Prayerful consideration
- think before you Pray

Session 1
Lord, Teach us to pray

- Pray for your enemies. Pray for those who persecute you. Who are your enemies?
- What if we pray for our competitors and they do well and take some of our customers? Is that what God wants?
- What are you praying about right now?
- Sometimes we try everything we can to fix something ... but we forget to pray about it.

Q. What is prayer? A. Simply talking to the Father. That’s what Jesus did, He spoke with His Father.

- Prayer is a mindfulness that the One Who said, “I am with you always” truly is.
- If we believe that Jesus is always with us, it will radically change our lives.
- Do you say, “I don’t know how to pray.” Do you know how to groan?
- What was it about Jesus’ prayer life that made them want to pray?

1. Prayer is “caught” before it is “taught.”

- What kind of letters will people write about you or me? Have we been caught praying? What will be our legacy?

2. Who Jesus was made people interested in His lifestyle habits.

- What are your secrets? What are your habits?
- The Kingdom of God has a different “bottom line” than the world’s “bottom line.” Who you are matters more in the Kingdom of God.
- Is the Word of God authentic in your life? Do the people who know you best want to be like you?
- The disciples saw Jesus when He was tired, hungry and thirsty, burned out... at His Best AND Worst. And they still wanted to be like Him. When the people who know you best look at your life, what do they see?

- Do you pray about what tempts you?
- Keep on asking...
  Keep on looking...
  Keep on knocking...
  Is that true?

If you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?

Jesus is saying, “Pray about everything.”
- Be persistent.
- Does reality match what Jesus is saying here?

What are we not understanding about what Jesus says... because we KNOW that He only speaks the truth.

Once when Jesus had been out praying, one of his disciples came to him as he finished and said, “Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples.”
Luke 11:1

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God.
Romans 8:26-27

Father, may your name be honored. May your kingdom come soon. Give us our food, day by day. And forgive us our sins, just as we forgive those who have sinned against us. Don’t let us yield to temptation.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What “consistency” is there in your prayer life? How important do you consider prayer to be as part of your Christian walk or as part of your everyday life? Discuss this with the group.

2. How comfortable are you praying in front of: (Why is this so?)
   1. Family
   2. Friends
   3. Co-workers or employees
   4. Strangers

3. Have you ever been mentored or been a mentor to someone else in the area of prayer? Do you think it is necessary, or should prayer be “natural” for a born-again believer?

4. How would you respond to a fellow believer who questioned the validity of Luke 1:19 after praying for something for a long time and seeing no results?
Prayerful consideration
- think before you Pray

Session 2
When the Answer is “No” - Part 1

Mr. Darren Fred

• If what Jesus said is true, then where’s my perfect life? Why is it not working out in life in the way the Scripture seems to say it should?

• As we pray, it might be a good idea to consider these things:

  1. Sometimes we ask for wrong things.

     • In Jesus’ time, bread was essential to life. It’s not about our “wants” in life - it’s about the essentials of life. Jesus said, “I am the bread of life.”

     • Your dream ... our mission. Is your “dream” God’s mission? Not necessarily.

     • Some things we want are just wants or wishes, but they are not the things that will build us for eternity and will build in us the kind of person God wants us to be.

     • There are things we ask for that can take us away from God and His design purposes for our lives.

     • Prayer is not a wish list, it is not a letter to Santa Clause.

     • Prayer is where we get to know God, and where He puts His dreams in us.

     • His mission is His dream - and His dream becomes our dream. If you are living that dream, you are probably praying for the “right stuff.”

     • Sometimes we want success just for the intoxication of it.

  ...You ask with wrong motives.
  James 4:1-3

  2. We ask God to do something for us when we haven’t done our part.

     • Why doesn’t He just change me and make me into the person He wants me to be?

     • Does being a Christian sometimes cause us to think we have permission to be lazy? Is there an element of Spiritual Entitlement? We need to be faithful and do our part.

  3. We pray for things that aren’t bad, but might be bad for us. (2 Corinthians 12:6-9)

     • There are some things that God can’t give us because we are not mature enough to handle them, yet.

     • Jesus is interested in building people who look, talk, act, think and love as He loved when He was on the earth.

     • God won’t allow things to happen that are not ultimately good for us.

     • God says, “I know who you were... and you were successful, because you were faithful to what I called you to be.”

     God’s #1 Goal: To make us more like His Son, every day.

  4. The answer to our prayer may involve the will of another person.

     Change that person -- change that circumstances -- Sometimes it is I that needs to change.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Read aloud and discuss Matthew 7:7-11. Talk about experiences you’ve had when you sincerely asked for something in prayer but got a “no” answer or nothing ever happened as you had hoped. Consider if any of the first four considerations/reasons could provide some insight as to why God would deny your request.

Considerations/reasons for a “no” response to our requests:

1. Sometime we ask for wrong things.
2. We ask God to do something for us when we haven’t done our part.
3. We pray for things that aren’t bad, but might be bad for us.
4. The answer to our prayer may involve the will of another person.
Prayerful consideration
- think before you Pray

Session 3
When the Answer is “No” - Part 2

Mr. Darren Fred

If Jesus says, “Ask ...” but you aren’t receiving, why not?

5. Sometimes we don’t get what we ask for because there is unforgiveness in our lives.

• Forgive as you are forgiven - they are connected.
• Without condition – forgive. “Father, help me forgive.”

6. Sometimes our prayers are hindered because WE need forgiveness.

• Sometimes we need to say, “I’m sorry.”
• There may be times that we need to apologize to God.
• The love of God puts boundaries on our lives.

7. Our expectations of God are sometimes too low.

• Sometimes there is a disconnect between who God says He is and what we see in the Bible and what we expect in our lives.

God is not playing games with us!

• My faith is sometimes still too small. I still don’t expect enough of You.
• God loves you.
  He’s still the God that opens barren wombs.
  He’s still the God that heals cancer.
  He’s still the God Who wants to live His dream through you.

8. Sometimes we don’t know why God doesn’t answer our prayers the way we think He should – but we trust Him anyway.

• It begins with what we are praying for and ends with who we become. God is building something in us for eternity.
• In the end, what we really want is to know Him.

How much more will your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?

• God knows what we need before we ask. He gives us Himself.
• Ask Him, “Fill me with your Holy Spirit, Make me like You, Put your DNA in me, whatever it costs me.”

Husbands, be considerate, treat your wives with respect so that your prayers won’t be hindered.
I Peter 3:7


Matthew 5:23-24
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Again, talk about experiences you’ve had when you sincerely asked for something in prayer but got a “no” answer or nothing ever happened as you had hoped. Consider if any of the second four considerations/reasons could provide some insight as to why God would deny your request.

Considerations/reasons for a “no” response to our requests:

5. Sometimes we don’t get what we ask for because there is unforgiveness in our lives.
6. Sometimes our prayers are hindered because we need forgiveness.
7. Our expectations of God are sometimes too low.
8. Sometimes we don’t know why God doesn’t answer our prayers the way we think He should – but we trust Him anyway.

It has been said that the Twin Pillars of Faith are simply this: God is sovereign and in control AND He always has my best interest at heart. Discuss this with your group. Do you believe these two things? How could this faith change your prayer life?
Prayerful consideration - think before you pray

Application & Commitment

James 1:22-25 NIV “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it— he will be blessed in what he does.”

John 15:5 NIV “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”

Don’t try to do this alone ...
Prayerfully consider what was taught in this series how you could best be used for God’s purposes as you apply what you have learned. Select one change in your behavior as a result of your prayer time.

Date Series Began: ___________________________________
Date Series Ended: ___________________________________
Participant’s Name: ___________________________________

A Biblical truth (principle) I learned from the lessons was: ________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________

I intend to apply this truth (principle): _______________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________

With the help of the Holy Spirit, I will begin applying this truth immediately. I ask and expect my group to hold me accountable for this and to check with me periodically to determine if I am doing so. Please ask me: ______________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________                                     _______________________
Signature                                                                                          Date