

Small Group Study

Our Vision

To know God and enjoy Him forever.

Our Mission

To build a Christian community by making fully devoted disciples of non-religious and nominally religious people



Discussion

Power with Purpose: Tapping into the Power of Prayer

Scripture

Have volunteers read the following scriptures and texts:

Mark 1:35

Before daybreak the next morning, Jesus got up and went out to an isolated place to pray.

Psalms 5:3

Listen to my voice in the morning, LORD. Each morning I bring my requests to you and wait expectantly.

Matthew 18:19-20

"I also tell you this: If two of you agree here on earth concerning anything you ask, my Father in heaven will do it for you. For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them."

Acts 12:5 (NLT)

But while Peter was in prison, the church prayed very earnestly for him.

It is the discipline of prayer that brings us into the deepest and highest work of the human spirit.

Richard Foster in *Celebration of Discipline*

"There is a moment between intending to pray and actually praying. It is as dark and silent as any moment in our lives. It is the split second between thinking about praying and actually praying. For some of us, this split second between thinking and actually praying lasts decades. It seems then that the greatest obstacle to prayer is a simple matter of beginning to pray. How easy it is and yet between us and the possibilities of prayer there seems to be this great gulf, an abyss of our own making, that separates us from God."

Emilie Griffin

Ice Breaker

Use ONE of the questions to help people open up and to focus your meeting. It is very helpful to go around in a circle with the leader going first. (Remember if you have new members or guests you should take time to introduce everyone.)

1. Was there ever a time when you almost lost your life? Tell us about it.
2. Has there ever been a time when several people were praying for you? Describe what happened.
3. What are your three favorite books?

Questions

1. What are your greatest difficulties in praying?

2. Have you experienced any disappointment with God that causes tension in the way you pray or hinders you from trusting God to answer your prayers?

3. Reflect on the following key statements from the Bible on prayer:

But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted!
John 17:7

And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure.
James 4:3

What can you learn from these two declarations about how to pray?

4. Read the following quote:

“Solitude is the furnace of transformation... the place of the great struggle and the great encounter—the struggle against the compulsions of the false self, and the encounter with the loving God who offers himself as the substance of the new self.”
Henri Nouwen

What do you think are the most important purpose(s) of the discipline of solitude? Why should we, like Jesus, regularly withdraw to a solitary place?

5. Thomas Merton said, “It is in deep solitude that I can find the gentleness with which to love others.” What do you make of this statement?

6. How can solitude help create an open space for God? How does it help us learn to ignore the rat race?

7. Read the following quote:

“This morning, as I came from the train and prayed for all the people on the street, I felt new energy surge into me. What it does to all of them to receive that instant prayer I may never know. What it does for me is electrical. It drives out fatigue and thrills one with eager power. How curious one’s mind feels thus encircling others. Is Jesus like that?”

Frank Laubach

Have you ever practiced such “flash prayers”—where to see someone is to pray for them? What was your experience like?

8. Read the following quote:

One hot July day, with the sun beating down, and my shirt drenched with perspiration, I stooped over my tiny tomato garden and picked a tomato. Prayer was the last thing on my mind. But as I held it in my hands, I was struck by how beautiful and red it was. Suddenly I was overwhelmed with the simple joy of being alive. I wanted to share the moment with God, to lift the tomato up into His face and laugh with delight over it. It even seemed that God, deep within me, was as delighted at this moment as I was. Together at the center.

For nearly an hour I went right on with my work in the garden... But inside, in a channel just beneath the surface, a stream of communion flowed silently between God and me. I never actually spoke words to God. I was utterly aware of my business in the garden. But I was somehow praying.

Sue Monk Kidd

Have you ever experienced anything like this? ...praying without words? Tell us about it.

God bless,

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