

MEFC Community Group Study Questions

For the week of December 8th – 14th

Getting Started

1. What does your prayer life look like? Take a little time to share around the group about what, when, where, how and why you pray.

Digging Deeper

2. George Muller (1805-1898) famously wrote of a minor course correction in his personal devotional life that ended up yielding major results in his walk with the Lord. Discuss Muller's discovery together as the group. Muller said:

“The difference then between my former practice and my present one is this. Formerly, when I arose, I began to pray as soon as possible...But what was the result? I often spent a quarter of an hour, or half an hour, or even an hour on my knees before being conscious to myself of having derived comfort, encouragement, humbling of soul...and often, after having suffered much from wandering of mind for the first ten minutes, or a quarter of an hour, or even half an hour, I only then began *really to pray*. I scarcely ever suffer now in this way.

My practice had been, at least for ten years previously, as a habitual thing, to give myself to prayer, after having dressed myself in the morning. *Now...*the first thing I did, after having asked in a few words the Lord's blessing upon His precious word, was, to begin to meditate on the word of God, searching as it were into every verse, to get blessing out of it...The result I have found to be almost invariably this, that after a very few minutes my soul has been led to confession, or to thanksgiving, or to intercession, or to supplication; so that, though I did not, as it were, give myself to *prayer*, but to *meditation*, yet it turned almost immediately more or less into prayer. When thus I have been for a while making confession, or intercession, or supplication, or have given thanks, I go on to the next words for verse, turning all, as I go on, into prayer for myself or others, as the Word may lead to it.”

Open Your Bible to Psalm 3...

3. Let's follow George Muller's lead by praying some selected psalms together. Read through Psalm 3 silently to yourself. Now have one member of the group pray this psalm out loud. You can follow it word for word, or merely use it as kindling for your own prayers along a similar theme. This psalm is for believers who find themselves experiencing suffering, oppression, or the antagonism of others.
4. Now turn to Psalm 51. Try the same thing here. This psalm is a prayer of confession of sin and repentance toward God. Again, have everyone read through it quietly to themselves first, becoming familiar with the contours of how David's praying. Finally, have one brave volunteer can pray this on behalf of the group. Ponder, too, the fact that David prayed this prayer without a knowledge of the cross of Christ - merely upon his acquaintance with the character of God.
5. Psalm 67 is a magnificent psalm along the lines of global missions. In the hands of the church, think of it as a prayer for the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). The concern of this

chapter is for the spread of the name and fame of the Lord - marked by a passion for his increasing global glory. Will someone pray through this one for the group? Consider, too, folding in prayers for our missionary families by name: The Bryces, Stouts, Hutchcrafts, Blisses, Brogans, and Lees.

6. Few psalms are as candid and frank about anger in the face of our enemies as Psalm 69. Known as an imprecatory psalm, or a cursing psalm, this prayer of David's will likely stretch you. Once again, read through it carefully to yourself, noting the various movements present within it (desperation, righteous indignation, humility, even worship). Our righteous anger is not to be suppressed or avenged - it is to be prayed. This psalm models for us how to do it. Is someone in the group willing to pray it out loud? If you're having difficulty, consider placing the persecuted church into the subject of this prayer. Also, don't forget that this psalm is cited repeatedly in the New Testament as prophetic of Christ himself: Matthew 27:34, 48; Mark 15:36; Luke 23:36; John 2:17; 15:25; 19:28-29; Acts 1:20; Romans 11:9-10; 15:3.
7. Psalm 103 is a prayer of worship. One of its most powerful features is how David's expressions of praise are each rooted in specific character qualities or attributes of God. Allow his prayer to become a model for your own. Have someone pray through this one out loud on behalf of the group as well. This one's especially important to pray in light of the gospel of Jesus. Why doesn't God treat us as our sins deserve (Psalm 103:10)? Because God treated his Son as our sins deserve (1 Peter 3:22-25).
8. The final psalm we'll pray through is Psalm 127. This is a prayer for our households, found in a portion of the psalter known as the Songs of Ascent. Once more, read and reflect on it individually, then choose one person to pray through it out loud. As you pray, make special mention (by name) of any children, grandchildren, nieces or nephews connected to you group.

Sermon Notes for 12/8/19
Psalm 20
"The LORD Saves His Anointed"

**"Plead the promise of God in prayer, show Him His handwriting;
God is tender of His Word"** -Thomas Manton (1620-1677)

**Two keys in praying the Psalms this Advent season...*

1. Don't just pray *to* _____, pray *with* _____ (vv.1-5)

2. Don't pray _____, pray _____ (vv.6-9)

Next Week: Psalm 45 - "Splendor & Majesty" - 3rd Week of Advent