does unity among Christians require? (page 193)
7. What is the model for unity for believers? (page 193)
8. What does being united like the Father and the Son mean? Does it mean everyone is alike and always agrees? (page 193)
9. What is the vertical connection that unity among Christians requires? (pages 193-194)
10. How long did Jesus want this vertical link to continue? What did He want to believers to see? (page 194)
11. When did Jesus stop praying for believers? (page 194)
12. What role does Jesus have now at the right hand of God? (page 194)
13. What New Testament book gives the best picture of Jesus' role as High Priest? (pages 194-195)

14. To whom was this New Testament book written and why? (pages 194-195)
15. What are some reasons why we might be tempted to decline spiritually? (page 195)
16. What does the picture of Jesus being our High Priest do for you? It is a help or a hindrance?
17. What are four things we can do to increase our awareness that Jesus prays for us? (page 195)
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
18. What will increasing our awareness of Jesus' High Priestly role do for us? (page 196)
19. What does "perpetual" intercession mean? (page 196)
20. Why might "what Jesus petitioned for on behalf of others" be a challenge to our praying? (pages 196-197)
21. Who are some people we may need to pray for on a long-term, on-going basis? (pages 197-198)
22. Was Jesus' prayer for unity for believers answered or unanswered? (pages 198-200)
23. What were some incidents in the early church that might have caused disunity and kept the early believers from developing into a distinctively Christian group? (page 199)
24. How can "not knowing whether Jesus' prayer was answered or not answered" be an encouragement to a pray-er? (pages 199-200)
25. What difference can the knowledge that Jesus is praying for us make in our ability to be faithful Christians?

## Chapter 18 of *Reaching Heaven*

### Magnanimous Intercession

1. What is the natural response when someone wrongs us, insults us or hurts us? (page 203)
2. Who arrived at the Garden of Gethsemane as Jesus finished praying for His present and future disciples? (page 202)
3. What was the crowd intent on doing? (page 202)
4. Who led the group? (page 202)
5. What signal of recognition had Judas arranged with those intent on finding Jesus? (page 202)
6. How did the Sanhedrin, the governing body of the Jews, ignore their own judicial standards as they tried Jesus? (page 202)
7. After finding Jesus guilty, whom did the Sanhedrin have to send Jesus to in order to legally bring about His death? (page 202)
8. How did Pilate avoid trying to make a decision about Jesus? (page 202)
9. Who tormented Jesus during His appearances before both Pilate and Herod Antipas? (page 202)
10. Even though convinced of Jesus' innocence, what did Pilate do to try to please the Jews? (page 202)
11. After Pilate sentenced Jesus to death, what did the executioners do? (page 202)
12. How did Jesus respond to His unjust treatment and to the executioners? (pages 202-203) Was this a natural or unnatural response?
13. How was Jesus' response different from the way other crucifixion victims responded? (page 203)
14. What were the words of Jesus' intercession for His enemies? (page 203)

15. Why does it seem that Jesus' enemies knew exactly what they were doing? (page 203)
  
16. What does magnanimity mean? (page 204)
  
17. How was Jesus' prayer for His enemies a magnanimous response? (page 204)
  
18. What can we learn from Jesus' prayer that will help us become magnanimous intercessors? (pages 205-208)
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
  
19. What are some words we can pray for those who have hurt us when we don't feel like praying? (page 205)
  
20. When we pray for our enemies, does this mean they won't be held accountable for their actions? (page 206)
  
21. According to many Bible scholars, when was Jerusalem punished for putting Jesus to death? (page 206)
  
22. What is one possible reason why Jesus suggested confrontation when forgiveness is needed (Matthew 18:15; Luke 17:3)? (page 207)
  
23. Who may receive the greatest benefit from your prayers for your enemies? (page 208)
  
24. How will *not* praying for those who wrong us hamper God's ability to bless us? (page 209)
  
25. What will forgiving those who wrong us reveal to us about God? (page 209)
  
26. What did Jesus say we would become if we pray for our enemies (Matthew 5:45a)? (page 209)
  
27. How can Jesus' example help us to forgive when it seems humanly impossible?