

Faith in Church!

Prayer



Faith in Church! Prayer ushers in the Kingdom

Passage(s): Matthew 16:13-20 (also Luke 10:18-20 and Matt 18:18-20).

This week has a strong prayer focus and so the notes are slightly different to normal. They are designed to help you discuss how prayer and faith combine, and also to help you to have a focus of prayer throughout your meeting.

IN - helping a sense of belonging.

- What comes to mind when you hear the word 'prayer' (words/thoughts/emotions/experiences)?
- What experiences or elements of prayer have been most significant in shaping your faith?

UP - hearing from God and growing.

Spend some time thinking about your heart for God and God's heart for you when it comes to your prayers using the following two exercises:

Exercise #1: Your heart for God: Pray a very simple prayer asking God to reveal to each of you something of his desire for you to connect with him. Have someone read Psalm 63 aloud and slowly, leaving some space for listening to God (David offered this psalm of praise to God when his own life was threatened in the desert of Judah). Question for discussion: Which of these verses encouraged you or challenged you about connecting with God?

Exercise #2: God's equipping for you: Discussion question: What are some of the things that help you pray (and what makes it harder for you to pray?). Read Luke 10:18-20. Discussion questions: What encourages you and challenges you about these verses when it comes to faith and prayer? From reading this passage, is there anything that you would like God to strengthen in you? Prayer: Either in pairs, smaller groups or as a whole group spend some praying for each person in line with these verses (maybe asking for more power, knowledge of authority, assurance of his love, ...)

OUT - impacting others.

Spend some time seeking God about some specific issues:

Exercise #3: Strategic Prayer (Listen, Share, Bind & Loose): Read Matthew 16:13-20 & 18:18-20. Either as one group or as smaller groupings: Share some situations to pray for, and then ask God these 2 key questions: (1) What is the enemy's scheme at work here? (2) What is your purpose, God? Share what comes to mind and use whatever you discern from these two questions to form the basis of some simple prayers to bind the work of the enemy and loose the work of God.