

Praying Together

Spend time praying together with your group, giving time to share joys and concerns, but making sure you have enough time to actually pray. Jot down your own prayer requests before your gathering begins.

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In Jesus' Name

John 14:1-14

Eric Sorenson May 6, 2018

Notes on How to Pray for Others

How to Pray for our Church

Pray for unity and a growing sense of community

Pray for the Senior Pastor search committee that begins meeting soon

Pray for the church staff during this time of transition

Pray that our church board will be filled with God's wisdom and insight

Pray for the hospitalized and the infirmed

Pray for children's, youth and adult ministries

Other Concerns:

Pray for our Community, our country, the World, and our missionaries.

Opening Up

Even though it sounds great, would you *really* want to have a Genie offer you three wishes? If not, why not?

Digging Into Our Text

Have you ever had the experience of asking God for something specific, and the Lord answered it just that way? Do you think there's any rhyme or reason to why certain prayers of yours are answered and others not? Read John 14.1-14. At first glance, what does verse 14 appear to mean? Read John 15.7 and 16, then John 16.23, and note the repeated phrase, giving it an obvious emphasis. Are these verses instructing us to make sure we end our prayers, "In Jesus' Name"?

Take a few minutes to read the interesting (if not humorous) story in Acts 19.11-16. What was the core mistake these Jewish exorcists made that led to their streaking out of the house? What's the difference between what these exorcists tried to do and how Jesus instructs us in John 14.14? How might this incident contain a warning to make sure we don't misappropriate what Jesus says in John 14.14?

Read John 15.7 slowly, perhaps a couple of times. Write out your own paraphrase of that verse and then share it with your Life Group. There is a clarifying condition to asking Jesus anything and being assured it will be done. What is the clarifying condition? What are some other words for "abide?" What do you think Richard Foster means by the following statement? "This 'abide in me' is the all-inclusive condition for effective intercession . . . Nothing is more important to the life of prayer than learning how to become a branch."

Look over the earlier verses in John 14: How is Jesus' relationship with the Father a model of abiding? That Jesus lived in an abiding relationship with the Father is obvious, but *how* did he do it? To the best of your knowledge, think of different examples in the New Testament where Jesus can be seen cultivating his abiding relationship with the Father. Combine those together with other examples your group thinks of. What is FF Bruce saying when he wrote, "Jesus lives in his disciples' lives and prays with their hearts and through their lips"?

Getting Personal

If it's true that abiding in Jesus is key to effective prayer, how can you cultivate your abiding with Jesus? Can you incorporate any of Jesus' personal practices into your own life? What place does the Lord's Supper have in nurturing your relationship with Jesus? How can you incorporate some of Jesus' practices when you come together with your Life Group? How can we, as a church, get better at abiding in Jesus?

For Pondering in Private

Which of the spiritual practices that Jesus exemplified are particularly challenging for you to practice? Do you think that those more challenging practices would help round out your efforts to cultivate your relationship with Jesus?