

RULE #4

Pray.

Goal:

To lead participants to consistently pray during their Red Sea trial.

Introduction:

Having investigated three rules, as you begin the fourth step, take a few minutes to check in with people asking how they're doing on the journey, how is the journaling going, etc. As the leader, you want to be as mindful as possible regarding the progress of each member of the group. You may also want to facilitate contact during the week between members so they can encourage each other. Remember, some things are better discussed in one-on-one settings rather than the group environment.

As you officially begin the next step, open with something like:

I have noticed that the vast majority of people in pain all do one thing: pray. Even people who don't pray, pray. For example...

At this point use an example of someone praying or use the story on page 21 in the study guide. Then ask the group,

Have you been praying during you red Sea experience? If so what's a typical prayer for you? If not, why not?

Following the discussion, transition to the Bible with a statement like,

*As we continue our journey we want to investigate this subject of prayer, which is the fourth rule and our fourth step that Rob describes simply as **Pray!***



PREVIEW THE JOURNEY

Have people turn to Exodus 14. Quickly retell the story.

Tonight let's focus on Exodus 14:10.

Let's break down this verse according to three actions of the Israelites. They:

- *Lifted their eyes (saw)*
- *Feared greatly*
- *Cried out to the Lord*

At this point just spend a few minutes discussing these three verbs by asking simple questions like:

What did they see?

Why were they afraid?

What do think was crying to the Lord looked like and what was the content of their cries?

Do you think their prayers were perfect, coming from great faith?

Some people may think the Israelites had great faith, but Exodus 14:11–12 seems to indicate otherwise. Even though their prayers may have lacked great faith, God still heard their cries (Nehemiah 9:9–11). Time may not allow you to fully develop this topic, but I wanted to remind you of these passages because some people may think they and their prayers must be perfect before God hears them. The example of the “imperfect” prayers of the Israelites should encourage people. Really try to drive home this point!



PREPARE FOR THE JOURNEY

In his book, Rob makes a distinction between quiet-time prayers and crisis time prayers. Using Matthew 6:6 and Joshua 24:7, how would you describe these two types of prayer?

According to Luke 11:1-4 what characterizes quiet-time prayer?

On page 24 of the study guide you'll see verses containing examples of crisis-time prayers. Pick out a couple of these to discuss in the meeting with a question like:

Do we find examples of crisis-time prayers in the Bible?

Peter's crisis-time prayer in Matthew 14:30 is a great parallel to Exodus 14:10. Definitely use this verse with a question like:

Let's look at a specific crisis-time prayer in Matthew 14:30. Do you see any similarities with this verse and Exodus 14:10?

Follow up the above question with this:

What does 1 Peter 5:6–7 teach about prayer?



PROCEED ON THE JOURNEY

After a good discussion about prayer, summarize the points with something like the paragraph on page 25 in the study guide:

The Bible teaches by both precept and practice two broad types of praying: quiet time praying to enhance fellowship with God and crisis-time praying to receive help from God. If you're new to the faith, you may not be familiar with the phrase "quiet time", which refers to a daily devotional time set aside for worship and fellowship with the Lord through prayer and Scripture reading.

You want to now apply this rule to the group:

It's now time for others to evaluate our prayer life in the midst of our Red Sea. How is your quiet-time pray going? Is it consistent? Difficult? Nonexistent?

Why is it important that we continue consistent quiet-time prayer in the midst of our pain?

What about your crisis-time prayer? If we've never prayed before do you think it's OK to begin with crisis-time prayer? What's the content of your crisis-time prayer?

By the grace of God, are you willing to commit to consistently apply Rule #4: Pray!?



PONDER THE JOURNEY

As you encourage participants to think about their journey by journaling, remind them it's a great practice to write out their prayers. In Psalm 5:3, the writer says he will direct his prayers to God. The word *direct* means *to order or prepare*. Writing out prayer is a great way to arrange or prepare prayers before the Lord. Is also a great way to keep up with what we are praying so we can also record answers to those prayers.