

Praying in Circles

Joshua 6:1-16

People today love extreme sports! We live in a world where the boundaries of human ability and capacity continue to be pressed and stretched. Sports like ice climbing, wing suit base jumping, kayak skydiving, snocross, and a myriad of other surprising options are cropping up as people look for a new rush of adrenaline, a greater challenge, and new ways to push the boundaries.

Into this world of risk taking adventurers God whispers an invitation, "Try drawing a prayer circle!" Believers who love God with a passion, but have slipped into a spiritual rut, it is time to enter a whole new level of extreme faith...it is time to become a circle maker! You'll discover it is one of the most extreme things you could ever do!

"The greatest moments in life are the miraculous moments when human impotence and divine omnipotence intersect — and they intersect when we draw a circle around the impossible situations in our lives and invite God to intervene." - Mark Batterson

Icebreaker:

Tell about a time you did something risky or extreme. What moved you to do something adventurous like this?

1) The first step to praying in circles is **PAY ATTENTION**. Read Joshua 6:1-2.

Joshua and the people of Israel most likely felt overwhelmed and under qualified to take the city of Jericho. But sometimes that is exactly where God wants us to be so that we will pray like everything depends on God. **Share with the group a time you felt under qualified or overwhelmed.**

Read Numbers 13:26-33. Describe the territory God called Joshua and the people of Israel to enter and take as their own. What was the nature of this task and why would prayer be such an essential part of accomplishing it?

2) The second step to praying in circles is **CIRCLE YOUR GOAL**. Read Joshua 6:3.

Mark Batterson writes "God has determined that certain expressions of His power will only be exercised in response to prayer. Simply put: We have not because we ask not. Put another way, we have not because we circle not." **Read James 4:1-3. How do you respond to this idea that some things don't happen because we choose not to pray and circle these things?**

Drawing prayer circles starts with discerning what God wants, what God wills. Take a moment to describe an area, relationship, goal or something else that you believe God wants you to circle in prayer. It could be a person, description of your neighborhood or workplace. **Write it below.**

- I believe God is leading me to circle _____ in prayer.

Next, write down three or four *specific* prayers you can begin to pray around this territory.

- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
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3) The third step to praying in circles is **BE PERSISTENT AND EXPECTANT**. Read Joshua 6:12-16.

What might be an example of something we would miss because we make a choice not to pray?

Describe a time when you failed to be persistent in prayer over something. What was the result? Can you share a time you kept circling and you got the result you prayed for?

Is there something you have not been circling in prayer that you now feel you need to engage with a whole new level of seriousness and persistence? What steps will you take to circle this matter in prayer and how can you group members come alongside you?

Read Matthew 20:29-34. If Jesus were to meet you face to face and ask “What do You want me to do for you?” what would you answer? What would you dare ask of Jesus...and have the confidence that it is something He wants to accomplish in and through you?

Pray:

Ask God to show you where you need to pay attention to possible prayer areas in your life and the life of your group. Allow group members time to pray for the things they have circled in prayer this week and lift each other up in prayer. Invite the Holy Spirit to prompt, convict, and move you to deeper places of prayer.

Connect:

Bold prayers honor God, and God honors bold prayers. God isn't offended by your biggest dreams or boldest prayers. He is offended by anything less! If your prayers aren't impossible to you, they are insulting to God. Why? Because they don't require divine intervention.

Watch the Story of Honi with Mark Batterson. Go here: <http://www.thecirclemaker.com/watch> and click on “The Story of Honi.”