

Discipleship Group

Reaching • Growing • Sending

Week of Sept 25, 2016

We Are Family – A Family Prays Together

Heartbeat

This week we explore ways to pray together as a spiritual family. This will be an interactive week that will require you to do some pre-planning. The goal is to help group members get more comfortable praying out loud for one another and in corporate settings. For some, this will be natural. For others, it will be very uncomfortable. Encourage all of your group members to participate, but be careful not to force someone to pray if they don't want to.

Get to Know Me [5-10 Minutes]

- Does your family gather for prayer before a holiday meal like Easter or Christmas? If so, who is most likely to volunteer (or gets volunteered) to pray over the meal?
- Have you ever had a stranger or someone you don't know well offer to pray for you? How did you feel about it?

Mid-Cities DNA [5-10 Minutes]

- When was the last time you heard God speak clearly to you about something specific? Describe that experience and how you knew it was God.

Exploration [20-30 Minutes]

What is prayer? In the Bible, the most common definition of prayer is “asking or petitioning God to do something.” Prayer can also include worship, adoration, and listening to God speak to us.

- Look up the following verses and discuss what we can learn about prayer from these passages. Take note of the circumstances and context of what is happening before these references. Have a group member take simple notes to review at the end. Assign verses to members of the group to read aloud so this moves along quicker.

Matt 5:43-44

Mark 14:38

Acts 6:5-7

Acts 8:14-17

Acts 16:23-25

Col 4:2-3

1 Thess 5:16-19, 25

1 Tim 2:8

James 5:13-14

James 5:16

Your list will look similar to this:

Pray for your enemies

To avoid temptation

Sending leaders/missionaries out

For people to receive the Holy Spirit

For strength during hardships

For open doors to share the gospel

Men are called to pray

Healing for the sick/sin issues

Sometimes we make prayer too hard...too formal...too inwardly-focused...too infrequent. What if we really believed God hears our prayers? Answers our prayers? Jesus sits at the right hand of God as we speak, praying for [making intercession] you and me [Rom 8:34]. We get the privilege of going to God on behalf of others in this same way. These four steps will help you gain confidence in how to pray for people with faith and boldness.

STOP – LISTEN – PRAY – ACT

- **Stop** - Notice people
- **Listen** - To people and the Holy Spirit
- **Pray** - Now, not later
- **Act** - Follow up as needed

Application [20-25 Minutes]

- How comfortable are you praying out loud in a group setting or for someone individually?
 - If fearful, why do you think you struggle with this?
 - What do you think could help you overcome this fear?
- If God answered all of the prayers you prayed last week, what would be different today?
 - Who would be healed?
 - Who would be a new believer right now?
 - Who would be blessed emotionally or financially?
 - Who would be comforted in grief or loss?
- What are some common scenarios in your world where it's easy to "punt" [miss] the opportunity to pray for someone right then? How could you overcome that fear and start making the most of future opportunities to pray for people?

Activation [15 Minutes]

Divide into pairs and practice praying for these common scenarios. Select 2 or 3 situations below, briefly role-play the situation, and practice praying out loud for that person. If these are not realistic in your world, insert your own scenarios that are more likely to happen soon.

- A co-worker turns to you and says, "Man, my head is killing me."
- You run into your ex and his or her new partner in public. Things are still real fragile.
- You suddenly encounter a real temptation (insert one thing you struggle with here).
- A neighborhood kid knocks on the door to raise money for a summer mission trip.
- A Christian friend asks you about the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- Your child is struggling with fear at night and not sleeping well.
- A relative is just diagnosed with cancer.
- A friend comes to you to confess a pornography or prescription pill addiction.

Close out the night in an open circle with one-sentence prayers. Encourage everyone to pray out loud. Give them an example of how to pray one-sentence prayers. These prayers should be focused on praying for other people either in the group or in their circle of relationships.