

**IS ANYBODY UP THERE?**  
**WEEK 2 DISCUSSION GUIDE**  
**"EXPECTATION"**

**READ**

This week we continued our series, "Is Anybody Up There," by reflecting on answers to some common questions about prayer.

Why should I pray? Prayer is about intimacy with God and is rooted in surrender. When we surrender to God repeatedly in prayer, we learn to trust God more and this builds intimacy.

*God designed the human machine to run on Himself. He Himself is the fuel our spirits were designed to burn, or the food our spirits were designed to feed on... God cannot give us happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing.* C.S. Lewis

If you want to live in intimate connection with God, then prayer is a necessity. Prayer provides a level of intimacy with God that nothing else will. It is about building intimacy by learning to trust Him as you surrender your life to Him. As you surrender to God in prayer, you will experience peace that only He can provide.

When should I pray? "*Pray continually,*" (1 Thessalonians 5:17), this is also translated as, "*pray without ceasing.*" We should pray every day, but not as a burden or something to check off our list, but as an ongoing interaction and a conversation with our heavenly father.

Where should I pray? Often when Jesus prayed he would go off by himself. "*Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed*" (Mark 1:35). Pray where you can get away from distractions and really focus.

How long should I pray for? Pray for as long as it takes to surrender to God. You want to be able to honestly say, "*your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven*" (Matthew 6:10). Allow time in prayer for God to change your heart and to align with His will.

What should I pray for? "*And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests...*" (Ephesians 6:18). Pray for anything and everything. Be honest with God, and don't try to hide the messy parts of your life. If we want to surrender to God, then we need to express it. Bring to God what you need to surrender the most. Prayer is about intimacy and trust that is based on honesty.

Ephesians 3:14-21

*For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*

In Paul's prayer for the Ephesians church he takes a posture of surrender and kneels. If you have a difficult time surrendering to God in prayer, you might want to try kneeling or praying with your hands open. Notice the boldness of Paul's prayer. When you pray don't hold back, instead be bold and specific. Pray with anticipation and expectation, expecting God to act.

### **DISCUSS**

Do you have a favorite place to pray, one that helps you to eliminate distractions and focus on prayer? What does this look like?

Think about a time in your life when you felt an increased connection with and trust in God as a result of prayer. Share this with your group.

Brainstorm ideas with your group, for creative ways you can incorporate prayer into your everyday life.

How does your life look different as a result of prayer?

In Paul's prayer to the Ephesians, he acknowledges God's ability to do "immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine." Share with your group a time in your life when God answered prayer in a way you could never have imagined.

### **PRAY FOR YOUR GROUP**

Pray that we would pray continually, that this would be an integral part of our daily lives. Pray that we would be honest with God in prayer as we surrender to Him.

### **PRAY FOR FCC**

Pray that we would be bold and specific in our prayers. Pray that we would not just ask God to act on our behalf but that we would pray boldly for strength and power to work with God to bring about His will.

**PRAY FOR OUR GLOBAL PARTNERS**

Please pray for our team of volunteers from FCCHB who left Friday, June 7- June 15 to serve in Ecuador with our global partners Ibero American Ministries. Pray for safe travel and for God to work mightily in their lives. Pray for those they will be meeting and working alongside as they assist in building a home for a family who lost theirs in the earthquake of 2017. Pray for relationships to develop and for boldness in sharing the love of Jesus and encouraging our partners who dedicate their lives to the communities in Ecuador.