

CONVERSATION GUIDE

1. Take 5-10 minutes to discuss last week's sermon.
2. What convicted you, surprised you, or made you stop and think? What topic or comment brought up by the preacher made you say, "I didn't see that coming!"?

This week's sermon topic is "Prayer." In this week's passage, Jesus teaches us what to say when we pray, but also tells us how to approach God in prayer and what to expect when we do.

READ Luke 11:1-13

DISCUSS and REFLECT

Read also Matt. 6:9-13 for a longer version of what we call "The Lord's Prayer."

What is Jesus teaching us about what our prayers should always include? (Hint: One example might be praise and worship.)

Some commentators say the phrase "our daily bread" may mean more than just physical food, it may also refer to spiritual food. Discuss this both in the context of this prayer and of the parable that immediately follows.

The prayer includes a request to God to "forgive our sins." Some theological interpretations hold that our sins, past, present, and future, were forgiven the moment we accepted Christ as our Lord and Savior. Why do you think Jesus tells us to ask for forgiveness? How, if at all, do you think this instruction is connected with the phrase that immediately follows ("as we forgive those who trespass against us")?

In interpreting the parable of the neighbor asking his friend for bread, Jesus uses the word which in Greek is "anaideia." This is variously translated "persistence" (NASB), "boldness" (NIV), or "shamelessness". In *The Message*, Eugene Peterson says, "if you stand your ground, knocking and waking all the neighbors"! What do you think Jesus is really saying here about how we should respond when a prayer is not immediately answered?

APPLY (Note: If there is sufficient time in your session, discuss these additional questions.)

The Apostle Paul writes to the church at Thessalonica, *"17 pray without ceasing; 18 in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus (1 Thess. 5:17-18 NASB)."*

1. Who is a "prayer warrior" in your life whom you might aspire to emulate?
2. Obviously we can't literally pray "without ceasing". How do you know when enough is enough...or when you aren't praying enough?
3. If someone asked you to describe your prayer life, how would you describe it?

MEMORIZE

"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you, seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you (Luke 11:9 NASB)."

CHALLENGE

Consider selecting one of the following that is NOT currently part of your prayer life, and commit to exercise this discipline daily for two weeks:

- 1.) Set a daily time for prayer, Bible study, and devotion. Even just 15 min. will be a blessing to you. Consider using a daily devotional guide such as Oswald Chambers' *My Utmost for His Highest*.
- 2.) Start a daily prayer journal. Record in this journal things and people that you prayed for that day. Check back and reflect on answers to those prayers.
- 3.) Email the FPC Caring Ministry and ask to be placed on the email list for the prayer letter. Have this letter in front of you during your quiet time and pray for individuals listed as the Spirit leads you. (Caring@fpchouston.org)

READING SUGGESTIONS

Prayer: Experiencing Awe & Intimacy With God, by Timothy Keller (available at www.amazon.com, www.gospelinlife.com, www.christianbook.com, or www.barnesandnoble.com.)