

Sermon Based Small Group Guide

January 7, 2018 sermon:

The Power of a Praying Church: "Gentlemen, this is a football."

Warm up: (15-20 minutes)

Questions for discussion:

- 1.) Share your story with your group: What is something you wanted to learn (perhaps even excel at) that was a longer, more difficult process than you anticipated? (Could be a sport, a musical instrument, or some other life-skill like driving.)
- 2.) In the message, Pastor Craig mentioned mistaken views of prayer including "prayer as a magic wand", "prayer as a fire extinguisher" and "prayer as a battle of wills with God". What have you been taught about prayer that could possibly be a "myth or misconception" that causes guilt and makes your spiritual life harder?

Digging deeper: (20-30 minutes)

1. "Longer prayers are not stronger prayers." We hear people pray long prayers using impressive language and assume those are great prayers that God loves. This is not necessarily true. Look at the passages below...some of the most important prayers recorded in the Bible...and talk about their length and complexity (or simplicity).

-Matthew 6:9-13

-Genesis 24:12-14

-1 Chronicles 4:9-10

-1 Samuel 1:10-16

2. The story Jesus told in Luke 18 about two men and their VERY DIFFERENT prayers is an important one. Read [Luke 18:10-14](#) together and notice all the things that were different about their approach to God. Why do you think humility in prayer is so important?

3.) Prayer, more than anything else, is a conversation with God. How difficult is it for you to have a conversation with someone that you know is trying to hide something from you or is lying to you? That, in part, is why God demands honesty in our prayers and confessing our sins and receiving His forgiveness opens up communication. Read [Psalm 66:16-20](#) and discuss the importance of dealing with sin in our lives quickly.

Application: (5-10 minutes) In the next 7 weeks we are going to deal with as many questions and struggles that people have with prayer as possible. What would YOU (individually or as a group) hope would be addressed? Have your group leader get your questions to Pastor Craig. Close with an honest, simple prayer!