



September 11, 2022 | David Smith
THE SOURCE OF OUR NEEDS

With prayer we can learn the prayer is a delight and not a duty.

MEETING AGENDA

WELCOME (10 MINUTES)

For the next three weeks, we will look at the vital role that prayer plays in our lives as followers of Christ. We want to encourage you and your group to take time to engage more deeply in prayer this month. To do this, we have resources that you can take advantage of. Just text "Challenge" to 32000. In addition, we have included a prayer prompt section where your group can practice prayer each week. This week we will look at the practice of prayerful confession.

This week we will learn how prayer can be a delight in our lives rather than feel like a duty...how it can be the best work, we do all week long.

Don't forget to take attendance via the attendance reminder email.

ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

Jesus promised us our "daily bread." What are some ways God has provided your daily bread? What does daily bread mean in your life/your family's life?

INTRODUCTION (5-10 MINUTES)

Anchor Verses: Luke 11:1-13; Psalm 73

This week we will learn how prayer can be a delight in our lives rather than feel like a duty...how it can be the best work we do all week long.

INTO THE WORD (25 MINUTES)

1. **Read Proverbs 30:8-9 and Luke 11:1-3. It is essential to have our requests couched in gratitude and the importance of being expectant but satisfied with God's provision. What thoughts do you have regarding this balance: the importance of being both expectant yet content and grateful for what God has given us?**

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. Boyd Bailey wrote in a devotional on the "Wisdom Hunters" website, "We may not have what we want or even deserve, but in Christ, we have all that is necessary. So, be humbly grateful to God, and contentment will increase its influence." We may think we need more or compare what we have to what others around us have, but it is essential to remember that God will provide us with what we need. If we use that perspective as the starting point, we will learn to be more content with what God does give us.]

2. **Read Luke 11:1-4. When Jesus teaches his disciples to pray, what comes before the need for daily bread? Why is this prior element an essential part of our prayers?**

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. Luke 11:2; Prayer doesn't begin with our needs, but God's glory. This helps set our perspective of who God is and that His kingdom needs to be our priority.]

3. **Read Matthew 5:3-12. We are all delighted when we receive blessings from God. The goal of a Christian ought to be that God esteems him or her as "Blessed." What did Jesus say about those whom God says are Blessed? How does prayer help us to be Blessed as God sees it? Consider how Christ explained those who are seen as Blessed.**

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

*[Answers will vary. Prayer causes us to stop thinking of ourselves and focus on the greatness of God; through prayer, we may be humbled. "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him because he cares for you. **1 Peter 5:6-7** Prayer is a source of comfort; it allows us to "do something" when we feel there is nothing that can be done. Through prayer, we can access the highest God of all creation and, in that time, know that we are not alone, for He is with us. Even when we are so desponded that we do not have the words, God helps us to pray. "Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words." **Romans 8:26** Prayer for us the opportunity for deep introspection. But, more importantly, we invite God into the deepest parts of our hearts so that the Holy Spirit may begin the work of transformation in us. "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." **Psalms 51:10** "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. **2 Corinthians 3:18**]*

APPLICATION (25 MINUTES)

1. **Read Psalm 73:16-17 and Luke 11:1-3. Think of times when you have faced significant struggles or problems in your life as a Christ-follower. Rather than simply asking God for help, we should worship him and focus on his glory first. What are some ways that we can make sure God is at the center of our focus amid all the struggles in our life?**

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. Rather than focusing mainly on our problems, we must turn quickly to God, our source of help, who can give us peace and comfort. Writing for LifeTree Institute, Doug Britton recommended several ways to do this: Remember that God is with you (Isaiah 41:10), pray to know God's peace (Romans 15:13), ask God to intervene (Psalm 18:1-6), and pray for God's guidance through the situation (Psalm 31:1-4). If we get into the habit of turning to God first rather than spending a lot of time on our problems, our mind will be renewed to keep God rather than our problems as our focus.]

2. **Read Luke 11:2-3; How would it help your prayer life to focus first on the Kingdom of God and His glory and then appreciate all that He provides across every aspect of our life?**

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

["Daily bread" is a metaphor for all our needs (Material, Relational, Physical, Emotional, Spiritual) Discuss Proverbs 30:8-9 "...give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full and deny you and say, "Who is the Lord?" or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God." Look again at Lk 11:3 "Give us each day our daily bread." To see that we can come expectant but satisfied in our trust of Him. And that we never confuse our "source" with the "resource"]

3. **Although he was far from perfect, King David was called "a man after God's own heart." (Acts 13:22) David prayed often and sought God's wisdom in his kingship and daily life. Moreover, he went to God even though he had sinned. What does David's example show us about how we are to seek God first, in our challenges, in our triumphs, and even in our sins?**

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

*[Answers will vary. David acknowledged that God's Will was perfect even if he, David, was not. He often fell short. David sought God's will for his life. "Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, seek him with their whole heart, who also do no wrong, but walk in his ways!" **Psalm 119:2-3** "For I find my delight in your commandments, which I love. I will lift my hands toward your commandments, which I love, and meditate on your statutes." **Psalm 119:47-48** David acknowledged God as a source of all his blessings. Even in his triumphs, David gave thanks to God for all that He had given him. "I wash my hands in innocence, and go about your altar, O LORD, proclaiming aloud your praise and telling of all your wonderful deeds" **Psalm 26:6-7** "Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! **Psalm 100:4** Even after repeatedly committing numerous very heinous sins, David did not run from God's judgment. David trusted that God loved him and would never abandon him, even in his shame. David confessed his sin to God and accepted God's correction. David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." And Nathan said to David, "The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die. **2 Samuel 12:13** "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!" **Psalm 51:1-2** "Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." **Psalm 139: 23-24]***

Prayer Prompts (5-10 MINUTES) (Choose 1 or both)

Confession - Admitting and confessing your sin to God [Psalm 32:3-5, 1 John 1:4-9]

1. Spend 5 minutes in silence, reflecting and confessing to God. Afterward, close out your night in prayer, asking for forgiveness for the things that separate us from Him.
2. This week, if you feel comfortable, reach out to one member of your small group and share one of the things you confessed to God. If appropriate, agree to hold one another accountable and to pray for one another moving forward.

PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for giving us a way to stay connected to you. May we grasp your love and care for our lives as we spend time in prayer for you. Help us to remember that prayer does not need to feel like a duty, but instead, it can be an opportunity to take delight in You and for You to delight in us. Remind us that You will provide what we need day by day, and keep our hearts steadfast as we wait on You to answer us. Help us to trust in You to reorder our priorities and be all we need. We love you and thank You for who You are in our lives. In Jesus' name, amen.