



WEEKLY STUDY

Week Four

In week four of the And They Prayed series, we learned about the Biblical call to stand in the gap for others. The phrase “stand in the gap” comes from the book of Ezekiel. It relates to an invitation to stand in the gaps of a wall to strengthen and provide security. This phrase has also been used as a metaphor for intercessory prayer (praying on behalf of others).

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected to a Providence Small Group visit prov.church/signup and click on Small Groups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture. Follow the daily prayer prompt and then pray this or your own prayer.

Dear God,

I have felt the need for your intervention in my life. Thank you for hearing my cries and responding with your faithfulness.

Today, I will stand in the gap for others. I lift them up to you now. My family, my friends, my neighbors, my church and the stranger on the street. Just as you have filled the gap created by sin in my own life, I place myself alongside those who are far away from you.

May your mercy be present with those I name before you. May Jesus, our rescuer, save them and draw them to himself.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: EZEKIEL 22.30

“I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found no one.”

- When the walls around ancient cities were breached, everyone in the city was vulnerable to attacks from enemies. We can plug the holes in the spiritual walls that protect us only through prayer. Jesus does the work. Where are the places you are vulnerable to attack? Those gaps can

be difficult to see in our own lives. Who do you trust to notice those gaps and lift you up in prayer? What keeps you from asking?

- *Pray for friends who will intercede on your behalf just as you intercede for them.*

TUESDAY: 1 TIMOTHY 2.1-6

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—² for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. ³This is good, and pleases God our Savior, ⁴who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. ⁵For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time.

- Paul urges his student Timothy to pray and intercede for the rulers of his day. We intercede for others but Jesus is the mediator. Our practice of praying for others is a participation in the work of Jesus Christ. If Christ is living in you, you will play a role in lifting others to God. Who are the leaders in your life that you will lift up in prayer? Notice how praying for them impacts your other conversations.
- *Stand in the gap in prayer for leaders in your church, community, country and the world.*

WEDNESDAY: ISAIAH 59.15-16

*The Lord looked and was displeased
that there was no justice.*

¹⁶*He saw that there was no one,
he was appalled that there was no one to intervene;
so his own arm achieved salvation for him,
and his own righteousness sustained him.*

- From God's perspective, there was clearly a lack of justice among his people. Yet no one acted to address the injustices. No one would intervene. These words convict us because our world is still full of injustice. If we are honest and aware, there are daily examples of action and inaction in the face of injustice. Can you think of a time when God seems to have intervened to address a lack of justice?
- *Pray for awareness and boldness to stand in the gap for those who suffer injustice.*

THURSDAY: JAMES 5.16

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

- Confession leads to healing, and healing comes through prayer. Who are the people you trust to receive your confessions? Who are those who feel comfortable confessing to you? How do you turn those confessions into prayer? Have you ever experienced healing that was connected to confession?
- *Pray with a trusted person today--sharing places you each have fallen short.*

FRIDAY: EPHESIANS 6.18-20

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.

- The best part about being in Christian community (small groups, Discipleship groups, Bible studies, spiritual friendship) is the earnest sharing of a need for prayer. "I need you to pray for me..." is an invitation for intercession. How do you or would you respond to this invitation from another person? Can you imagine asking for prayer?
- *Call a friend, family member or neighbor just to ask them how you can pray for them. Then pray!*

SATURDAY: JOHN 17.1-3

[Jesus] looked toward heaven and prayed:

"Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. ² For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. ³ Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

- Jesus intercedes for his disciples and all those God has given him. If you are a Jesus follower, count yourself in that list. When Jesus intercedes on our behalf, the reward is eternal life. Thank God!
- *Thank God for His offer of eternal life through Jesus Christ, whom He has sent.*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Pastor Jacob shared a story of a time when, as a high schooler, members of the football team stood in the gap to save him from a potential fight. Are there similar stories that stand out from your life? Who would you hope would come to your rescue when you are under attack? Who prays for you?