

Small Group Meeting on Jesus Teaches Us To Pray

Review (20 mins)

Reflect together on your experiences over the last week. *Where have you received encouragements in prayer?* What has God been teaching you? Where have you been growing in your walk with Him? Had you set yourself a challenge in your discipleship? How is that going? Share those experiences with your small group.

Read (10 mins)

Recap on the sermon from last Sunday. Try to give a summary to those who were not able to be present.

Luke 11:1-13

Read the Bible passage for this week, slowly and prayerfully. It might help to use your imagination to picture the scene. Below, you will find helpful background information in our 'Setting the Scene' section.

As you read, look out for *shockers* and *blockers*.

Shockers – a phrase, word, image or something from the text that resonates, stands out or connects with you.

Blockers – something from the text that raises questions for you.

Setting the scene:

- At first in his ministry Jesus retreats on his own to pray (4:42, 5:16, 6:12) but after appointing 'the 12' he includes them too (9:18, 9:29, 11:1ff, 22:39)

- Already Jesus has encouraged his followers to ‘pray for those who mistreat you’ (6:28) and later tells a parable to encourage them to ‘always pray and never give up’ (18:1ff)

Reflect (20 mins)

After you have all had time to read the text, pause and be still to listen to God through the Scriptures.

Begin your reflection time by each naming your *shockers* and *blockers*. Listen carefully to each other, share your thoughts and reflect on this passage together.

You might also like to explore one or more of these questions:

Q1. What patterns of praying do you find helpful? Share together, encourage and learn from each other.

Q2. Saints of past years used to say that they were ‘too busy **not** to pray’. What distracts you from praying? Share ways in which you have tried to overcome such distractions.

Q3. ‘Because of your shameless audacity’ (v8): is that a description that could be applied to your prayer life or do you feel uncomfortable with such a description?

Respond (20 mins)

As you draw near to the end of your session, consider how you might respond to your reading and reflection by “walking the talk”. What are you going to be doing this week that will help you seal what you have learnt about prayer? Maybe you are working on a previous challenge or activity – share how you are growing in that.

Some new challenge ideas

1 Try what you've learnt from each other

As you've shared together identify one thing that you will take into your own prayer life (or that of your household) over the next month which you have not tried before.

2 Praying corporately

The NIV footnote to the start of the Lord's Prayer has the more common 'Our Father' and, as can be seen from 'setting the scene' above, Jesus prayed corporately with his disciples.

Between now and Easter look to attend one or more opportunities for corporate prayer at Christ Church:

March 4th and April 1st Church prayer meetings

March 18th Hush – a contemplative prayer session

Every Wednesday at 7 a.m. – focusing on the vacancy

For those of you at work – look out for opportunities to join with colleagues to pray.

3 'Arrow Prayers'

Prayer can happen anywhere – before a business meeting, at the checkout, when chatting on the phone. Be aware of opportunities to pray silently or openly in all places – keep a record and see what God is doing.

4 Family Prayers

Parents, take time to reflect how you are modelling prayer for your children, and how they might teach you to pray.

Group Prayer

As a group, pray for one another this week as you explore a deeper life with God through prayer. Pray that your times of prayer and your attempt to walk in the light of God's ways will increase and become more habitual throughout each day. Finish by saying the Lords Prayer together (in your native tongue if the group has more than one represented).

Additional Notes

Many of us have been brought up on the acronym **ACTS** for patterning our prayer lives:

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| Adoration | Praising God for who he is (e.g. Ps 96 or Ps 148) |
| Confession | Saying sorry and asking for forgiveness and the power to repent (e.g. Ps 51) |
| Thanksgiving | Thanking God for what he has done, not least as we have seen him answer prayers (it can help to keep a journal) |
| Supplication | Praying for others |

The team in Kisoro last summer learnt another acronym from Steven Ruzaza the Diocesan Secretary to encourage us to be persistent in prayer. **PUSH: Pray Until Something Happens**