

Praying with your Eyes Open

II KINGS 6:8-23

Now the king of Aram was at war with Israel. After conferring with his officers, he said, "I will set up my camp in such and such a place." **9** The man of God sent word to the king of Israel: "Beware of passing that place, because the Arameans are going down there." **10** So the king of Israel checked on the place indicated by the man of God. Time and again Elisha warned the king, so that he was on his guard in such places. **11** This enraged the king of Aram. He summoned his officers and demanded of them, "Tell me! Which of us is on the side of the king of Israel?" **12** "None of us, my lord the king," said one of his officers, "but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the very words you speak in your bedroom." **13** "Go, find out where he is," the king ordered, "so I can send men and capture him." The report came back: "He is in Dothan." **14** Then he sent horses and chariots and a strong force there. They went by night and surrounded the city. **15** When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh no, my lord! What shall we do?" the servant asked. **16** "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." **17** And Elisha prayed, "**Open his eyes**, LORD, so that he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. **18** As the enemy came down toward him, Elisha prayed to the LORD, "**Strike this army with blindness**." So he struck them with blindness, as Elisha had asked. **19** Elisha told them, "This is not the road and this is not the city. Follow me, and I will lead you to the man you are looking for." And he led them to Samaria. **20** After they entered the city, Elisha said, "LORD, **open the eyes of these men so they can see**." Then the LORD opened their eyes and they looked, and there they were, inside Samaria. **21** When the king of Israel saw them, he asked Elisha, "Shall I kill them, my father? Shall I kill them?" **22** "Do not kill them," he answered. "Would you kill those you have captured with your own sword or bow? Set food and water before them so that they may eat and drink and then go back to their master." **23** So he prepared a great feast for them, and after they had finished eating and drinking, he sent them away, and they returned to their master. So the bands from Aram stopped raiding Israel's territory.

JOHN 4:30-35

Context: Jesus has just talked with the Samaritan women at the well, she has realized that Jesus is the messiah and has returned to her village told them about Jesus. "They" in verse 30 refers to the Samaritan villagers.

They came out of the town and made their way toward him. **31** Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something." **32** But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about." **33** Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?" **34** "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. **35** Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, **open your eyes and look at the fields!** They are ripe for harvest.



For what does Elisha pray? Why?

How does God open and close eyes?

What is ultimately accomplished?

When we open our eyes, what do we see?

INTERVARSITY®

LEADING
EDGE

Sketches of Leadership #18

Pray with your Eyes Open

Look and see what God is doing, then join in through prayer and work.

BLINDERS (KEEP US FROM SEEING)	LENSES (HELP US TO SEE)
Not knowing God, who he is, his heart, or how he has acted in the past	Knowing God, who he is, his heart, how he has acted in history.
The inside of our own eye lids	Just open your eyes and looking.
Our own <input data-bbox="527 489 690 541" type="text"/>	Lift up your <input data-bbox="1279 489 1442 541" type="text"/>

Summary: Unplanned or poorly planned corporate prayer will only give you as much vision (seeing) as the group already has, but well thought out, well led, vision-based corporate prayer can open people's eyes to who God is, his heart, and what he is doing, and help them (corporately and individually) join in with him.

Case Studies

CASE STUDY #1:

It's your first time attending a prayer meeting that is sponsored by InterVarsity. The leader, Matt, is glad to see you and invites you to sit with the other two people who have already shown up. After 10 more minutes two more people have arrived and Matt begins by saying, "so do we have any praises today?" One person shares about how well an exam went. Another person shares about how she was running late, but prayed and then found a great parking spot. Matt writes this all down in his prayer meeting journal. Then he asks, "Do we have any prayer requests?" An exam and an ailing aunt are mentioned. Matt then asks who would like to open, and who would like to close? Kevin and Stephanie volunteer. Kevin begins praying and prays through all of the 'praises' and 'prayer requests' using King James English with all the right verbs. This is followed by 7 minutes of silence. Bonnie tries to pray for a few of the things that Kevin has already prayed for, but twice uses Thou and You in the same sentence. Then another 5 minutes of silence, after which Stephanie dutifully prays through all the 'praises' and 'prayer requests' and closes with an "Amen." Matt asks for a volunteer to lead next week's prayer meeting. You raise your hand. **What do you do differently and why? What do you keep and why?**

CASE STUDY #2:

Pick a recent corporate prayer setting from your chapter and use that as a case study.



II KINGS 6:8-23

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For what does Elisha pray? Why?

He prays 3 times:

1. "Open his eyes, LORD, so that he may see"
2. "Strike this army with blindness"
3. "LORD, open the eyes of these men so they can see."

How does God open and close eyes?

God opens and closes eyes, yet he chooses to do this through Elisha's prayers. God enjoys partnerships with us in His work.

What is ultimately accomplished?

Peace is established, peacefully without bloodshed. God gets the glory for this great and merciful victory.

When we open our eyes, what do we see?

Beyond our own needs
The reality of God's work
Opportunities to join God at work

Pray with your Eyes Open

Look and see what God is doing, then join in through prayer and work.

BLINDERS (KEEP US FROM SEEING)	LENSES (HELP US TO SEE)
Not knowing God, who he is, his heart, or how he has acted in the past	Knowing God, who he is, his heart, how he has acted in history. You find this in scripture. Using scripture in corporate prayer is a good idea. Just opening your eyes and looking.
The inside of our own eye lids (like some kind of transcendental meditation) Prayer isn't just about our own personal peace or psychological well being (prayer actually accomplishes things outside of ourselves).	Watch for God answering prayer. God is doing great things all around the world, and is answering prayer all the time.
You believe prayer works, but you only pray about yourself. Our own navel. Self-absorption keeps us from seeing the bigger picture. Lift up your eyes. Well planned prayer that helps you to look beyond yourself.	Use IFES Praise & Prayer, Operation World, the Intercessor, etc..
Fear (like the servant) that God won't answer our prayers or won't deliver.	Fiery furnace: whether God saves us or not, we will not bow down.
(Leave this box blank for group ideas)	(Leave this box blank for group ideas)

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