

Personal Liturgy

Week 10: The Power of Prayer

Primary Passages: Acts 2:42-47; Acts 3, Acts 4:32-37

Related Passages: Matthew 6:9-13

"The true church lives and moves and has its being in prayer."

- Leonard Ravenhill

"The history of missions is the history of answered prayer."

- Samuel Zwemer

LifeGroup Study Guide:

Personal Liturgy Self-Assessment: As you've been praying the Lord's prayer everyday over the past few weeks, what insights has God given you? Do you see any examples where you are shifting toward your first impulse being to rely on the Lord instead of relying on your own strength?

Read and Recap: Have someone read **Acts 2:42-47, Acts 3:1, 3:12 and 3:31, and Acts 4:32-35**. Then recap some of the highlights from this week's sermon.

Read Matthew 6:9-13. From both the communal language of the Lord's prayer and the practice of the early church, we see prayer not only as an individual activity, but also as a communal activity.

- How would you describe the prayer life of our LifeGroup? Do we put appropriate emphasis on prayer? When do we pray as a group (i.e. when someone is hurting, confessing, celebrating, talking about their friend who doesn't know Jesus, etc.)? When should we pray?
- Do you have any discomfort, fears, concerns or hesitations towards praying out loud in a group? Where do you think that comes from and how can we encourage you?

Guided Prayer Time (20-30 minutes) - Have someone in your group read the following gospel reminder before praying together as a group:

"Grace means we aren't saved by our prayers. Jesus' perfect prayer life has been substituted for ours. We stand before God now counted as perfect pray-ers of perfect prayers. And grace means we accept each other freely. We give room for weaknesses and struggles. We help each other grow and learn out of kindness and acceptance. We don't need to impress God or each other.

You are already loved. You are already righteous in God's sight. You will not be judged by God or by us as to the quality of your prayers. There is nothing to fear."

Read Acts 3:23-31.

- **Part 1 - Acknowledge God's Goodness.** These believers start praying by acknowledging who God is (v. 24). Let's do the same. As a group, spend some time thanking God for who He is without thinking about the stuff He gives you. Focus on how incredible He is on His own.
- **Part 2 - Pray Through Scripture.** Next, these believers prayerfully interpret their lives through the lens of God's Word (v. 25-26). Think about Scripture that helps you understand what's going on in your life right now. If nothing comes to mind, pray through these verses as we head into Easter:

1 Corinthians 15:1-6 - *"Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep."*

2 Peter 3:8-9 - *"The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance."*

Matthew 6:9-10 - *"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."*

- **Part 3 - Bring Your Anxieties to God.** In v. 27, these believers talk about how bad everything is going as all kinds of completely different, people and groups gang up against Jesus. What are your anxieties? Tell God.
- **Part 4 - Remember** God is sovereign. In the same breath, while they are casting their anxieties on the Lord, they immediately acknowledge how God is in control even when the circumstances are bad (v. 28). Ask God to help you see how He is in control even in the midst of painful circumstance.
- **Part 5 - Ask God to Bring His Kingdom.** After Peter and John have been falsely imprisoned overnight, God's people don't hunker down in fear. They praise God, ask Him for boldness, and commit themselves all the more to seeing God's kingdom come on earth. Pray for God to give us boldness and to help us value His kingdom more than anything else. Pray for lots of people to come to our Easter celebration and hear the gospel. Pray for our community to more and more be a supernatural community of grace and love for each other, and our neighbors.