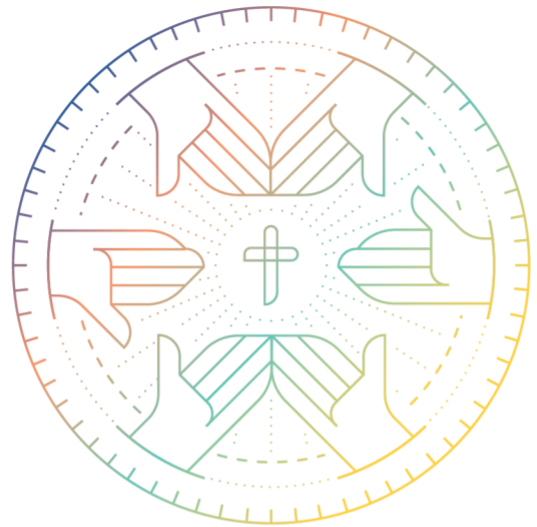


Group Life.

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ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

What question have you most often wondered regarding prayer?

OR

If you had 10 minutes for a One-on-One conversation with Jesus, what would you talk to him about?
What question would you ask?

INTRODUCTION (5-10 MINUTES)

Read Mark 7:24-30.

What most stood out to you from this week's sermon?

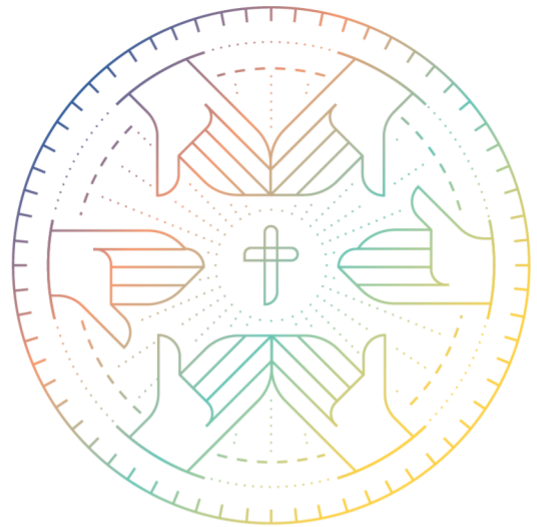
INTO THE WORD (15 MINUTES)

Read Acts 10:34-35, 44-45 and Psalm 62:8. The Scriptures are clear that God shows no favoritism, as the story from Mark 7 illustrates this truth. 1) Discuss what the Syrophenician woman brought to the conversation with Jesus. The qualities you list are essentials in prevailing prayer. 2) How did she reflect the truth of Psalm 62:8?

HOST Guidance: She was desperate. She was passionate. She had nowhere else to turn. She had faith that Jesus could fix this. She went to Him. She fell down before him in humble submission. These things are postures for prayer, both physically and spiritually. The woman showed great trust in Jesus, and like Psalm 62:8 mentions, she poured out her heart to God.

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Read Mark 7:27 and Matthew 15:24-25. Discuss the meaning of Jesus' use of the word "dog" in reference to the Syrophenician woman. Was it signifying something cultural, something derogatory or perhaps something metaphorical?

HOST Guidance: Dogs were seen as unclean animals. Similarly, Gentiles were seen as unclean because they were excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. (Eph. 2:12-13) The Jews were God's chosen people (Ex. 19:3-6). The issue of the woman's desperate need was more about timing than about Jesus' willingness to meet her need. Jesus, himself a Jew, came to the Jews first, before the Gospel would be widely proclaimed to the Gentiles. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek (Rom. 1:16). Though the Jews came first, Jesus has compassion on all (Psalm 145:9).ok, I'll attach it here. Take a look when you have a moment in the car.

Read Matthew 6:1, 6:5-8. Discuss how these verses from Jesus' greatest sermon reflect on the need for humility in prayer? What do they teach us about humility in prayer?

HOST Guidance: The sermon begins by highlighting the hypocrisy of the Pharisees in practicing disciplines like giving and prayer more as a show to bring them recognition, than as acts of humble devotion toward God. Don't try to impress God with lofty words or fancy phrases, but rather be simple, transparent and humble. Be honest. Don't hide anything. Trust that God already knows what you need and you do not need to convince him. He deeply loves you.

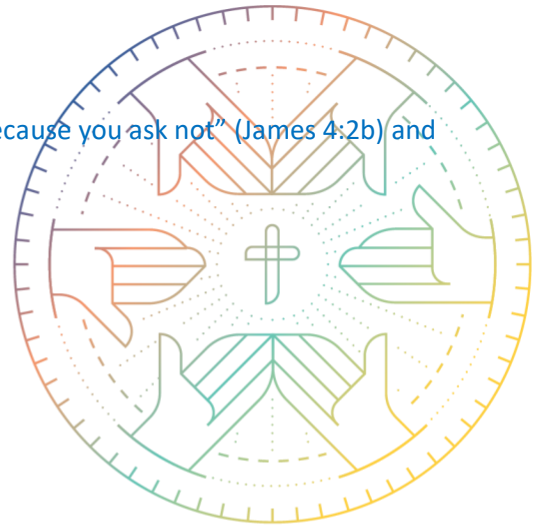
Read Mark 7:28-30. What did the woman's answer to Jesus mean? What was she saying and how does her statement represent boldness in prayer?

HOST Guidance: This woman continued the metaphor Jesus had developed. She took the metaphor one more step, which was bold and filled with hope. She was willing to ask Jesus to see beyond the cultural bias of his day and respond to her need based on her faith (and her desperation). She recognized her lack of standing before Jesus (as a Gentile), yet brought her

request to Jesus anyway. Remember, “you have not because you ask not” (James 4:2b) and “Give all your worries to him” (1 Peter 5:7).

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APPLICATION (20 MINUTES)

Host Guidance: Below are several separate application questions for your group to consider and discuss. Choose as many questions as you have time to discuss, but try to close with the last question below.

Take a look at your recent posture for prayer. Do you see the elements of the woman in your own prayer posture? Is there anything about her approach to Jesus you'd like to mimic?

What's one element of your personal prayer life that reflects your humility before God?

Discuss how we can come before God in prayer and demonstrate both humility and boldness? What does that look like for us? How can we do that?

Is there a situation in your life that is desperate? How can you reflect the Syrophenician woman's faith in your own situation? How do you show God both your trust and your desperation?

Discuss the meaning of the Tim Keller quote, “God will either give us what we ask or give us what we would have asked if we knew everything He knows.” How does this encourage you today?

PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

Our Savior and Lord Jesus, we are grateful for this story today. It encourages us that you show no favoritism and that you are easily touched by our weakness and pain. Help us to believe that you a God who answers those who diligently seek you. Help us to trust in your power and your love, which meets us in our moments of despair. As we bring our lives and our circumstances to you, we trust in your answer because you know all things and you know what is best. Amen.