

# Lenten Prayer Group Guide

## Week 4

As usual, there are four sections to this guide in addition to the option to listen to or sing a song. Plan to spend about a quarter of your time on each section, adjusting accordingly whether or not you choose to use the song.

Also, it is important that you make sure that everyone understands at the beginning of each prayer time that anything said during the time is confidential and should not be shared outside the group without permission.

### Praise

Read the following passage aloud.

Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end...So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel he had around him...After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, "Do you understand what I was doing? You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and you are right, because that's what I am. And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. I have given you an example to follow.

John 13:1, 4-5, 12-14 (NLT)

Jesus consecrated Himself by giving up his right as Teacher and Lord to be served and instead chose to serve his disciples. This decision foreshadows Jesus's upcoming choice to give up His life entirely on the cross.

Let's praise Him now using Philippians 2:6-11. Go around your group having each person read a single verse from the passage and immediately follow their reading with a brief prayer of praise to God. Feel free to go through the passage multiple times as you have time.

- 6 Though he was God,  
he did not think of equality with God  
as something to cling to.
- 7 Instead, he gave up his divine privileges;  
he took the humble position of a slave  
and was born as a human being.

8 When he appeared in human form,  
he humbled himself in obedience to God  
and died a criminal's death on a cross.

9 Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor  
and gave him the name above all other names,

10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

11 and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

### **Consecration & Confession**

Read aloud the following passage.

He walked away, about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." Then an angel from heaven appeared and strengthened him. He prayed more fervently, and he was in such agony of spirit that his sweat fell to the ground like great drops of blood.

Luke 22:41-44 (NLT)

Doing God's will is not always pleasant or easy. Sometimes we need to say, "God I don't want to do this, but I will because I belong to You. Please help me!" Consecration must begin with a choice, a conscious decision to surrender to God's purposes for us. He will help us.

Is there something that you need to surrender to the Lord? Is there a choice you need to make? Do you need strength to do it? Give each person in the group the opportunity to confess a current struggle and to ask for God's strengthening that they might surrender what is necessary to God.

### **Thanksgiving**

Sacrifice, as we see here, is the ultimate expression of love. Love for God. Love for others. In Hebrews 12:2 it says that Jesus endured the cross and scorned its shame "for the joy set before Him."

What exactly was the joy set before Jesus? His sacrifice was what would make it possible for us to be with Him for all eternity. **We** are the joy which was set before Him.

Take some time now to thank Him.

## Asking

Is it possible that we could be like Jesus saying, "Not my will, but Yours be done, Father"? Do we really want this? Maybe we need to ask for increased willingness to lay down our wills.

If we are to be truly consecrated, given over to Him for His purposes, we must lay down our lives, our wills, to God.

Philippians 2:13 says, "For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases Him." And in Mark's telling of Jesus in the Gethsemane, Jesus begins his prayer by stating, "Abba, Father... everything is possible for you." Let us pray for these things for ourselves and for our church with the knowledge that this is God's will and nothing is impossible for Him!

## Song *(optional)*

Conclude with this song of intent to lay down our lives to God. Click on the song title to hear the song.

### Lay Me Down

#### Verse 1:

With this heart open wide  
From the depths from the heights  
I will bring a sacrifice

#### Verse 2:

With these hands lifted high  
Here my song here my cry  
I will bring a sacrifice  
I will bring a sacrifice

#### Chorus:

I lay me down  
I'm not my own  
I belong to you alone  
Lay me down, lay me down  
Oh, hand on my heart  
This much is true  
There's no life apart from you  
Lay me down, lay me down

#### Verse 3:

Letting go of my pride  
Giving up all my rights  
Take this life and let it shine, shine, shine  
Take this life and let it shine

#### Bridge:

It will be my joy to say  
Your will, your way  
It will be my joy to say  
Your will, your way  
It will be my joy to say  
Your will, your way, always

Source: LyricFind

Songwriters: Chris Tomlin / Jason Ingram / Jonas Myrin / Matt Redman  
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