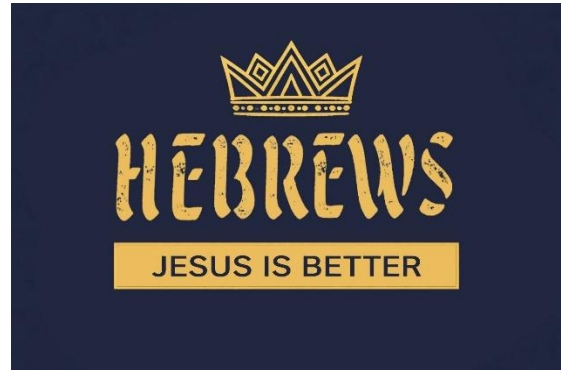


# “Rhythm of Prayer: A Jesus is Better Prayer Experience”



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## INTRO – 5min

### Say It:

At BPF, we aim to practice our “Rhythms” at least once a year. One of those rhythms is prayer. Today, we will spend our entire small group in prayer. Don’t let that scare you though. We’re going to walk you through it all step by step, and you’ll discover that it’s much easier than you imagined. The model we will use today was also used in the “**Rooted**” series. We will:

**Pray Up:** Praise God for who He is and what He has done.

**Pray In:** Ask God to shape us into His image from the inside out.

**Pray Out:** Pray for others and for boldness in sharing Jesus with the world.

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## SECTION 1: Pray Up (15min)

Spend time recognizing who God is and what He has done.

**Leaders:** Take the time to create a prayerful space for your group. You might dim the lights in the room, light candles, or put on some soft background instrumental music. Don’t make it creepy or weird, but a little effort communicates the value in these practices.

### Say It:

To start, I will read some of God’s praiseworthy characteristics over you. Each of these has been a part of our Hebrews study. As you listen, choose one that means the most to you and praise God for who He is. **If you’d prefer, you can print copies of these characteristics from pages 5-6 to allow your members to follow along as you read or you could take turns reading through them. PLEASE DO THE READING OUTLOUD. though.** Verbally remembering God’s characteristics is another form of worship. This is what it means to Pray Up!

**1. The Radiance of Glory** - "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word." (Hebrews 1:3a)

**2. The Enthroned King** - "After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven." (Hebrews 1:3b)

**3. The Unchanging Creator** - "In the beginning, Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you remain... you remain the same, and your years will never end." (Hebrews 1:10-12)

**4. The Crowned Savior** - "But we do see Jesus, who was made lower than the angels for a little while, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone." (Hebrews 2:9)

**5. The Merciful High Priest** - "For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people." (Hebrews 2:17)

**6. The Compassionate Intercessor** - "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin." (Hebrews 4:15)

**7. The Source of Eternal Salvation** - "And, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him." (Hebrews 5:9)

**8. The Promise-Keeper** - "God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged." (Hebrews 6:18)

**9. The Anchor of the Soul** - "We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf." (Hebrews 6:19-20)

**10. The Indestructible Life** - "...one who has become a priest not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life." (Hebrews 7:16)

**11. The Permanent Priest** - "But because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them." (Hebrews 7:24-25)

**12. The Mediator of a Better Covenant** - "But in fact the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, since the new covenant is established on better promises." (Hebrews 8:6)

**13. The Perfect Sacrifice** - "How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!" (Hebrews 9:14)

**14. The Author and Perfector** - "Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:2)

**15. The Unshakable Kingdom** - "Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe." (Hebrews 12:28).

**Discuss It:** Remember, prayer is simply communication with God. He is no less present in your discussions than He is in your voiced prayers or in prayerful silence. He has a seat in your gathering space.

- Which of these passages stands out to you? Why?
- What is your story? How have you witnessed God being these things in your life?

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## SECTION 2 – Pray In (30min)

Ask God to shape you into His image from the inside out.

### Say It:

This section of our prayer experience is intended to help you reflect personally and create a space for Him to work “in” you, and the shape you.

We will spend 30 minutes during this section, and you can choose one or more of the Bible passages in the handout. **Print pages 7-8 for each of your group members.** Feel free to spread out, find a place to get comfortable, a place where you can write easily, and focus on “praying in.”

We will NOT be sharing our written prayers so you can be as honest as you’d like.

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## SECTION 3 – Pray Out (12min)

Pray for others and for boldness in sharing Jesus with the world.

## Say It:

Hebrews 10:24-25 - <sup>24</sup>And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup>not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

This passage tells us to "consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds." and later on, in chapter 13 we will be called to "go to Him outside the camp," reaching those who don't yet know Jesus.

Take a few moments to consider 2 things: We're just asking you to think, not to voice specific names or descriptions of people.

- 1) Who needs to be "spurred" on? Other Christ followers? A mission organization? A small group member?
- 2) Who could you reach "outside the camp?" (People who don't know Jesus)

Next, split up into groups of 2 or 3, share your people/concerns, and pray for them. Pray that Christ followers will not "shrink back," and that they'd remember the "muscle memory" of having faith through difficult times in the past. Pray also for God to empower you to reach those people in your world who don't know Jesus.

[Spend a few moments praying in your smaller groups.](#)

**Discuss It:** Remember, prayer is simply communication with God. He is no less present in your discussions than He is in your voiced prayers or in prayerful silence. He has a seat in your gathering space.

- How can we, as a small group, provide the 'side-by-side' support (Hebrews 10:33) needed so that none of us feels like they are standing 'outside the camp' alone?

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## SECTION 4 – Wrap Up (3min)

### Pray It:

Lord Jesus, Thank You that we no longer live separated from You, but enjoy a relationship of constant access. Forgive us for the times we try to pay You back for a gift that was freely given. Help us to walk this week not as debtors, but as heirs resting in Your finished, once for all work. When we are tempted to drift or audition for Your love, remind us that the case is closed and the record is clean. Give us the courage to go outside the camp and share Your better hope with a weary world. In Your name, Amen.

# Characteristics of God

## found in Hebrews

1. **The Radiance of Glory** - "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word." (Hebrews 1:3a)
2. **The Enthroned King** - "After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven." (Hebrews 1:3b)
3. **The Unchanging Creator** - "In the beginning, Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you remain... you remain the same, and your years will never end." (Hebrews 1:10-12)
4. **The Crowned Savior** - "But we do see Jesus, who was made lower than the angels for a little while, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone." (Hebrews 2:9)
5. **The Merciful High Priest** - "For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people." (Hebrews 2:17)
6. **The Compassionate Intercessor** - "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin." (Hebrews 4:15)
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## Access Granted Reflection: Hebrews 10:19-22

*<sup>19</sup>Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup>by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, <sup>21</sup>and since we have a great priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup>let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.*

**The Context:** The Old Covenant architecture said "Stay Back." Jesus says "Come In."

**The Prompt:** Are you still trying to "sew the curtain back together" by using guilt or "religious performance" to feel accepted by God?

**Write a prayer confessing a specific "dead work" (a duty you do out of fear/pride) and ask Jesus to help you rest in your identity as an heir rather than a debtor.**

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## "Anti-Drift" Reflection: Hebrews 2:1-3 & 3:12-13

*<sup>1</sup>We must pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. <sup>2</sup>For since the message spoken through angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, <sup>3</sup>how shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him.*

*<sup>12</sup>See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. <sup>13</sup>But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "Today," so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.*

**The Context:** The author warns us not to “drift away” or let our hearts become “hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.”

**The Prompt:** Where do you feel a drift happening in your life right now? Is it toward busyness, cynicism, self-reliance, etc? Write down what has been capturing your attention lately. **Write to God asking the Holy Spirit to "soften" the soil of your heart in that specific area.**

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## "Anchor of Hope" Reflection: Hebrews 6:18-20

*<sup>18</sup>God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged. <sup>19</sup>We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, <sup>20</sup>where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.*

**The Context:** Hope is an "anchor for the soul, firm and secure," that enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain.

**The Prompt:** What storm or unseen reality is currently making you feel unstable? Write about the difference between a wish and a Biblical Hope (a settled certainty). Write something asking Jesus to be your anchor in this specific situation.

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