



HEALTHY HABITS

DIGGING DEEPER

WEEK 3: Prayer

This study guide is designed to help you dig deeper into the weekend message and apply it to your life. The questions below are meant to encourage thoughtful reflection, discussion, and prayer for you and your Life Group.

PRAY

Have someone in your group open in prayer.

MESSAGE SUMMARY

This week at Fair Oaks Church we continued in our series on *Spiritual Fitness*. This week's focus was prayer. We learned that in order to be healthy fit Christians, we need to have a healthy and active prayer life.

KEY SCRIPTURE

And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

This, then, is how you should pray:

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come, your will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one.”

Matthew 6:5-15

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stood out to you from this weekend's message or key scripture?
2. In what way(s) do you struggle with prayer?
3. In Jesus' instructions to pray, what types of things are we told not to do? How are we instructed to pray? Is Jesus condemning public prayer? What matters in prayer: what is said or the heart of the individual?
4. Are there different ways to pray? What are some different ways to pray? What could you add into your prayer life to make it more substantial or meaningful?
5. Why is the Lord's Prayer a good model for prayer? What example does it give us to emulate in our own prayer life?
6. If you haven't yet, take a few minutes now to take the Prayer Habit section of the Spiritual Fitness Assessment (available at fopc.org or via Fair Oaks Church app). If you are comfortable, share your score with your group. Where does your current score for prayer land on the Spiritual Fitness Scale at the end? What is one way you might want to respond to where you are with the habit of prayer today?

PRAYER ACTIVITY

Take a moment to do one of the two activities as a group.

The Conversation Prayer (5-10 minutes):

Begin to pray about an area of your life. After you have prayed, take at least 5 minutes and “listen”. Keep yourself free of distractions, pay attention to what you are feeling. If after a little while you are having trouble, pray again asking for direction or clarity. Treat this prayer as if you were listening to someone on the telephone.

Prayer Journaling (10-15 minutes):

Make sure everyone in the group has a writing implement and a piece of paper. Challenge everyone to take a minute to write down a prayer. Have them divide the prayer up into the following areas: things they are thankful for, areas they want to work on or improve in, reflection on how they have grown in their faith, and things that are incredible about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit.