



## Prayer Research:

### Team Evaluation, Discovery Bible Story Set, & Resources

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#### Introduction to FPS's Prayer Strategies Discovery Bible Studies Set:

Prayer—or engagement with God—is integral to every aspect of the lives of the team members and the corporate team, as well as to the strategy and approach they use. Within this document, you will find the following: a definition and explanation to the Prayer strategy, a set of questions to help you diagnosis the status of your team's use of this strategy, a Discovery Bible Story Set to help you understand Scripture's view on this strategy, and links for further resources related to this Prayer strategy. We recommend completing the team's diagnostic first then adapt the Discovery Story Set to meet your team's needs. Feel free to use the typical DBS questions, however, in addition we've tried to suggest you ask these much deeper questions to elicit specifics regarding this strategy. The Fellowship of Prayer Strategists have a set of nineteen different prayer strategies. These are not intended to be the complete picture of this strategy but a glimpse at the use for this strategy. You can find more strategies at [www.prayer-strategists.net](http://www.prayer-strategists.net). We hope these tools will prove helpful in considering ways you and your team can increase your capacity for extraordinary prayer for the sake of the King and His Kingdom.

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#### Prayer Research

**Definition:** Spirit-guided research into the supernatural underpinnings of reality to help produce more informed, effective intercession, ministry, and outreach.

**Explanation:** We are told to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength; as we engage with God, He invites us into partnership with Him. "It is the glory of God to conceal a matter and the glory of kings to search it out." The Bible informs us we are to be kings and priests unto our God. He invites us to engage with Him, to go deeper in seeking His wisdom so that our prayers are in line with His heart and His will in situations and for people. We know that when we pray according to His will, He hears us and He assures us that when He hears us, we have the requests that we have asked of Him. Numbers 13 sees God instructing Moses to send men to scout out the country of Canaan that He was about to give them. The New Testament sees Paul surveying the land of the Ephesians and using what he saw as the foundation of his apologetic. George Otis Jr. commented on the importance of informed intercession, "Specificity fuels fervency and fervency yields results." His thought came from James 5:16b, "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." As we pray specifically, we can pray with passion. Prayers ignited with passion move God's heart. Compare the difference in effect of a shotgun to a laser—the increase in focus dramatically increases the power released. Understanding why darkness lingers where it does throughout the world, and in particular in the area of the focus of our prayers, helps us to better address those hindrances and see breakthroughs. Preparing to engage with God on behalf of the sphere He has assigned to us demands that we see that sphere as He does. Prayer allows us to see through God's eyes to the spiritual realities that exist all around. We begin by lifting up our eyes to the harvest fields,

listening and watching what He will reveal. We look for the harvest force that is already engaged in that field and we look to understand the status of the harvest field itself. Ultimately, we want to ask God to show us that field when the work is finished—what will our sphere look like when God’s Kingdom fully comes?

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### Diagnostic Questions for You & Your Team:

1. Have you and your team spent time listening to God for His picture of what YOUR sphere looks like when the Kingdom of God has fully come among it?
2. Do you and your team have a systematic plan for seeking God and “lifting up your eyes” to truly see the state of the field God has assigned to you?
3. Are you recording what God is showing you and your prayer partners as to the state of the harvest force in your field? The state of the harvest field itself? The obstacles that exist to the flourishing of His Kingdom (the world, the flesh, the devil)?
4. Have you engaged in spiritual mapping (recording your insights on maps/calendars/timelines/journals) as you prayer walk to better understand the spiritual underpinnings of the area and people to which you are called? Have you been addressing those strongholds God has progressively revealed?
5. Are you seeking God to turn the obstacles into opportunities for the gospel? What strategies is God revealing and how well are you implementing them?

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### Discovery Bible Story Set:

#### 1. “Lift Up Your Eyes” - John 4:31-18

- A. **Pray** as a group before beginning that God would speak to us and open our hearts to hear Him.
- B. **Read** the entire passage aloud at least 2 times or listen to an audio version twice through. If your group uses storying, present the scripture in this way. Then, have the group practice re-telling the story together.
- C. **Discussion questions:**
  - Who in the story is “engaging with God” and how? Are they followers of Jesus or not?
  - How is God engaging with the people in this story?
  - How did Jesus’ perspective on the situation differ from that of His disciples?
  - What might it mean that Jesus is commanding them to “lift up their eyes” and why?
- D. Take a few minutes to **quietly listen** to God. What is He instructing you to do from what you’re hearing? Share with each other what you’re sensing. Are some of His instructions quite different than you might have imagined? How?
- E. Who is God asking you to **share** this story with? When will you do it? Share with the group.
- F. What key principles about prayer can you draw from this passage?

God assigns to each a segment of the harvest field in which to work. Look at these two examples of spiritual research to see what God will teach you.

#### 2. “Explore the Land” - Num. 13:1-13

- A. **Pray** before beginning that God would speak to us and open our hearts to hear Him.
- B. **Read** the entire passage completely through.
- C. **Discussion questions:**
  - How might this story relate to your own assignment from the Lord?
  - What would God want you to “lift up your eyes” to see in your own harvest field?

- How did the presence or absence of faith in the hearts of the spies result in different reports about their assignment? Why?
  - What might God have hoped that the spies did with their information gained from their exploration? How could you use the information you gain from your own harvest field survey?
- D. Take a few minutes to quietly **listen to God**. What is He instructing you to do from what you're hearing? Share with each other what you're sensing. Are some of His instructions quite different than you might have imagined? How?
  - E. Who is God asking you to **share** this story with? When will you do it? Share with the group.
  - F. What key principles about prayer can you draw from this passage?

In the next example, Paul apparently spent time looking around in his own harvest field assignment. Let's see how he used the information he gained.

### 3. "Paul in Athens" – **Acts 17:16-34**

- A. **Pray** before beginning that God would speak to us and open our hearts to hear Him.
- B. **Read** the entire passage completely through.
- C. Discussion questions:**
  - How might this story relate to your own assignment from the Lord?
  - What would God want you to "lift up your eyes" to see in your own harvest field?
  - How did harvest field study help Paul better share good news? How might it help you?
- D. Take a few minutes to quietly **listen to God**. What is He instructing you to do from what you're hearing? Share with each other what you're sensing. Are some of His instructions quite different than you might have imagined? How?
- E. Who is God asking you to **share** this story with? When will you do it? Share with the group.
- F. What key principles about prayer can you draw from this passage?

Luke 9:49-50 Jesus told His disciples that whoever was not against you was for you. As we survey the harvest field assigned to us, we also look to see who else God has brought to work in this field and how we could join hands with God and one another for the sake of the gospel. God's heart is that we may be one even as Jesus and the Father are one (John 17).

### 4. "Commanded Blessing" – **Psalm 133**

- A. **Pray** before beginning that God would speak to us and open our hearts to hear Him.
- B. **Read** the entire passage completely through.
- C. Discussion questions:**
  - What do you like about the story? What is difficult or what don't you like?
  - What do you learn about people from this story? What do you learn about God?
  - What good things does this passage indicate come from unity of the brothers?
  - How might this story relate to your own assignment from the Lord?
- D. Take a few minutes to quietly **listen to God**. What is He instructing you to do from what you're hearing? Share with each other what you're sensing. Are some of His instructions quite different than you might have imagined? How?
- E. Who is God asking you to **share** this story with? When will you do it? Share with the group.
- F. What key principles about prayer can you draw from this passage?

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## Further Resources on Prayer Research:

- Article: “Adapted Questions for Spiritual Mapping”: <https://prayerstrategists.files.wordpress.com/2015/12/adapted-questions-for-spiritual-mapping.docx>
- Powerpoint: “Harvest Field Survey”: <https://prayerstrategists.files.wordpress.com/2015/12/harvest-field-survey.ppt>

## Spiritual Mapping Bibliography:

- ***Informed Intercession***, George Otis, Jr., 1999 Renew, Ventura, CA.  
A comprehensive guide to spiritual mapping in order to target intercession effectively. Chapter 1 tells about cities around the world that have been transformed by fervent persevering intercession.
- ***Releasing Heaven On Earth—God’s Principles for Restoring the Land***, Alistair Petrie, 2001 Chosen Books, Grand Rapids, MI.  
Offers an extraordinary look at the connection between God’s creation and evangelism, eloquently outlining the biblical mandates for healing the land and releasing God’s blessings. Provides insights on stewardship of the land that will cause a huge release of souls for the Kingdom.
- ***Spiritual Mapping Field Guide***, 1993 The Sentinel Group, Lynnwood, WA.  
Practical field manual to facilitate informed intercession through systematic research. Includes many handy tools and lists of resources. Helps intercessors to more accurately target their prayers.
- ***The Last of the Giants***, George Otis, Jr., 1991 Chosen Books, Grand Rapids, MI.  
A serious attempt to introduce spiritual mapping, enabling us to see the world around us as it is—its spiritual makeup—not as it appears to be.
- ***The Twilight Labyrinth***. George Otis, Jr. 1997 Chosen Books, Old Tappan, NJ.  
The latest, up-to-date account of why spiritual strongholds and principalities of darkness linger where they do throughout the world, especially in the 10/40 Window least-evangelized nations.

Further resources and connection with other prayer strategists are available through the Fellowship of Prayer Strategists and their website [www.prayerstrategists.net](http://www.prayerstrategists.net).