

Prayers *Small Group Discussion*

WEEK SIX

Mary's Magnificat

Luke 1:46-56

Prayer is a vital yet often confusing aspect of the Christian life. Do I pray enough? How should I pray? What should I pray about?

The prayers of the Bible have much to teach us about our freedom to relate to God through prayer, and in these prayers we learn about who Jesus is and what he has done for us.

Psalms 66:16-20

- ¹⁶ Come and hear, all you who fear God;
let me tell you what he has done for me.
¹⁷ I cried out to him with my mouth;
his praise was on my tongue.
¹⁸ If I had cherished sin in my heart,
the Lord would not have listened;
¹⁹ but God has surely listened
and has heard my prayer.
²⁰ Praise be to God,
who has not rejected my prayer
or withheld his love from me!

Romans 8:26-27

- ²⁶ In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. ²⁷ And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

Luke 1:46-56

- ⁴⁶ And Mary said:
"My soul glorifies the Lord
⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
⁴⁸ for he has been mindful
of the humble state of his servant.
From now on all generations will call me blessed,
⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me
— holy is his name.
⁵⁰ His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.
⁵¹ He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;
he has scattered those who are proud in their
inmost thoughts.
⁵² He has brought down rulers from their thrones
but has lifted up the humble.
⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.
⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel,
remembering to be merciful
⁵⁵ to Abraham and his descendants forever,
just as he promised our ancestors."
⁵⁶ Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months
and then returned home.

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Prayer Ideas

- Pair up and listen and pray for one another.
- Pray (with a partner, trio, large group) for your small group, your church, the greater church, missionaries, etc.
- Share requests together & pray for the person on your right this week.
- Brainstorm characteristics of God. Note them somewhere and take time to reflect & pray over each of them!
- Pray through a favorite worship song's lyrics together. Sing together.
- Pray for your neighbors and co-workers.
- Lay hands on one another to pray.
- Write a prayer on a post it note. Stick the notes all around the room. Take some time to travel and pray over all the prayers. Split the notes up to take home & pray this week.
- Take some time to think of things that start with each letter of the alphabet. Write or draw a picture and then pray prayers of thanks for each of those things listed.
- Kneel together. Take time to listen, pray silently and then pray aloud.
- Pray a Psalm. Look at Psalm 8 or one of your favorites and take time to pray through it together!
- Go for a prayer walk!
- Pray one word prayers.
- Pray for your city together.
- Other ideas?

What is the context of this prayer from Mary?

Potential answers: Mary gets a visit from an angel!? She is initially troubled with the news - and stunned as a virgin - but quickly accepts "I am the Lord's servant". Then goes to visit Elizabeth.

Often called "Mary's Magnificat" (Latin: my soul magnifies the Lord), what are other words for magnify and what words do we see 'doing this' toward God in this passage?

Potential answers: praise, enlarge, worship, intensify, adore, etc...Holy is his name, his mercy extends, performed mighty deeds, lifted up the humble, filled the hungry, helped his servant Israel - packed with huge praise!

Is your first response to new situations (potentially full of hardship or joy) a posture of praise & prayer to God, like Mary's? What is going on in your heart that's keeping you from responding this way?

Potential answers: Answers will vary.

Where in this passage do we see who Jesus is and what he has done for us?

Pray Together! Really. Do it!

Leader's Note: Yes this is different, but we do want you to take time to pray together before your accountability time.

Some of these prayer ideas work best with pens, paper, crayons, post it notes, a whiteboard, etc. Look through the list on the left, get creative, ask if anyone else has ideas, add in your own, be bold and try something new - and/or (potentially) plan ahead for next time!

Accountability Questions

How can we encourage you in the posture of your prayer this week? (cheer you on if you're doing great - challenge you if you're not)