

A TIME OF EVANGELISM (sharing Jesus)

Tonight we have been considering prayer as part of the “roll up your sleeves” work of the Church.

Of course another work of the Church is to share good news about Jesus.

Can the two “works” come together? See if during the coming week you can witness to the love of Jesus by sharing with an unbeliever a way that God answered prayer.

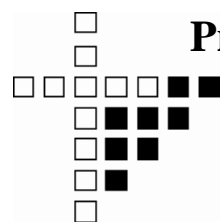
CLOSING PRAYER

In your closing prayer please pray for continued unity and growth in outreach at St. Luke.

CYBER CONVERSATION ABOUT PRAYER

All are invited to join in an online conversation about the book Prayer: Does It Make Any Difference. Copies of the book are available at the Sign Un Center at church or from a local book store.

Go to our web site for more information.
www.stlukehas.com/chat



Problems with Prayer

St. Luke Lutheran Church
Fall, 2008
Home Group Discussion #1

Encouragement for Greater Involvement in Prayer

The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. James 5:16

This four part study is designed to do two things.

First, it serves to help us continue in a “life on purpose.” Each session will accent five purposes in life:

Worship: live to please God

Fellowship: be connected into God’s family

Discipleship: become like Jesus

Ministry: serve others

Evangelism: share Jesus

Second, it leads participants into a discussion on various prayer issues. Good communication is crucial to any relationship—that includes our relationship with God! A robust prayer life helps our relationship with God flourish.

A TIME OF FELLOWSHIP (connected to one another)

As our home groups resume make sure that everyone in your group knows each other. Take turns sharing:

- An interesting summer experience
- A fall chore you dread
- A hope you have for our study on prayer

A TIME OF WORSHIP (pleasing God)

It is said that the first duty of every man and beast is to praise the Lord.

Have each participant share a blessing from God. Then take turns reading as you read through Psalm 103. Have someone lift up a word of prayer asking God to help each participant see something new about prayer.

A TIME OF DISCIPLESHIP (becoming like Jesus)

“Jesus... went off to a solitary place where he prayed.” Mark 1:35

A PROBLEM WITH PRAYER: IT IS WORK!

Tonight we are going to consider prayer as something more than a formality, more than a religious nicety. It is one of the crucial “works” of the Church.

VIEW THE FIRST DVD SEGMENT

Identify some differences between work and play.

Have you heard this? *In America we play at our work and work at our play.* What does that mean? Could it be said that *the Church plays at its prayer?*

How do you think about *prayer as a crucial work* of the Church?

Prayer remains a struggle for me... I persist because I am fulfilling God's command, and also because I believe I am doing what is best for me whether or not I feel like it at the time. Moreover, I believe that my perseverance, in some unfathomable way, brings pleasure to God. We should always pray and not give up, Jesus taught. Prayer: Does It Make Any Difference? p. 161

Discuss the sentiment expressed by Philip Yancy. Compare it to Genesis 32:22-30.

Read each of the following passages. What do they have to say about *prayer as work*?

- Psalm 13:1-3
- Psalm 22:1-2
- Psalm 144: 3-6
- Jeremiah 12:1
- Habakkuk 1:2-3

Part of Jesus' work was the *work of prayer*. Read the following passages. What do you learn about prayer and work?

- Mark 1:32-35
- Luke 22:31-32, 39-44

Jesus charged his followers to *work at prayer*. Read Luke 22:45-46. How does this impact your understanding about the *work of prayer*?

In what ways is the *joy in prayer* impacted by thinking about the *work of prayer*?

What would it look like if the Church got to work at prayer? What would it look like if you did?

A TIME OF MINISTRY (serving others)

One of the ways we serve others in the congregation is through prayer. Share with one another a prayer request for the group to work on for the coming week.