

## Weekend message Small group study

- complementing the sermon given at St. Paul on **8/22/15 – 8/23/15.**
- a meeting agenda organized per St. Paul core values
- estimated for a 90-minute meeting



## WEEK TWO STUDY PRAYER FOR THE HARVEST

**Equipping** “the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ”—Eph. 4:12

Below is a tool to help delegate the leading/facilitating of meeting components between different small group members.

	Prayer (p.5)	Outreach (p.5)	Word of God (p.2)	Equipping (p. 6)	Worship - Our Redemption Response - (p.2)
Study component leader					

**Prayer leader** – Leads group prayer time

**Outreach leader** – Leads the charge of outreach (serving, inviting, filling the empty chair, etc.)

**Word of God leader** – Leads the Bible study time, encourages application of God’s Word to life

**Equipping Leader** – Coordinates and reminds who will lead the different meeting components.

**Worship (Our Redemption Response) Leader** – Leads worship time during meeting.

## Worship – Our Redemption Response

5 minutes

Read Psalm 100 in unison, while taking breaks in between each verse to add your own thoughts, praise and prayer.

***Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.***

<Pause to add your own thoughts, praise and prayer>

***Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.***

<Pause to add your own thoughts, praise and prayer>

***Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.***

<Pause to add your own thoughts, praise and prayer>

***Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.***

<Pause to add your own thoughts, praise and prayer>

***For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.***

<Pause to add your own thoughts, praise and prayer>

*Worship champion:* close with prayer.

## Word of God

45 minutes

1. **Read Mark 2:1-5.** Then read the following together:

There are many ways to “lower our friends down to Jesus.” As a small group there are some very specific things you can do. Research from around the world conducted by Missions International has found that one of the most important elements of groups that attract and win lost people to Christ relates to prayer. Four issues surfaced related to the small group’s prayer:

- #1 Daily prayer for members of the group
- #2 Devotional time spent with God each day
- #3 Focused prayer related to the small group meeting
- #4 Prayer daily for non-Christians by name

All four aspects are connected spending time with God each day and integrating group related prayer needs into that daily time.

2. *Quick Neighbor Nudge*. Everyone quickly turn to a neighbor and answer the following question:

How would you rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5 on these four prayer habits?

Use the following scale as a guide:

(1) Seldom.... (3) Somewhat.... (5) Often

3. **Praying for those far from God**. For our time together today we want to focus particularly on the habit of praying daily for non-Christians by name. *With a partner*, look up the scripture passages that have been provided for you to discover specific ways that we can pray for those that don't yet know Christ.

Take turns looking up the passages below and discuss how each reference relates to ways that we can "lower people to Jesus" by praying specifically for them.

Key Insight about Praying for the Lost

Revelation 3:20

Matthew 9:36-38

Acts 28: 23-27

2 Corinthians 4:3-4

Titus 2:11-14

Colossians 4:2-6

**Debrief:** Debrief with the group about what they found in each passage. Highlight one key insight from each passage that can fuel the way that we pray.

**Excerpt from Groups Ablaze/LC-MS Ablaze Living: Power in Prayer .**

4. Read the following article:

One of the most intriguing aspects of our Christian lives is that God calls us into partnership with Him. His redemptive plan for mankind is something for which He invites us to link shields with Him, much like Roman soldiers linked shields when they were in the midst of a battle. Not that we can save any individual by our own efforts; that is truly a work of the Lord. However, the Great Commission passage in Matthew 28:18-20 indicates that God expects us to share the Good News with those around us. Not only does He ask us to co-labor with Him (Romans 10:14-16) but He also asks us to pray about the Harvest.

Dick Eastman, in his book *Love on its Knees*, talks about some creative ways that we can pray for our unbelieving friends, acquaintances, and family. He has found it helpful to pray that God would stir six questions in the mind, heart, and experience of those that need to know Jesus. The six questions that he has made a practice of praying revolve around the simple framework: Who? What? Why? When? Where? How?

**WHO?** We can pray that our friends will become more and more curious about who God is. We can ask God to cause circumstances and experiences to stir questions about how they relate to the God of the universe.

**WHAT?** What does the person you are praying for need to know and believe? You can pray that they would have the opportunity to hear the Gospel clearly presented. Pray that God would make it clear to them about His plan of salvation and His desire to be Lord of their life.

**WHY?** God often stirs the heart by nudging an unbeliever to answer the question, “Why am I here?” We can pray that our friends would be convicted to ask the ultimate questions about what direction their life is heading toward. In the searching we can pray that they would seek after the Lord diligently.

**WHEN?** The world asks the question, “When will I be happy?” or “When will I experience fulfillment in my life?” We can pray that they will experience emptiness with what the world has to offer in answer to these questions. We can ask God to show them that they will only find peace and contentment when they have turned their life over to the Savior.

**WHERE?** We can pray that our friends will slow down enough to muse over the question, “Where will I go when I die?” or “Is this all there is and then it’s over?” We can pray that these penetrating questions will stir their soul and will lead them to ask questions which will lead them to the Bible. We can pray that we will have opportunities to talk with them about eternal things. All of us at times ask the question, “How can I cope?” We can pray that life circumstances will force our friends to ask God for help. In a loving way, we can pray that the challenges of life will create an openness to spiritual things.

### **Debrief**

Question #1: What stands out to you in this article?

Question #2: Is there a new or fresh insight about praying for unbelievers from this article?

**Excerpt from Groups Ablaze/LC-MS *Ablaze Living: Praying for the Harvest* .**

## Outreach

15 minutes

**Practice Activity (10 minutes).** This is a practice activity that people will do on their own. Instruct everyone to pick one person in their life that needs God. Ideally, it is someone that they know relatively well. In the box provided, they are to write a written prayer for that person using the six questions. In other words, they are to put the six questions from the article into their own words for the person that they are focusing on. This is simply a way to begin to practice using the six questions and making them a bit more personal. Have them share with a partner...

My six questions prayer for \_\_\_\_\_

**Application Activity (5 minutes).** Allow each individual to do some reflection on the following questions:

- What keeps me from praying consistently?
- What do I need to do to become more regular and consistent in praying daily for my “harvest field?”

After everyone has had a chance to reflect have them share with people around them (triads, etc.). In triads, transition to the prayer time below..

**Excerpt from Groups Ablaze/LC-MS Ablaze Living: Praying for the Harvest .**

## Prayer

20 minutes

In your triads, share a prayer request based on what was discussed during this meeting’s *Word of God* and/or *Outreach* time. What is that next step in your faith life God is calling you to make? What convicted you from God’s Word and/or our discussion of His Word? Please also share a way in which the group may support/encourage you regarding what you’ve shared. Of course other important matters can be prayed about as well. After all have shared, pray for the person on your left (whether aloud or silently). Pray together in popcorn style (as opposed to going in order around a circle.)

**Equipping** *for coordinating next week's meeting...*

**5 minutes**

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