

TIPS ON GROUP PRAYER

Prayer is an important part of being in a Life Group. Over the years, we've found that group prayer goes better when we follow three simple guidelines.

WE PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME - Anyone in the group is free to introduce a prayer request, either before prayer begins or during prayer time. Once a topic is introduced, the group focuses on that request alone. Once it's covered, the group moves on to the next topic.

PRAY MORE THAN ONCE - Because the group is focusing on one topic at a time, each person is encouraged to pray several times during the prayer time for those topics they feel most led to pray about. No one is required to pray.

WE KEEP OUR PRAYERS SHORT AND SIMPLE - Group prayer goes better when members keep their prayers short and to the point. When someone prays for a long time, it's hard for the other members to stay focused, and long prayers tend to intimidate those who are just learning to pray out loud in a group. No one is required to pray out loud.

NOTES / PRAYER



Faith That Brings Friends

The Story

Matthew 9:1-13

They had a strong _____ in Jesus that kept them _____ toward Him.

Belief + Movement = _____

MAIN POINT 1. Our Faith Should Move Us to Action— Individually and in Community

Hebrews 11:1, 11:6, James 2:14, Romans 10:9, Matthew 6 and Luke 11, 2 Chronicles 7:14, Matthew 18:20

Following Jesus _____ involve a _____ of faith.

MAIN POINT 2. Jesus Gives Us What We Need Most— Forgiveness Before Healing

Isaiah 41:10, Matthew 28:8

Jesus _____ always give you what you _____, but He will always give you what you _____!

The miracle that we all NEED is not _____, it's _____: forgiveness and life in Christ.

MAIN POINT 3. Jesus Calls and Welcomes Sinners into Community

Isaiah 61:1

The church is not a _____, it's a _____.



DISCUSSION GUIDE

These questions are designed to help groups discuss the weekend teaching while building relationships with each other and applying God's Word to our lives.

September 21, 2025



WARM UP

1. In this weekend's story, friends carried a paralyzed man to Jesus. If you had friends who could carry you anywhere, where would you want them to take you?

2. If you could choose a fun or creative way to enter every room, what would it be?

3. What is something that stood out to you from this weekend's message?

KNOW IT



1. This weekend, saw Jesus dine at Matthew's house and the stir it caused. In Luke 19:1-10, Jesus dines with another tax collector. Read both passages (Matthew 9:1-13 and Luke 19:1-10). What similarities do you notice in these two stories? What differences?

2. If you had to describe Jesus' values or what seems important to Him from His interactions in these stories, what would you say?

3. How do these stories challenge the way we think about who is "worthy" of God's attention?

SHARE IT



1. In this weekend's story, the friends expected Jesus to heal the man physically, but He forgave his sins instead. Have you ever asked God for something and received something different than you expected? How did you respond?

2. People were shocked that Jesus welcomed tax collectors and sinners. Have you ever been welcomed into a space you felt like you didn't belong? How did that change the way you see yourself or others?

LIVE IT



1. Jeff challenged us to think about who we're bringing to Jesus. When you think about inviting someone to experience Him, what fears or hesitations come up for you? What would help you overcome those hesitations?

2. Jesus shows compassion in the stories we read. Compassion can be described as "empathy in action." What do you think true compassion requires, and how might it look in our own lives?