

# SERMON NOTES

Rev Adam Dodds  
Nexus Church  
12 APR 2026

Prayer

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## Gen 2:15; Jer 18:1-10

### ice breaker

Share a time when you experienced a clear answer to prayer.  
What was the situation, and how did God respond?

### overview

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- Prayer is simply a conversation with our Creator, both talking and listening.
- Our prayers and actions can impact what God does and doesn't do.
- We have authority and responsibility, and are called to help shape the future to create something beautiful.
- The Lord desires to dwell with us.

### reframing

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When it comes to prayer, we need to make **two essential shifts**.

#### **Fatalism → Functional**

God works through our prayers.

#### **Functional → Friendship**

Prayer is not just a means to an end, but it is the endpoint itself. It is both our responsibility and privilege.

## go deeper

Rev. Adam's message challenges how we think about prayer by confronting a subtly dangerous idea many Christians hold, in fatalism. The key question is simple: do our prayers and actions impact what God does, or is everything already fixed?

The image in **Jer 18** of the potter and clay gives a clear answer. God says He will change what He plans to do based on how people respond to circumstances. This is not an isolated idea; it reflects a wider pattern in Scripture, where God responds to Moses, Hezekiah, and others.

**Gen 2:15** shows humanity given the responsibility to tend to and care for creation. Prayer is one way the Lord's will is carried out on Earth. Prayer is not just a ritual, nor empty words, but a real partnership with God to carry out the renewing of all creation.

## bible study

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**Read and discuss Jeremiah 18:1-10 together.**

Consider how God says He will *change His mind* based on people's actions, and what that could mean for the way you approach prayer.

How does this challenge or confirm your understanding of God's sovereignty?

## discussion

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- 1 Have you ever struggled with a *fatalistic* view of prayer, believing that outcomes are predestined to occur regardless of whether you pray? If so, what led to that perspective?

## discussion cont.

- 2 The sermon used the illustration of tending a garden to show how something beautiful can be created through care and cultivation. What areas of your life has God given you authority and responsibility to shape, and how can prayer increasingly factor into that?
- 3 What are the biggest barriers that prevent you from praying more consistently?

## application

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Choose **one** of the following to put into practice this week.

### Option 1: Throughout The Day

Set 3-5 random alarms on your phone throughout the day. When they go off, pause for 2min to talk with God about whatever you're doing or thinking about in that moment.

### Option 2: Specific Situation Focus

Identify one regular activity (commute, walk, workout, etc.) where you typically consume content on your phone. Instead, use that time to commune with the Lord through prayer.

## prayer framework

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- **Confession:** Silently confess any wrong beliefs about prayer or areas where you've avoided the responsibility the Lord has given you.
- **Partnership:** Share with one another a specific situation where you want to partner with the Lord through prayer this week. Pray into that for one another.
- **Intimacy:** Simply share with the Lord how you want to know Him more. Listen.

# MORE RESOURCES

Prayer

Rev Adam Dodds

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**Be vulnerable:** Share your own struggles with prayer to create a safe space for honesty

**Encourage variety:** People connect with God differently—affirm diverse approaches to prayer

**Make it practical:** Help people leave with concrete next steps, not just good ideas

Prayer/praise report from your group? Anything else you think we should know? [Click here](#) to pass it on to our Pastoral Team so we can address it in our weekly meeting.

## additional questions

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1. The sermon contrasts the ugliest lawn in the world with beautiful botanical gardens to illustrate our responsibility to shape the future. What *gardens* in your life need tending through prayer and action?
2. Adam shared a story about praying for healing and seeing immediate results. How do you reconcile times when prayers seem powerfully answered with times when they don't seem to be?
3. The sermon states that God desires to dwell with His people from the beginning to the end of the human story. How does believing that God actually wants to spend time with you impact your motivation to pray?
4. What does it mean practically to *pray continually*, or turn your entire life into an ongoing conversation with God while still fulfilling daily responsibilities?
5. Do you truly believe your prayers make a real difference in what God does, or do you sometimes doubt their effectiveness?