

Community Groups are used extensively as the primary vehicle for discipleship at The Gathering and run on a quarter system. There is one in the fall, one in the winter and one in the spring. During the summer weeks we don't meet in Community Groups but we still offer the Growth Guides as a tool to help you grow personally. The Growth Guides are designed to help you dig deeper into the weekly sermon on your own or with your family and are available each week along with the note sheets at church as well as online.

COMMUNITY GROUPS ARE BETTER WHEN MEMBERS COME PREPARED. THIS GUIDE HAS BEEN PROVIDED AS A TOOL FOR THAT.

Consider...

Use the summary and discussion below to review and apply this week's message:

Message Summary

Using Ephesians 6:18-20 as the core passage, this week we discussed how we **Stand Up in Prayer**. From this and earlier passages in the letter, Paul both describes and exemplifies how to carry out this command. So, we discussed **3 Prayer Points** that will help us Stand Up in Prayer and resist the forces of darkness that seek to destroy us.

1. **Prayer frequency** – Because the battle is always raging, we are encouraged to pray at “all times.” Practically, this means staying in constant dialogue with God throughout the day. If we are to be successful in the battle, we must keep the lines of communication open with our “general.”
2. **Prayer posture** – We must “stay alert” and keep watch for the enemy and his attacks. We do this “with all perseverance” (implying we will get tired and/or distracted) and “with all intercession for the saints” (implying our brothers and sisters need you to pray for them). Practically, this means we must be intentional about our prayer life, not driven by emotion, holding one another accountable and lifting each other up.
3. **Prayer focus** - In addition to the practical application Paul provides in Chapter 6, he has provided an example in Chapters 1:15-19 and 3:14-21 by actually writing out a prayer to the Ephesians in his letter. From here and Chapter 6, we can draw a few examples of things to pray for.
 - a. That we would grow in our knowledge of Him and what He has done for us
 - b. That we would be strengthened by the power of His resurrection and be able to comprehend His great love for us
 - c. That when given the opportunity, we would be given the message that He wants us to speak and the courage to speak it with boldness for His glory

Big Idea: “Prayer is not merely a way to get things from God but a way to get more of God.” – Tim Keller from the book, *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*

Discuss

Use the following questions to review and apply the points learned in the message.

- Read Paul's prayer to the Ephesians 1:15-19, 3:14-21 all at once and discuss which of the 3 Prayer Points (frequency, posture, focus) resonated with you the most and why?
- In reflecting on your own spiritual battles, how has God used prayer to draw you closer to Him?
- Read Paul's prayer in Colossians 1:3-14 (another prison letter). What similarities and differences do you see with his prayer to the Ephesians?
- What has God taught you through intercessory prayer (praying for others)? Why does Paul encourage this in our “prayer posture” when we can all pray for ourselves?