

Sermon Discussion Guide- Week of Mar 11, 2018

“A Life of Prayer” Pastor Hall 8:15, 9:30 & 10:55

Getting Started- Life Updates, Prayer Requests & Opening Question (15-20 min)

- Is there anything that came up this past week in regard to the previous witness or application points that you would like to share? (Receiving Communion, Acts 2:42-27)
- Are there any joys or concerns that you would like to share with the group for the closing prayer time or for group members to hold in prayer during the week? (please note them below for later)

- What modern songs could you name that have the idea or concept of prayer in them? What message was being presented in them?

Review the Sermon (25 min)

Please read aloud the sermon scripture below. As you go through the discussion questions that follow, know that it is ok to skip questions in order to manage the time for discussions in each section.

Phillipians 4:4-9

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things. ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me – put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

- If you had to give a one-minute summary of the sermon message this week, what would you say?
- How does Paul’s background of suffering for serving Christ and his imprisonment at the time of writing today’s scripture add weight to this charge given to the followers of Christ to “Rejoice in the Lord always?”
- In Mark 1:35, Jesus got away from people in the early morning hours for a private prayer time with God. Why would Jesus, the Son of God, need to take time for prayer? Why do followers of Christ need prayer time with God?

- Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane in Luke 22:42 reflected a respect for God's ultimate will over his own personal preference. The apostle Paul prayed to have a "thorn in the flesh" removed and yet the answer he received from God was "my grace is sufficient for you." (2 Corinthians 12:8-9) What do these two scriptural examples teach us about prayer?

Personalize the Sermon (15 min)

- What were points of encouragement or challenge for you personally in the sermon?
- How do you respond to Richard Foster's statement- "Prayer catapults us into the spiritual frontier of life?"
- Pastor Hall shared that 22 years ago, her marriage was in trouble and yet when she prayed for peace and tried to follow God's lead, her marriage was restored. They will celebrate their 32nd anniversary this July. What frontiers of your life would you like to apply the discipline of personal prayer to?
- "Pray Until Something Happens", or the acronym PUSH, suggests taking a long-term view of the spiritual discipline of prayer, praying even when we don't feel like it. Have you ever taken an extended period of time to pray repeatedly about the same things? How do you believe God responded to those prayers?

Apply the Sermon (15-20 min)

- Christ Church's daily devotionals and challenges for the Lenten focus on prayer this week was provided on the Sunday morning handout, and is available at www.christchurchsl.org/lentprayer. You can also subscribe to receive daily emails at www.christchurchsl.org/lent. Please join the community in learning about and practicing the discipline of prayer this week!
- What forms of prayer might you consider trying this week? Using prepared prayers written by other Christians? Meditating on one or two verses of scriptures? Using doodle art as a visual expression of things you are placing in God's hands this week? Singing or reading the words of a favorite hymn? Other forms not listed here?
- Pastor Michelle will be leading a prayer retreat at Christ Church this Saturday, from 9am-1:30 with breakfast provided. You can register at www.christchurchsl.org/lentenretreat. If you are not able to attend, would you consider setting time aside on Saturday morning where you are for personal prayer?

Witness & Closing Prayer (5-10 min)

- One of the ways Christians can be a witness to those around them is to show loving concern for others and to offer to pray for them. Have you offered to pray for others you have been in conversation with before? Are you open to that if the opportunity presented itself this week?

- The group leader or another volunteer who took notes on the prayer requests shared earlier in the meeting, may now lead the group in closing prayer.