

Devoted

Living deeply and widely in the family of God



Life Group Connection Guide

Seeks to help you dig deeper into God's Word on your own and aid in your discussion in a Life Group during the week. Follow the simple prompts below in a journal or together in a small group setting. If you would like to join a midweek Life Group, please contact: jon@neighborhoodchurch.com

Feb. 22 — Devoted to Prayer (Matthew 6:5-15)

- **Welcome & Ice Breaker:**
 - *If your prayer life were a photo on your phone right now, what would it look like?* Ex: 📶 Low Battery Mode – "I pray when I'm running on empty," 📅 Calendar Reminder – "I have a set time, but sometimes I snooze it," 🎧 Voice Memo – "I talk to God casually throughout the day," 📷 Blurry Selfie – "I'm trying, but I'm not sure what I'm doing," 📺 Live Stream – "It's constant and ongoing," 📁 Hidden Folder – "It's private and deeply personal." Who first taught you how to pray? Who has taught you the most about prayer?
- **Important Dates:**
 - **Youth Groups** Tuesday Evenings 7-8:30pm • Cypress Campus Gym
 - **SHINE KIDS** Wednesday Evenings 6:45-8:15pm • Cypress Campus Gym
- **Opening Prayers:**
 - **Hold yourself before the Lord // Psalm 139:23**
 - *What emotions are you feeling as you come to Life Group?*
 - Hold all of yourself out to Him and sit quietly • Allow God to come close to you & care for you in prayer right now • Listen for His voice/presence/leading
 - **Hold what you are holding before the Lord // Psalm 90:17**
 - *What are you dealing with, working on, preparing for?*
 - Hold it out to Him and sit quietly • Allow God to come close to you & establish the work of your hands • Listen for His voice/presence/leading
 - **Return • Recommit • Repent • Reattach to the LORD who is with you // Psalm 139:24**
 - *Draw near to God as He draws near to you*
 - *"Heavenly Father, I live and have my being in You: I humbly pray You would so guide & govern me by Your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations in my life that I may not forget You, but may remember that I am ever walking in Your sight; through Jesus Christ my Lord, amen."*
- **Scripture Passage: Matthew 6**
 - Begin by reading the passage out loud; even a few times if it is a shorter passage in order to let it settle down inside you.
 - As the Scripture is being read, pay attention to any word, phrase, or feeling that the Holy Spirit may be highlighting to you.
 - Then share what you noticed and/or write down your observations as the Spirit leads.

- **Discussion/Personal Reflection**

- What challenged you, or stood out to you during your devotional time with the Lord Jesus this week?
- If you were able to hear it, what did the Holy Spirit point out to you personally from Sunday's sermon?
- Read Matthew 6:5-8. How does Jesus redefine the *purpose* of prayer here? Prayer is not about performing before God or saying the "right" words, but about intimate relationship with the Father. Consider: when I pray, am I more aware of God's presence or of my performance? Am I afraid of messing up? When do I come to prayer: only for requests or for an extended conversation with God? What distractions, habits, or motivations might be keeping my prayer life shallow? How might Jesus be inviting us to into deeper dependence on His Father?
- Read Matthew 6:9-13. How does the Lord's Prayer shape our priorities and align our hearts with what God wants for us and for the world? Do you ever pray this prayer of Jesus'? If so, in what moments? If not, how come? What does it look like for God's kingdom—not mine—to come first in my prayers? How might praying this way reshape my desires, decisions, and daily life?
- Read Matthew 6:12-15. In what ways does our devotion to God grow *wider* through dependence, forgiveness, and surrender? Jesus reminds us that prayer is not only personal—it shapes how we depend on God and relate to others. Where do I need to trust God for "daily bread" rather than self-reliance? Is there anyone I need to forgive so that God's grace can flow freely in my life? How does acknowledging spiritual battle affect the way I pray?

- **Closing in Prayer:**

- Ministries/Missionaries: *Dave & Lisa Dower*
 - *Church planters in the country of Turkey*
 - *Please pray for divine contacts with whom He wants us to meet. Pray also for directions, blessings, obstacles, open doors, and spiritual potholes, and all we encounter. Please help us navigate with your prayer and discernment, asking for the Holy Spirit to make all things known that we need.*
- Consider those who the Holy Spirit may be placing on your heart to pray for • Hold them up to the Lord for His intervening love in their lives • Allow Him to care for them through your prayer right now.
- *"Lord, who are You putting on my heart today? Who needs a special touch from You in their life? Who can I hold up to You in prayer?"*