

## **When You Pray Session 6 Notes**

In this week we focus in on intercessory prayer- the act of petitioning God on behalf of others. We look, in depth, at Paul's two prayers for the people of the church of Ephesus- toward the beginning of the letter Ephesians 1:15-23 and middle of the letter: Ephesians 3:14-21. There are some great truths here. Everything that we learn this week in regards to praying for others, we should be praying for ourselves as well.

### **Day 1 REMEMBER YOU HAVE THE SAME FATHER**

Scriptures For The Day:

Ephesians 3:14-21

Luke 22:32

John 17:8-9

John 17:20-21

Ephesians 2:1-10

Ephesians 2:11-22

We are asked to read a lot of Scripture this day! You can take time and read through it all with your ladies, and then discuss some of the main points:

- Jesus prayed for others, He is our example.
- We are to pray for one another, because just as we are individually reconciled to God, we are reconciled to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ.
- We are not always inclined to unity and harmony with one another. Praying for others is a way that we can foster a Christ-like love towards those who we do not always see eye to eye with. (How would it change your heart toward someone, or a group of people, if you prayed for them?)
- What connects us the most with our Christian family is that we have all received redemption for our sins through Christ- we now have the same heavenly Father. This connection is more important than a bond that comes from having things in common with one another.

### **Day 2 AN UNLIMITED SUPPLY OF STRENGTH**

Scriptures For The Day

Ephesians 3:14-16

In this day we focus on the strength that we have access to through God. Jada Edwards makes a good distinction: we do not just need to ask for a portion of God's power, rather we can ask

that we experience God's power in proportion to His glory. That is a lot more power than we might imagine we could ask for!

Where do the ladies in your group need to be reminded of God's strength? To what or to whom are they looking to for that strength? God? Or something else?

Jada Edwards shares some great insight on how to unpack feelings of powerlessness on page 152. Here are some tactics that I have used over the years in case they are helpful to share with your ladies.

- I ask God specifically for help in places that I feel weak or faithless.
- I tell Him why I feel weak in those areas. I don't hold anything back. He is a safe place for me to be vulnerable and honest.
- With His help, I identify places where I am not trusting in His promises, and am instead holding on to an "earthly" (fickle, unsatisfying, unbiblical) solution instead of trusting in His power.
- I find some Scripture that speaks to this internal conflict I am having.
- I write the Scripture down, try to memorize it, pray it back to God, remind myself of this biblical perspective every time I feel powerless, or every time I am tempted to sin to regain power. I repeat to myself that it is best for God to be in complete control of my life- to orchestrate it how He sees fit, because in His wisdom, He knows what is best for me.
- I ask God for His help to trust Him in those moments. I tell God that I want to be content in Him, and nothing else.

I encourage any lady to walk through this process. These same things are what they can pray for others as well!

### **Day 3 WHERE CHRIST LIVES, THERE MUST BE LOVE**

Scriptures For The Day

Ephesians 3:14-19

Isaiah 57:15

John 15:4-5

Psalms 1:1-3

Matthew 7:24-17

Instead of asking God to fix others, or yourself, have you asked God to richly dwell in your heart? Paul uses excellent metaphors: dwelling, rooted, grounded. Keep these types of metaphors in the forefront of your minds when you consider your relationship with God. Reading God's Word, being familiar with what it says, is a way to stay rooted and grounded.

Have you ever considered that if you connect with the Lord EVERY day- with an honest heart, fully trusting God's goodness, fully committed to repenting and obeying THAT DAY- how far off the spiritual path can you get? We all sin, disobey, give into temptation and folly at times, but if we are meeting with the Lord daily- cultivating deep roots, acknowledging our foundation in Christ, allowing the Holy Spirit to dwell richly in us, we only have "24 hours' worth" of sin AT WORST to deal with at any point in time. It should be a relatively quick correction, even if it is a long period of daily confession, repentance and obedience. Eventually, it will stick. God is faithful. The problem comes when we ignore God day after day- we can become hardened by pain, deceived by sin, complacent, lost and then the trajectory of our sin can really lead us into difficulty that can seem overwhelming to overcome.

How by staying rooted, grounded in Christ, can you better love others?

#### **Day 4 GOD'S ABILITY WILL EQUIP YOU FOR HIS WORK**

Scriptures For The Day

Ephesians 3:14-21

Romans 8:28

John 14:12-14

2 Cor. 3:1-6, 4:1-6

Ephesians 1:10

A few big takeaways from this day.

- This is a great example of reading Scripture in context. I heard Ephesians 3:20 quoted often when my mom was dying of cancer. Of course, everyone meant well, but when you look at the context of Eph 3:20 it is in reference to all the things that Paul stated.: pursuing unity, living in the power of the Holy Spirit, inviting Christ to dwell in our hearts, being grounded in love, being filled by God with His own fullness.
- We cannot ask God for things like a genie in a bottle. We cannot quote scripture like a spiritual "password". He wants our allegiance, our loyalty, our love- we cultivate that by living by His word. The more that our hearts and minds are aligned with His, the more the things He gives us will satisfy the deepest longings of our soul.
- God can do anything He wants- but it will be in accordance to His will, His agenda, and His priorities and perspectives, which we do not always understand in our finite minds. Like Jada states on page 163, we must be cautious not to ask for Gods power and strength in order to keep an idol on the throne of our lives.

## **Day 5 A CANVAS FOR GOD'S GLORY**

Scriptures For The Day

Ephesians 3:14-21

Revelation 2:1-5

Romans 15:5-6

Ephesians 1:15-21

Philippians 1:3-5

Colossians 1:9-21

In this day, we discuss interceding for our churches. The church is the bride of Christ. As Jada Edwards states, "God's glory is displayed in His church when we live like who we are in Christ."

The church is an example to non-believers about what it looks like to exist in a Christ centered community, or a spiritual family.

How has the church demonstrated Christ to you?

How do you use your gifts and talents to serve your church family?

Do you display the immeasurable riches of His grace through His kindness to us in Christ Jesus?

How do your words and behavior within the church influence those around you that are not Christ followers?

Paul prays for specific aspects of the church in the Scriptures on page 168. How can you be praying for our church?