

## LEADER'S GUIDE / FOR FEB. 25 SERMON

### QUICK REVIEW

How did Pastor Mark's message on prayer make you think differently or challenge you in some way?

### MY STORY

1. Is there anything in your life (your spiritual life, or other) that you would say you are devoted to?  
If devoted seems like too strong a word, or if your group participants struggle with this question, ask them what in their life they have given time and attention to in order to improve a skill, gain mastery of, etc.
2. Have you ever stopped praying about something because God wasn't answering?  
If possible, come prepared with an answer that will get discussion started. This is a question that requires vulnerability and trust within your group.
3. Which word best describes your view of prayer: discipline, duty, desire, drudgery?

### DIGGING DEEPER

1. The idea of praying continually, or praying without ceasing is both well-known and biblical (1 Thess. 5:16-17). But what does that look like? In addition to giving the admonishment to pray, the Bible gives examples of how to pray. As a group, look at the following Scriptures (You don't have to read them word for word. Look for the main ideas.):

#### **Psalm 22: 1, 11; Psalm 88:1-2, 13; Lamentations 2:18**

- One of Mark's points this morning was that it's natural to pray in times of crisis. When you are in crisis, how do you pray? Is it okay to be honest with God about our feelings toward a crisis?

#### **2 Thess. 1:11; Eph. 1:15-19, 6:18-19; Philippians 1:3-5**

- Prayers for others are called "intercessory prayers" because we are interceding or acting on behalf of someone else. Why is it important to pray for others? Who around you is (or should be) on your prayer list?

#### **1 Samuel 2:1-2; Luke 1:46-49; Psalm 8**

- What attributes of God do you see in these prayers?
- Why is it important and worth our time to praise God in our prayers?

#### **Daniel 9:17-18**

- In the verses prior to these, Daniel lays out a petition for forgiveness. In v. 17-18, he gives the reason why he can pray so confidently. Put these verses in your own words. Why can we pray with confidence?

If someone in your group expresses an interest in studying more about prayer, Tom Schindler recommends [Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God](#) by Timothy Keller

2. Jesus, Himself, gave us a model for prayer. It is recorded in Matthew 6 and in Luke 11. Have you ever learned to recite this prayer? Was reciting this prayer Christ's intent? While it's okay to use this prayer as a regular part of a church service, there can be the danger that it can become so familiar that we stop seeing the message.

The Lord's Prayer can be a sensitive issue because so many people grew up in churches that used it as part of their liturgical practice. To the other end, many churches shy away from ever using it. Help your group see the importance of Christ's prayer model in shaping our own prayer life.

*On Earth as it is in Heaven* by Warren Wiersbe is a good resource.

3. Take a look at this prayer in either or both places. If you broke the prayer into components, how would you label the parts of this prayer? Are you including these components in your prayers? Although your group may have their own words for these components, one way of expressing them would be:
  - Praising God
  - Praying for God's Will (praying that we see God's will the way He does)
  - Praying for provision (reliance on God)
  - Asking for forgiveness (and extending forgiveness to others)
  - Asking for God's protection (deliverance from evil)

### **TAKING IT HOME**

1. Moving prayer from duty to desire may require some creativity in your prayer time. As a group, generate a list of creative prayer techniques. (Praying Scripture, journaling, prayer walking, praying in color (doodling), etc.) Pick one or two to try this week and be ready to report your experiences to the group the next time you meet.
2. Rate your prayer life on a scale of 1-10. Yes, this is highly subjective! Don't worry about how you currently compare to the people around you! Now, what is one thing you can do this week to move yourself up one number on the scale?
3. This week as you intercede for your group members, use the verses above from 2 Thessalonians, Ephesians and Philippians as a model.