



TERM 3 2020

EVANGELISTIC
PRAYER
TEAM
BOOKLET



**CITY BIBLE
FORUM+**
Ask the bigger questions



EVANGELISTIC PRAYER TEAM

Vision: to reach the world through the work place with the good news about Jesus

Aim: 1000 people across Australia meeting Jesus in the pages of the Bible

EPTs seek to gather Christian workers across our cities to **encourage** one another in our **CONVICTION**, **CHARACTER**, **COMPETENCE**, and **COURAGE** so we all can share Jesus with our colleagues and to **pray** for each other that God may work in their lives to see Jesus known.

Remember as you pray:

Coffee



Dinner



Gospel





Take the next relational step

Coffee



Shared a personal conversation
Know I'm Christian
Spent social time together

Dinner



I understand their worldview
Shared Bible worldview

Gospel



Clear presentation of gospel
Reading Bible
Become Christian
Joined a good church



REACH THE WORLD



REACH THE WORLD

WHAT'S INSIDE

This study explores why we seek to reach the world through the workplace with the good news of Jesus by prayerfully seeking to help people meet Jesus in the pages of the Bible.

HOW TO USE THESE STUDIES



These EPT studies are short modules to help workers think more deeply about different areas of your workplace witness. They are designed to be used in Evangelistic Prayer Teams (EPTs), but can also be used in any small group setting.

Scripture quotations taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version® NIV®
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REACH THE WORLD THROUGH THE WORKPLACE

How would you reach our world with the good news about Jesus?

BIG IDEA

As we endeavour to reach the world through the workplace with the good news of Jesus, we aim to do this by prayerfully seeking to see 1000 people across Australia meeting Jesus in the pages of the Bible.



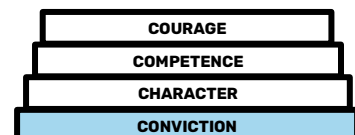
From the Bible

How do we come to a saving faith?

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes... **Romans 1:16**

...faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ. **Romans 10:17**

But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour, ⁷so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. **Titus 3:4-7**



Key Truths

There are many ways that we could reach the world through the workplace, so why do we seek to do so through reading the Bible one-to-one or in small groups? There are 3 reasons:

1. Theological

We know that God works to build his kingdom, by his life-saving word, through his life-giving Spirit. While God may speak in many different ways, we know he has spoken once for all in his Son, Jesus Christ, the Word of God. We have access to Jesus as we read the Bible and God's Spirit enlightens our minds and hearts to the call of the Gospel.

2. Culturally

As Baby Boomers retire, gone is the age where workers trust clergy or theological experts for matters of spiritual importance. Gen X and Y tend to look to practitioners and peers (respectively) for spiritual matters¹. They want to see that the Christian life works, and they prefer to listen to people they trust, rather than experts they no longer regard. Additionally, fewer people have read the Bible or are familiar with biblical concepts; people are starting further back than ever before – they don't necessarily know what they don't know about God.

3. Relationally

We have been thinking about our relationships in terms of the Coffee – Dinner – Gospel. Some people have a surface level relationship with us (Coffee), some people we're getting to know more personally (Dinner), and others we know at a very deep level – talking about the very things of God (Gospel). Relationally, inviting someone to read the Bible with us is a bit like asking someone out on a first date, whereas inviting someone to church is the relational equivalent of inviting that same person to meet the extended family at a reunion on the weekend!

Consider Rico Tice's words:

The days when you could go from zero to the gospel in a single conversation are not the norm—keep praying for it, but don't be discouraged by it not happening. [...] Research suggests that when people put their faith in Christ, on average it's taken two years from the point

¹ mccrindle.com.au/insights/blog/generation-next-meet-gen-z-alphas/

when they came into meaningful contact with a Christian who witnessed to them—and that time period is growing. Witnessing is a long-term commitment to invest in a relationship, to pray tirelessly, and to speak the gospel over and over again, patiently and persistently. It is a journey of gospel conversations. It really does take effort.

And

It's harder and harder to take people to hear the Bible taught; you need to take the Bible to them. People who would never consider stepping into a church will feel far less threatened reading and talking about the Bible with a friend.

Honest Evangelism, 2015, p87-88

Thoughts? Questions?



Application

Increasingly, instead of trying to find that knock-out argument, the perfect event, or amazing book to recommend, we're aiming to invite our colleagues to meet Jesus as they read a Gospel for themselves with us. We're finding that increasingly people aren't prepared to consider the bigger questions of life upfront. Instead, after reading the Bible for some time, that's when the questions start flowing and the gospel starts to make more sense. Who could you invite to read a Gospel with you?



Prayer

Take some time to write down three names of people you would like to invite to read through a Gospel with you – perhaps you could put them into an app like PrayerMate or the EPT app.

Share and pray for opportunities to read the Bible with those people.

Remember as you pray:



Coffee



Dinner



Gospel



TOGETHER IN PRAYER



TOGETHER IN PRAYER

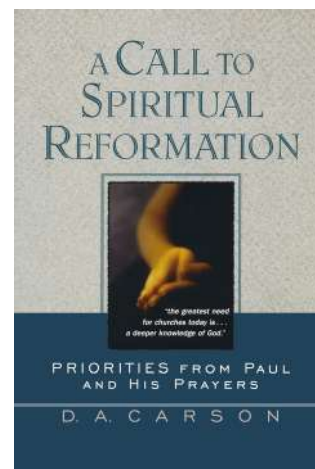


WHAT'S INSIDE

These studies examine the role of prayer in workplace evangelism.

Many of these studies are deliberately shorter than normal to allow for more time to pray.

Studies 6-9 are somewhat based upon a chapter in Don Carson's book, *A Call to Spiritual Reformation*, which is a fantastic examination of Paul's prayers. It is definitely recommended reading.



HOW TO USE THESE STUDIES



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HEART'S DESIRE FOR THE LOST

1

What gets you up in the morning? What is your heart's desire?

BIG IDEA

Paul's heart's desire and prayer is the salvation of his fellow Israelites.



From the Bible

What is Paul's heart's desire?

I speak the truth in Christ—I am not lying, my conscience confirms it through the Holy Spirit—² I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.³ For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my people, those of my own race,⁴ the people of Israel. **Romans 9:1-4a**

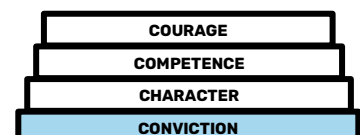
Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved.² For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. **Romans 10:1-2**



Key Truths

1. Look at Paul's language – heart's desire and prayer. How regularly do you think Paul prayed for the lost?
2. The Jews are zealous for God, but they are ignorant of God – a tragedy that sees them miss God's righteousness and try to make their own.
3. Paul feels the Jews are so close and yet so far – so he prays that God would save them.

Thoughts? Questions?





Application

How do you feel about your colleagues not being saved?

What would it look like for the “lost” to be your heart’s desire?



Prayer

Pray for a true heart’s desire for the lost.

Where are you up to in your relationships with your colleagues?

What’s the next step?

Pray for that next step for your colleagues meeting Jesus.

Remember as you pray:



Coffee



Dinner



Gospel

THE FRAGRANCE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS

2

Fragrance is such a personal thing. What smells great to me might smell repugnant to others – Durian anyone? What smell do you like that others hate?

BIG IDEA

Paul is thankful that God parades him before the world – as a welcome aroma to God; the pungent whiff of death to some, and the potent fragrance of life to others.

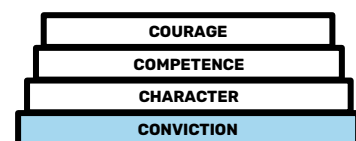


From the Bible

What does it mean to be led as a captive in Christ's triumphal procession?

But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ's triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere. ¹⁵ For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. ¹⁶ To the one we are an aroma that brings death; to the other, an aroma that brings life. And who is equal to such a task?

2 Corinthians 2:14-16



Key Truths

1. Paul and his team are led by God in triumphal procession – it's ambiguous whether Paul means as conquering troops or conquered army (either could fit).
2. God uses Paul and his team to see the fragrance of the knowledge of Jesus spread everywhere.
3. The aroma of Christ is the fragrance of life to those being saved, and the stench of death to those perishing. How do you see this mixed response to the gospel in your workplace?

Thoughts? Questions?

Application

Whether the stench of death or the fragrance of life, Paul's response is thankfulness. How do you respond when you're the stench of death?

How does this change our prayers?

Prayer

Share together about the next step with your colleagues meeting Jesus.

Pray for that next step for your colleagues.

Remember as you pray:



Coffee



Dinner



Gospel

STRIVE IN PRAYER TOGETHER

3

Strive! It's the kind of word you see in lots of vision statements – but not one we use regularly in everyday life. What does the word strive evoke for you?

BIG IDEA

Our EPTs are a time to join together to strive in prayer, and to refresh one another for God's service.



From the Bible

What does Paul ask of his brothers and sisters?

Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, through our Lord Jesus Christ and through the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in prayers to God on my behalf. ³¹Pray that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea, that my ministry to^[a] Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, ³²and that, by God's will, I may come to you with joy and be refreshed together with you.

³³May the God of peace be with all of you. Amen.

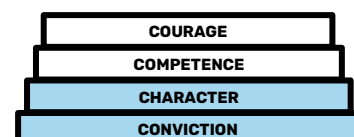
Romans 15:30-33



Key Truths

1. Prayer is a worthy encounter. It takes effort.
2. Prayer is a group activity. It links us in gospel partnership. We partner with fellow Christians across the globe as we strive together in prayer to God.
3. Paul prays for deliverance from unbelievers, for acceptable service to the saints, and for the way to be clear for him to be with the Roman Christians – so he may be refreshed in their company.

Thoughts? Questions?





Application

Our time together in EPTs can be one of joy and refreshing as we strive together in prayer.



Prayer

Thank God for our time together – for this team that can strive together in prayer.

Pray for that next step for your colleagues meeting Jesus.

Remember as you pray:



Coffee



Dinner



Gospel

Devoted! It's more than being a fan. It's a commitment. What are people at your workplace devoted to?

BIG IDEA

Prayer is a commitment – it requires attentiveness and thankfulness. Pray for each other – for open doors and clarity for the message of Jesus.

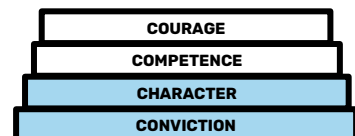


From the Bible

What is the posture of prayer for the Christian?

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. ³And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. ⁴Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. ⁵Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. ⁶Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Colossians 4:2-6



Key Truths

1. Paul wants the Colossian Christians to devote themselves to prayer – not only as individuals, but as a team.
2. Prayer happens with watchfulness and thankfulness. We need to keep up with what God is doing and remember all things come from God – our prayer needs to be soaked in thankfulness.

Thoughts? Questions?

Prayer

Pray for one another – for an open door to speak a clear message about Jesus when the opportunity arises.

Remember as you pray:



Coffee



Dinner



Gospel

Our culture isn't always comfortable with the concept of a spiritual world behind our physical realm. Why do you think that is the case?

**BIG
IDEA**

In our spiritual battle, our prayers for each other should be for the preaching of the gospel.



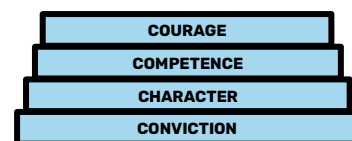
From the Bible

How does our spiritual battle shape our prayer life?

...our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Ephesians 6:12, 18-20



Key Truths

1. The danger of spiritual evil for Paul is that he would shrink away in fear from declaring the good news about Jesus.
2. So, in light of his battle against the evil spiritual world, Paul asks for prayer. He asks for prayer that he would fearlessly preach the gospel.
3. Praying for each other is how we respond to the threat of evil.

Thoughts? Questions?

Application

The temptation in our spiritual battle with evil is that we become reluctant to declare the gospel of Jesus – or even to be known as a Christian. How have you experienced that reluctance in your life?

How can we fight our spiritual battle and keep preaching Jesus?

Prayer

Pray for one another, to boldly identify with Jesus and declare the good news of trusting in him.

Pray for the next step for your colleagues.

Remember as you pray:



Coffee



Dinner



Gospel

When was the last time you were able to just spend time listening to God in his word, meditating upon it, and praying?



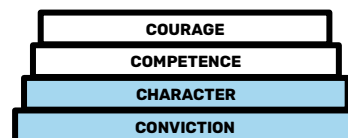
From the Bible

What has Martha chosen? What has Mary chosen?

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. ³⁹She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. ⁴⁰But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

⁴¹"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, ⁴²but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

Luke 10:38-42



We are no longer a contemplative culture. When we're not rushing about, we've got some form of screen in front of our face. We rarely take time to listen to God in his word, to think, or to pray. Martha has Jesus in her home, and instead of listening to him like Mary did, she was too busy.

Our busyness can push listening to God and prayer to the fringes of our lives – or worse eliminate it altogether!

In *A Call to Spiritual Reformation*, Don Carson comments:

if you are too busy to pray, you are too busy. Cut something out.

Prayer

If you have been too busy for God, pray for forgiveness.

Pray for opportunities to take the next step with your colleagues.

Remember as you pray:



Coffee



Dinner



Gospel

Remember a time when you felt energised to pray. What was happening then?

Sometimes prayer can be difficult because we just don't feel like it. God feels far from us, we feel fake. How can I pray if I feel so discouraged? But we make two mistakes when we think this way:

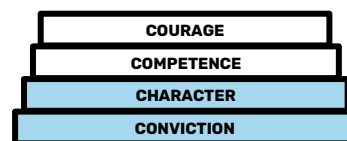
1. That my prayers are acceptable to God based on how I feel.
2. My obligation to pray is somehow tied to how I feel at the time.

**From the Bible**

If the unrighteous judge shows mercy, how will God act?

And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. ² He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. ³ And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, 'Give me justice against my adversary.' ⁴ For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, 'Though I neither fear God nor respect man, ⁵ yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.'" ⁶ And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge says. ⁷ And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? ⁸ I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

Luke 18:1-8



The parable of the persistent widow teaches us that even a corrupt judge will give in to persistent requests - and God is no corrupt judge. He loves to give to his children all they need.

Consider these words from Don Carson,

God insists that we learn not to hide behind our feelings of dryness, behind our chronic unbelief, behind our lapses into discouragement. He wants us to learn to trust him, to learn to persevere in prayer. In short, in prayer as in other areas of life, God wants us to trust and obey.

Don Carson, A Call to Spiritual Reformation



Prayer

Spend time considering what might be the next step with your colleagues to meet Jesus and pray.

Remember as you pray:



Coffee



Dinner



Gospel

TOO CONTENT WITH MEDIOCRITY TO PRAY?

8

Often as Christians we can get concerned with the quality of the preacher's sermon, the quality of the music in church, but not so much the quality of our own prayer life. We get content with mediocrity.



From the Bible

What do you think "all" means here?

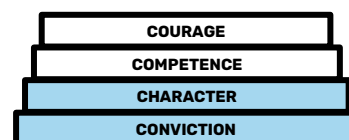
Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ⁵ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

These words form the core of the Shema – a daily prayer for Jewish people. The Shema was a daily reminder to God's people of their need for whole-hearted (and everything else) devotion to God. Why was it a daily reminder? Because our desires are so easily distracted and split. C.S. Lewis makes this assessment of our split desires:

It would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.

C.S. Lewis, The Weight of Glory



When we are too easily satisfied by the meagre things of this world, and do not seek the perfect gifts from God, it's no wonder our prayer life plummets.

Is your prayer life sagging? Maybe you have let other things crowd out your devotion to God?



Pray for a whole-hearted devotion to God.

Pray for an opportunity to take the next step with your colleagues.

Remember as you pray:



Coffee



Dinner



Gospel

When Adam and Eve realised they had sinned, they were ashamed and hid from God. Shame forces us to retreat from the presence of God.

But just as Adam and Eve couldn't hide behind some trees, we too cannot hide from God.

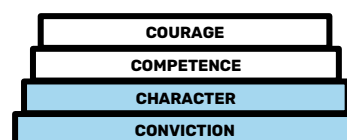


From the Bible

If God sees everything, what hope do we have in our shame?

Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.¹⁴ Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. **Hebrews 4:13-14**

Nothing is hidden from God – our secret sins are done before his eyes. BUT we also have Jesus our great high priest, who knows our weaknesses and intercedes on our behalf.



We need to realise, in our shame we are trying to hide from the only one who can forgive us and deal with our shame. Our shame should prompt us to pray, not drive us from prayer.

Prayer

Pray silently for forgiveness for the times you run from God.

Pray for an opportunity to speak of the forgiveness that is ours in Jesus.

Remember as you pray:



Coffee



Dinner



Gospel