

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Message Series: AWAKENING
Message Title: Awakening (to Prayer)
Speaker: Pastor Kevin Myers
Date: September 10, 2017

Icebreaker:

What's your worst 'sleeping' story? Have you slept late for an important appointment, flight, or event? Have you ever fallen asleep at the wheel?

Message Overview:

This week's message was *Awakening*. In this one-week message, Pastor Kevin (PK) talked about how sleep can make us miss things in our day to day lives, and this is true in our spiritual lives as well. Paul said, "But make sure that you don't get so absorbed and exhausted in taking care of all your day-by-day obligations that you lose track of the time and doze off, oblivious to God . . . *Be up and awake to what God is doing!*" (Romans 13:11-12 The Message). Where are we asleep spiritually and missing out on what God might want to do?

Discussion:

This week, Pastor Kevin followed up on the prayer teaching he gave on Friday night, Sept. 8. Jesus is giving us a wake-up call, and he wants to begin an awakening in each of our hearts, in our church, and throughout our territory!

1. Always **pray** & never **give up**.

Read Luke 18:1. "Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should *always pray and not give up.*"

- Was there a time when you stopped asking God for the desires of your heart because God didn't answer, or didn't answer the way you wanted him to?
- What are some reasons that we give up on prayer? What if we give up too soon?

- Have you ever persisted in prayer and finally saw an answer? Can you share that with the group?

Read Luke 17: 5, 26-29. The disciples asked Jesus to increase their faith. Included in his response to increase their faith were stories of belief vs. unbelief (Noah) and godliness vs. godlessness (Lot). In Luke 17, Jesus was describing two kingdoms, in which prayer is the difference. PK noted that we often feel like we fall on the side of faithful believers in God, but when it comes to prayer we're on a different side. Prayer is how we engage with the Kingdom of God. A rich and healthy prayer life is necessary to engage fully with God as believers

Kingdom of Mankind

(Little Deal)

- Unbelief
- Faithless
- Godless
- Prayerless
- Powerless

(Self)

Kingdom of God

(Big Deal)

- Belief
- Faith
- Godly
- Prayerful
- Powerful

PK said, "I cannot have the full engagement of God in my life, marriage, kids, family, work, finances, church, community around me - unless I engage God in prayer. God has MORE he longs to do for us, and it is only triggered by prayer. Jesus teaches us that prayerful is powerful and prayerless is powerless!"

- Have you ever prayed and felt the power of God at work?
- Have you ever prayed and yet still felt powerless?
- Do you sometimes feel like you believe in God but aren't sure how to talk to him?

Read Luke 18:1-8. Some people find it difficult to pray because they view God as the judge, but this parable serves to contrast our good God with this judge. God isn't a wicked judge. That's why we can pray—because God is good. God isn't reluctant to hear our pleas. We are important to him. We don't go to him as a beggar—he tells us to ask him for what we need.

- Did this teaching on the persistent woman and the judge change your perspective on God?
- What do you imagine God is doing while you pray?

PK said that we should live our lives awake to what God is doing, but we could be falling asleep at the wheel of our faith. We need to wake up to what God is doing. Throughout Luke 17 and 18, Jesus is saying, “Wake up to the Kingdom of God.” And we do that through the power of prayer.

At the Prayer Warrior Gathering, PK taught through the concepts of “The Hour That Changes The World” by Dick Eastman. This teaching encourages us to spend five minutes in twelve segments (one hour total). We are now going to practice some of those in the group as time permits.

- **Praise and Worship**—Praise and worship is an expression of admiration and devotion to God.
Read Psalm 100 or 115 or listen to a worship song.
- **Waiting on the Lord**—Waiting on the Lord is an act of surrender to God. It is often wordless worship that concentrates on him. It is focused attention to move from “self-conscious to God-conscious.”
Psalm 46:11 says, “The Lord Almighty is with us.” Take the time to feel God’s presence.
- **Confession** of Guilt and Sin—The act of admitting our sinfulness (and specific sins) for forgiveness and cleansing, allowing you to enter into his presence more intimately.
Read 1 Peter 1:15-16 to remind yourself that he calls you to holiness. Stop to consider the gap between God’s perfect holiness and your attitude and behavior. There is not pretense with God. He knows it all anyway. Be real as you name your sins to him. Own it, admit it, and confess it. Read Psalm 130 to remind yourself that God forgives us of our sin.
- **Praying Scripture**—Listening to God’s words and learning to feed yourself spiritually and to pray according to what God might stir in you that is consistent with his teaching. Listen for the Holy Spirit to use the Scripture that you are reading to confirm or add wisdom. Ask for his instruction or

correction.

Read 2 Timothy 3:16.

- **Watching**—A time of spiritual observation, sorting through where Satan is at work and what God is doing. Use your imagination to see the world as God sees it. Ephesians 6 tells us that there is spiritual warfare going on—can you see it?

Read Matthew 26:41. Jesus instructs the disciples to watch and pray. Use your imagination to see the world as God sees it.

- **Intercession**—Standing in the gap and praying for others: family, friends, small group, God’s agenda for the church.

Read Colossians 1:9, 1 Timothy 2:1, Ephesians 6:18, and James 5:16. Pray for God to pour out an awakening over 12Stone, greater Gwinnett and other churches, and awaken in each of us:

- A greater **Love for Him**
- A greater **Obedience to Him**
- A greater **Love for Spiritually Lost People**
- A greater **Love for One Another**
- **Petition**—for your personal needs, for the things that burden you.
Read Luke 18:1-8, Matthew 7:7-12.
- **Thanksgiving**—a time to express gratitude to God.
Read 1 Thessalonians 5:18.
- **Song**—lift up a song of praise and worship to God.
Read Psalm 96:1-3.
- **Meditation**—to reflect upon your life, faith, walk with God. This is time to mull over what you have said to God and what you think he is saying to you; a spiritual evaluation.
Read Psalm 1.
- **Listening**—give five minutes to hearing from the Lord. Receive instruction and impressions as to what he might reveal to you. Not only are you learning to hear the voice of God, you are dispelling the voices of the world.
- **Praise**—exalt and glorify God.
Read Matthew 6:13.

Wrap-Up/Close:

- Do you feel better equipped to pray with these steps?
- If you didn't attend the Prayer Warrior Gathering in September, will you attend in October?
- Will you commit to following the 12 steps for praying an hour on one day of each week over the next three weeks?

Throughout the Week: (Optional)

- If you missed the Friday night teaching, plan to attend the Prayer Warrior Gathering on Monday, October 23 at Central campus.