



## Get Connected!

### Week #4

A Bible reading was assigned for each day this past week. Some of us have well-developed habits of reading and reflecting on scripture. For others of us, this is a new idea, or we have struggled to establish such a habit.

Begin the group today by answering the following question:

#### **Group Sharing:**

What one or two things stood out for you about Jesus? What did you learn that was new?

As we follow Jesus, our desire is to grow in our relationship to him. We want our hearts to be formed more like the heart of Jesus.

Throughout history, Christians have practiced various disciplines to stay connected to God and to keep growing in our relationship to Jesus. Each practice involves:

- being attentive to scripture
- being prayerful and
- being deliberate.

Last week we focused on the importance of scripture. This week we will focus on the importance of prayer.

This session will help us to be more deliberate in connecting with the heart of God, through prayer.

### Teach us to Pray!

One day, after Jesus had been praying, one of his curious disciples asked him, “Lord, teach us to pray” (Luke 11:1). All of us have learned something about prayer in our lives. In some way we have been “taught to pray”.

**Group Discussion:** What has been your experience of prayer? Share briefly your journey of prayer. Include such things as:

- where you first learned to pray.
- your best experiences.
- what has been hardest for you.
- what have you learned about prayer.

**Group Sharing:** Thinking back to the personal prayer journeys of the members of your group, what different prayer practices were reflected in your stories?

### **Practicing Prayer:**

In Joe's story, Joe tells about one group's experience of prayer which led him to become interested in being part of a group:

"Brad's and Mike's group was only one of many groups at FBC at that time who met together weekly... This group had been exploring some of the practices that the church developed over the centuries. In the past three weeks, the men had decided to practice the discipline of intercession – praying that God would supply the needs of others. Something powerful had happened at last week's breakfast meeting. When each man reported his experience and the way God was leading him, each man had prayed about the same concern. They had been led to the same family and were moved to respond to the crises."

There are many kinds of prayer and Christian practices that are available to help us connect with God. Brad's and Mike's group had chosen one.

### **An Assignment**

We call it "practice" because it doesn't come easily. However, committing to a practice of prayer with honest reflection on the experience can help you grow in your openness to God's leading.

In our culture, many people have difficulty finding time to pray. We value material things and our accomplishments. Prayer doesn't fit either category. To be a disciple is to begin to value differently. In the coming week, you may confront some of those things you value in your life. Can you move "time for God" to a higher priority in your life?

Here is the challenge for the coming week: find 5 minutes each day to be silent.

As you take this time for silence, just experience it and listen for God. Afterward you may want to take some notes on your experience to share with your group next week.

## **Some words about silence:**

Silence is often difficult. When we quiet ourselves we may begin to feel some of the anxieties or fears we live with. Those are uncomfortable. When you notice them, you may want to offer them to God – ask God to hold them during this time of silence.

When we quiet ourselves we may begin to feel how tired we are and begin to drift off to sleep. Take note and offer your tiredness to God.

Silence can be a helpful practice for preparing to read scripture or before entering into a time in which we make requests to God for others or for ourselves.

After your experience of silence, you may want to continue reading some scripture each day. You might want to continue with teachings of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke chapters 13 - 14

Close the group with prayer. Pray for each other in your group. Also pray for:

- our church,
- the other groups that are meeting
- our worship together and
- our opportunities to help others connect  
with the heart of God.

A resource you might want to check out after this session:

[Celebration of Discipline](#), by Richard Foster (12 Christian practices to help us grow as disciples of Jesus). You may find it in the Church Library, or speak to your group leader or Pastor Leon.