

LIFE GROUP LESSON

Moving the Needle - Week of January 14

Introduction

Even now as I write, I am about one block from Hugh's Auditorium at Asbury University where nearly one year ago, February 7, 2023, the Holy Spirit fell and a revival broke out in Wilmore, Kentucky. Upon the humble confession and audible repentance of one young man at a midweek chapel, God showed up and leaned in from heaven's glory. Within the next two and half weeks, thousands of persons flooded the small university town seeking God, seeking the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. This past summer, my husband and I learned the story behind the story.

Hung Too Leow of Malaysia was a former seminary student just across the street from the university at Asbury Theological Seminary. He says in his own words:

"In June 2020, God spoke to me clearly. I should carry signs (signs of repentance and of a call to revival etc.) while walking-running almost everyday on North Lexington in Wilmore, Kentucky. I did this for about two years. These signs of preparing for revival got the attention of Wilmore residents.

In May 2022, we received an urgent call to serve the homeless in New York City. This was after praying for 2 years and 8 months full-time in Wilmore. Actually I started praying for revival in February 2016 – all together about 7 years. I felt my call to pray for revival had not been completed. God told me that He would not send revival while I was still here."

Pastor Charles has often said, "prayer always precedes revival and spiritual renewal among God's people." John Wesley said, "Nothing of significance happens without prayer." Christ Church has entered into 21 Days of Fasting and Prayer from January 7th to January 27th. Our primary text speaks to the Plain Truth for this week: **Faith without works is dead faith, and prayers without action are powerless.**

Jesus not only prayed for persons, he acted upon his prayers and invited persons to follow him. Read Matthew 9: 9-13

Discuss the flow of Jesus modeling "Invitational Hospitality"

- a. What did Jesus say to Matthew? What was Matthew's response?
- b. Who else was impacted by Jesus' encounter with Matthew?
- c. Have you considered having a "Matthew Party" where you, like Matthew, would invite some friends to a backyard cookout, a desert night or morning coffee. Who would you invite so some friends and neighbors could simply meet each other?
- d. Discuss Jesus' comments to the Pharisees in vs. 12 and share how this has meaning in 2024?

Read Matthew 9: 35-38 and as the Scripture is read ask these questions:

1. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?
 - a. Can you identify with the sick, the brokenhearted, and those on the margins whom Jesus healed and touched?
 - b. Has there been a time in your life when you have been without purpose or direction? Like a sheep in need of a shepherd?
 - c. Jesus says to pray so God can send more workers in the field. Are you one of those workers?
2. What are you going to do about it?
 - a. How can we spend some time with persons who are in need in 2024? John Wesley once said, "The reason why we care so little for the poor is that we spend so little time with them." Share an experience in the past of what it was like to help someone in need, to care for someone who needed a friend, food or just company. Did something happen within your spirit when this took place?
 - b. We often pray for people, their needs and ask God to meet those needs. Share how you have moved beyond just praying for someone to acting upon your prayers in the past. Will you step forward and be the answer to someone's prayer today by being willing to be a "harvester" whom invites people to worship?
3. How can we help you?
 - a. It takes faithfulness and courage to get out of our comfort zone to care for others, to invite people to worship. Tell the group about a time you did invite someone. What happened?



- b. How can we pray for you and hold you accountable for next week's life group is simply asking you, "hey, how did the invite go this week when you said you would pray for someone then invite them?" Can we agree to lovingly hold each other accountable to being people of "Action" so we might empower our faith?

Prayer and Action:

Let's write down a list of names of persons from our life group to lift up. Let's also agree to not just pray for them but to make a commitment to invite them to worship or to our life group. Let's pray for family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, students, and acquaintances.

Text: Matthew 9:35-38

PLAIN TRUTH

Faith without _____ is _____ faith, and prayers without action are _____.

Jesus outlines for us how to Act on our Faith - to empower our prayers by acting on them:

1. Pray for a heart of _____ by _____ others through _____ eyes.
2. Pray like _____ depends upon _____ and _____ like everything _____ upon _____.
3. Pray with the heart of a _____ who is _____ to serve _____ you are.

One Year Bible Reading For This Week:

January 14: Genesis 30:1-31:16 Matthew 10:1-23 Psalm 12:1-8 Proverbs 3:13-15

January 15: Genesis 31:17-32:12, Matthew 10:24-11:6, Psalm 13:1-6, Prov. 3:16-18

January 16: Genesis 32:13-34:31, Matthew 11:7-30, Psalm 14:1-7, Proverbs 3:19-20

January 17: Genesis 35:1-36:43, Matthew 12:1-21, Psalm 15:1-5, Proverbs 3:21-26

January 18: Genesis 37:1-38:30, Matthew 12:22-45, Psalm 16:1-11, Proverbs 3:27-32

January 19: Genesis 39:1-41:16, Matthew 12:46-13:23, Psalm 17:1-15, Prov. 3:33-35

January 20: Genesis 41:17-42:17, Matthew 13:24-46, Psalm 18:1-15, Proverbs 4:1-6

January 14, 2024