

Week beginning: 21st May 2006

Discipleship : Prayer

Welcome: Someone once said ‘There are more tears shed over answered prayer than over unanswered prayer’. Does your cell agree? Share your experiences of answered prayer – and how you felt!

Worship: Don’t forget to worship in your cell meeting. It is through worship that we draw near to God! (If you have musicians you can sing or listen/sing along with a worship CD or do something even more creative!) *Also – How much of the hymn ‘What a friend we have in Jesus’ does your cell know by heart? Why do you think it is so unforgettable – is it really just the tune?*

Discuss:

Prayer has many different facets including the following:

- Waiting on the Lord
- Interceding or praying for others
- Asking God for what we need
- Listening to God
- Standing in Spiritual Warfare
- Thanking God
- Offering praise to God as a sacrifice
- Asking God to forgive our sins

From the list, pick the 3 aspects of prayer which you think are most important – don’t just say ‘they are *all* important’ – which 3 facets figure most prominently in ***your*** daily prayers? Now compare your top 3 with the rest of the cell. Which aspects of prayer got most votes? Which got least? Discuss some possible reasons for the results.

Word: James 5:13-18 - Prayer results in the application of God's Power into the situation that we are praying for. We can *all* do this as we become confident of the fact that God hears our prayers and will answer them with Power. The Power does not belong to us but to Him. What He is looking for in us is openness to His working, so that He can work through us and use us in whatever situation He chooses to place us. Through us God wants to release the Power of the Kingdom of Heaven into the lives of the people around us every day. *But for this to happen we must make time to listen to Him.*

Teaching Slot: How many votes did 'Listening to God' get in the discussion about the most important aspects of prayer? Simply put, prayer is talking *with*, not *to*, God. It is a two-way communication where we speak to Him and He speaks to us.

Christian – be expectant that God will speak to you.

Be aware that three voices have access to your mind when you are praying alone: yours, Satan's and God's. Here are some measures you can take to block out the unwanted ones!

Lay down your mind and your will before God – *and your voice will not speak.*

Proclaim Jesus as Lord and claim the cleansing of His Blood. Put on the armour of God (Eph 6:11-18) – *and Satan cannot speak.*

Choose a time of the day or night when you are not going to be disturbed. Make sure you have enough time not only to speak to God but also to listen to Him.

Discuss -

- In the past, roughly what percentage of your prayer time have you dedicated to listening to God? Which aspects of our Christian lives (i.e. not just prayer!) could be improved by spending more time listening to God?

And finally...

Witness:

A grandfather was walking through his yard when he heard his granddaughter repeating the alphabet in a tone of voice that sounded like a prayer. He asked her what she was doing. The little girl explained: "I'm praying, but I can't think of exactly the right words, so I'm just saying all the letters, and God will put them together for me, because He knows what I'm thinking."

Do we walk in this kind of faith?