

## GET FIT

### “PRAYER IS WORKING THE CORE”

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#### WHY PEOPLE DON'T PRAY MORE?

1. NOT SURE YOU KNOW HOW TO PRAY.
2. GET BORED OR DISTRACTED WHILE TRYING TO PRAY.
3. THINK YOUR REQUESTS ARE TOO SMALL FOR GOD.
4. NOT SURE YOUR PRAYERS WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

- **PRAYER IS COMMUNICATING WITH GOD.**

*Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my sighing. Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray. In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.*

Psalm 5:1-3

#### TALK TO GOD

1. WITH GUT-LEVEL HONESTY

*Moses returned to the LORD and said, "O Lord, why have you brought trouble upon this people? Is this why you sent me? Ever since I went to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has brought trouble upon this people, and you have not rescued your people at all." Exodus 5:22-23*

*"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men... And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Matthew 6:5, 7*

2. **ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS TO YOU**

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. Philipians 4:6*

*Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7*

3. **CONTINUALLY**

*Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

**Pray**

**Until**

**Something**

**Happens**

*As she kept on praying to the LORD, Eli observed her mouth. Hannah was praying in her heart, and her lips were moving but her voice was not heard. 1 Samuel 1:12-13*

4. **AND LISTEN FOR HIS RESPONSE**

*And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. 1 Kings 19:12b-13*

*My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. John 10:27*

#### Discussion Questions:

- 1) **On a scale of 1-10 (ten being the highest), how would you rate your prayer life this last week?**
- 2) **Describe how you communicate with God. What is effective and meaningful to you?**
- 3) **What is your biggest current prayer need? Spend time praying together.**

# Getting to Know God Through Prayer

## Week 1

Describe a time when God answered an important prayer in your life. How did the way God answered your prayer affect your relationship with Him?

*Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my sighing. Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray. In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.*

## Psalm 5:1-3 (NIV)

On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the highest, how would you rate your time spent talking with God this past week? Explain.

*"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men... And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.*

## Matthew 6:5, 7 (NIV)

How honest are you with God when you pray? What are some reasons that keep us from being totally honest with God?

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*

## Philippians 4:6 (NIV)

Describe how you communicate with God. What ways are most effective and meaningful to you?

What types of things do you typically pray about? *Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus*

## 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NIV)

What keeps most people from praying on a regular basis? What are some specific ways we can overcome those challenges?

*My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.*

## John 10:27 (NIV)

What is the biggest issue or need in your life currently? Spend some time praying for those needs as a group.

**Final thought:** With your group pray God will help you develop a deeper relationship with Him through prayer. Set aside a time each day over the next week to spend time talking with God.

**Here are some suggestions you may want to use for your time with God this week:**

**Day 1** - Spend time thanking God for all he has done in your life. Tell Him some specific things in which you are thankful for.

**Day 2** - Have an honest conversation with God by telling Him your true feelings about Him. Ask for a deeper relationship with Him.

**Day 3** - Pray for some specific needs in your own life. Pray for both large and small requests.

**Day 4** - Pray for others. Pray specifically for the needs that were voiced by your group. Pray for each member of your group by name.

**Day 5** - Listen to God. Present your requests to God from the four previous days and then simply pray, quietly listening for God's gentle whisper.

# Getting to Know God Through Prayer

## Week 1

### For Further Study

To use this resource, simply select one or two questions from each category below that you think will help your group discussion. Alternatively, you can use these questions and scriptures in your own personal devotions during the week.

### Open

Who has prayed for you in the past? How have their prayers helped you?

What role have someone's words of encouragement played in your life?

### Explore

#### Read Philemon 1:1-7

- Who wrote this letter? (1:1)
- To whom was this letter written? (1:1)
- What do we know about the church from this brief introduction? (1:2)
- What two godly qualities did Paul desire for his readers? (1:3)
- What was always a part of Paul's prayers? (1:4)
- What had Paul heard about the readers of this letter? (1:5)
- How did Paul pray for his audience? (1:6)
- What did Paul suggest Philemon would gain by actively sharing his faith? (1:6)
- What had Philemon done for Paul? (1:7)
- What had Philemon done for the other Christians in the region? (1:7)

### Reflect

- When are the normal times in a day or week that you pray?
- What are the subjects or concerns you most often address in your prayers?
- What do you think are the marks or ingredients of a good prayer?
- What is your reaction when someone says he or she is praying for you?
- How does it help a person to tell him or her that you are praying for them?

### Apply

Is there anyone God might be asking you to pray for this week?

What are some specific ways you can improve your prayer life this week?