

**Week 13- "Struggle: Asking His Help"**  
**Study Guide and Discussions Questions**

Week 13 (8/11/2019)

***Struggle: Asking His Help*** (ch.14, pg. 222-239)

For this weeks study please read chapter 14 in the book, "*Prayer*", by Timothy Keller. If you have any observations or questions in the reading please feel welcome to bring them to your Life Group.

Main point for the Study:

Prayer is not merely a way to get inward peace—it is also a way to look outward and participate with God in His work in the world. (Keller, *Prayer*, pg. 223)

Primary Bible Scripture for the week:

Psalm 13 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup>How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?

How long will you hide your face from me?

<sup>2</sup>How long must I take counsel in my soul

and have sorrow in my heart all the day?

How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

<sup>3</sup>Consider and answer me, O Lord my God;

light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death,

<sup>4</sup>lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over him,"

lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.

<sup>5</sup>But I have trusted in your steadfast love;

my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.

<sup>6</sup>I will sing to the Lord,

because he has dealt bountifully with me.

### Study and Reflection Questions:

In Keller's book, *Prayer*, chapter 14 focuses on the third of three primary categories of prayer. The three types are, "upward" prayer, "inward" prayer, and "outward" prayer. This week's chapter focuses on "outward" prayer; also referred to as petition, supplication, or "asking God for help."

1. Read Psalm 13. The psalmist is expressing distress because he feels that God has not heard his petitions for help against enemies. Have you ever felt like this; that God is not listening to your pleas for assistance and help with your enemies? There are many kinds of "enemies" we face in this world. Name some types of "enemies" that one might ask, or petition, God to help them overcome.
2. Keller, in this chapter, makes a point that prayers of supplication need to be a struggle; they need to be "strenuous petitions." As Keller writes, "Prayer has been called, 'rebellion against the world's evil *status quo*.'" (Keller, pg.223). Ephesians 6:18 lists prayer as a weapon in our spiritual warfare against the forces of evil. What do you observe in Psalm 13 that gives indication of this being a strenuous, bold, and impassioned prayer to God? (hint: focus on the first 4 verses)
3. In this chapter, Keller also affirms that we should pour out our hearts' desires to God. However, it always needs to be viewed in the context of what is agreeable to God's will. In other words, we should be asking God for things that fulfill both our desires and His will and wisdom (c.f. James 4:2-3). If what we are requesting seems contrary to God's character and teaching then we need to seriously reflect upon the motivations of our heart (Keller, pg. 226). How does this change the way you will talk to God about the things you would like to see happen in your life and in the lives of those you are praying for?
4. If we step back and view this Psalm in the context of the history of Jewish faith and New Testament Christianity we observe a prayer that precedes the birth of Jesus Christ by about 1000 years. Discuss how this Psalm of prayer is an ultimate example of God answering prayer in a way, or manner, that the Jewish people did not expect. Note that this Psalm is foreshadowing the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Discuss and reflect upon how God answers the Psalmist's petition for deliverance from enemies in a much grander way than the Psalmist could ever imagine. In what ways does this example personally impact your perspective on prayer?

**“PRAYER” –Pathway Church Message Series**  
14-week study guide, (spring 2019)

Welcome to the study guide that we will be using for the next 14 weeks as we read Timothy Keller’s book, “Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God.” This book will aid us as we deepen our understanding of what the Bible teaches regarding prayer. Below is the schedule for weekly reading and the Pathway sermons that will coincide with the chapters in the “Prayer” book.

During this series we will journey together and explore many aspects of prayer. Prayer is a key spiritual discipline in the life of a Christ follower. One can certainly pray and not be a Christian, but one cannot be a Christian and go without prayer. Prayer is the primary way a Christian communes with and communicates with God. Prayer is vital in the Christian life and yet frequently a neglected discipline. Christians are instructed to “pray without ceasing... for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thess. 5:17,18 ESV).

The purpose of this series is to deepen our understanding of and expand our experience with prayer. Together we will experience awe and intimacy with God through our prayer life.

The primary study guide resource will be Timothy Keller’s book, “Prayer.” Pathway will provide additional questions to help guide individual study or Life Group discussion. It is recommended you do the reading before you come to the Sunday service that coincides with that chapter. The discussion points contained herein are meant to give initial guidance and focus for Pathway’s church-wide study. It is the prerogative of the group to dive deeper into Keller’s book if so desired.

In addition to the Sunday sermons, Tim Keller's book "Prayer", and Life Group discussions, there will be several other ways during this series that Pathway will encourage one to further enrich their prayer lives:

1. Open invitation to Sunday morning prayer time @ 9AM in Room 101. We will be gathering in Room 101 every Sunday morning before service from 9AM – 10AM to pray with one another and for one another (no experience necessary!). All are encouraged to come.
2. Pathway Pastors will be texting out brief prayer prompts to those who opt it. It is easy, just text this message "**@pccprays**" to the number **81010** and you will receive a daily text prayer prompt as a reminder to take a moment to talk with God.

If you prefer email instead, just send an email to

[pccprays@mail.remind.com](mailto:pccprays@mail.remind.com) (no subject required).

3. Pathway will be encouraging prayer during the second worship set of Sunday service, creating more opportunities for people to pray with one another, pray on their own, or pray with one of the prayer shepherds in the back of the sanctuary.

The Pastors and Leadership of Pathway Community Church thank you for your participation in this prayer series. We pray that this series will bring about a deeper understanding and a richer experience in your prayer life. We pray that your awe and intimacy with God grows and deepens through this series.

## **14-Week Reading and Sermon Schedule**

### **Desiring Prayer**

Week 1 (5/5/2019)

***The Necessity of Prayer*** (ch.1, pg. 7-18) and ***The Greatness of Prayer*** (ch.2, pg. 19-32)

### **Understanding Prayer**

Week 2 (5/12/2019)

***What is Prayer?*** (ch.3, pg. 33-49)

\*\*\*5/19/2019 (break from Prayer series for PCC Retreat weekend)\*\*\*

Week 3 (5/26/2019)

***Conversing With God*** (ch.4, pg. 50-65)

Week 4 (6/2/2019)

***Encountering God*** (ch.5, pg. 66-80)

### **Learning Prayer**

Week 5 (6/9/2109)

***Letters on Prayer*** (ch.6, pg. 81-96)

Week 6 (6/16/2019) \*Father's Day

***Rules for Prayer*** (ch.7, pg. 97-107)

Week 7 (6/23/2019)

***The Prayer of Prayers*** (ch.8, pg. 108-119)

\*\*\*6/30/2019 (break from Prayer series for a Generous Giving message)\*\*\*

Week 8 (7/7/2019)

***The Touchstones of Prayer*** (ch.9, pg. 120-142)

### **Deepening Prayer**

Week 9 (7/14/2019)

***As Conversation: Meditating on His Word*** (ch.10, pg. 143-164)

Week 10 (7/21/2019)

***As Encounter: Seeking His Face*** (ch.11, pg. 165-186)

### **Doing Prayer**

Week 11 (7/28/2019)

***Awe: Praising His Glory*** (ch.12, pg. 187-204)

Week 12 (8/4/2019)

***Intimacy: Finding His Grace*** (ch.13, pg. 205-221)

Week 13 (8/11/2019)

***Struggle: Asking His Help*** (ch.14, pg. 222-239)

Week 14 (8/18/2019)

***Practice: Daily Prayer*** (ch.15, pg. 240-262)