

Leaders:

1. Continue (or start) discussing the neighbor challenge. If taking a night off of SG is not desirable, make a group-wide commitment to do it between now and Thanksgiving and follow up.
2. This series goes through November. Make it your ambition to pray as a whole group after discussion for 10-15 minutes. Leave it open, guide it, or ask others to guide that time.

LEARN

Read Matthew 6:5-8 together. What stands out from the text and Sunday's sermon that was helpful, encouraging, or challenging?

Jesus gives 2 ways not to pray in the text. What are they and what is the heart behind them? (Don't pray for the show or to manipulate. Praying for show is for recognition or to impress others. Praying to manipulate is thinking God is listening or impressed by many words, vain repetition.)

What is the goal of prayer? Why is it important to always keep the goal in mind? (God is the goal! He rewards those who seek him, and he is the reward. Keeping it in mind has many benefits, one being a continual drawing near to God with whatever I'm praying about.)

PRACTICE

How have you found prayer to be difficult in your own life? Is it that life is good/normal, or a bad theology about prayer, that you don't understand it, or...?

(The bad theology one is HUGE! So easy to believe that because God already knows, or he is "sovereign" we just don't need to pray. When your theology leads to prayerlessness, it is not a biblical theology.)

Are you ever tempted to make prayer a show before others? What needs to change in our hearts when that is the case?

(It may be fear of man – "what will they think", or desire to appear smart/godly. Need to ask God that even as we pray with a group, he draws us to pray only to him and for his glory.)

How can you avoid the trap of "manipulative prayers"? How can you genuinely ask God for what you want/need without going toward manipulation?

("Your will be done" is important here, so long as we mean it. God, here is my heart, here is what seems best to me, but I submit my will to your will.)

Group prayer: Dedicate 10-15 minutes to praying together.

CHANGE

Are you more prone to pray to impress others or manipulate God? Or, is the truth that you just don't pray much at all? Talk as men/women about how you need God to change your heart's posture toward prayer, then ask God to change you.