



Welcome to the first week of our new series. Before we begin, I want to put the proposed Summer Growth Groups Schedule in front of everyone so you can put each meeting on your calendar and plan accordingly . . . Also, don't forget "Bring a Friend" day on May 20 – be thinking and inviting now!

Sunday Groups	Wednesday Groups
May 6, 13, 20 (Sunday Night Live), & 27	May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
June 3, 17	June 6, 20
July 15, 29 (Church-wide Event on July 4)	July 4 (Church-wide event), 18
August 12 (Fall Kick-off?), 19, 26	August 1, 15 (Fall Kick-off?), 22, 29

- **What is prayer to you?**
- **What do you usually pray for?**
- **Read Luke 11:1-5.** What do we learn about prayer from this model prayer that Jesus used to teach the disciples?
- **Read Luke 11:5-8.** What do we learn from the boldness and persistence of the person in this parable? What does this tell us about how God wants us to approach Him?
- **Read Luke 18:1-8.** Look at the widow's persistence . . . is there anything in your life that you have ever prayed that much for? How did God respond? How did you react to His response?
- **Read Luke 11:9-10.** What is the biggest thing you want God to do right now? Is it consuming your mind, thoughts, and emotions? Would I believe it is your biggest concern if I were to listen in on your prayer life?
- **What BIG thing will you "ask, seek, and knock" for on a consistent basis for the rest of the year?**
- **When will you set aside time this week to pray for something BIG?**



**Growth Groups  
Leader's Travel Guide  
Week of May 6-12, 2007**

I am really excited about what God is doing in the Growth Groups at Journey! Our group meeting this week was one of the best we have had yet, and it is building momentum for a new group. I am now preparing to hand off the leadership of my group to a new leader to set me free to gather more folks for a new group. As we prepare for the summer months, Eric and I have put together a summer Growth Groups schedule, which will help you and your group members plan ahead to maximize effectiveness of your groups. Please take the time to go over this schedule with your group and encourage them to use it as a tool to invite some disconnected friends. Some people will be less intimidated coming to a small group than they would at Sunday worship . . . Encourage your folks to use any avenue they can to invite disconnected friends (Including "Friend Day" on May 20!)

Please review the schedule and let me know if you are going to be out of town any of your group times, so we can begin now to find someone in your group to step up and help lead.

<b>Sunday Groups</b>	<b>Wednesday Groups</b>
May 6, 13, 20 (Sunday Night Live), & 27	May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
June 3, 17	June 6, 20
July 15, 29 (Church-wide Event on July 4)	July 4 (Church-wide event), 18
August 12 (Fall Kick-off?), 19, 26	August 1, 15 (Fall Kick-off?), 22, 29

I also want to encourage you to continue to talk to your groups about organizing some contact events out in the community to reach some disconnected people. If you need any help or resources, let Eric or myself know, and we will do what we can. Please be seeking out potential group members on Sunday mornings (and during the week) and talk to them about getting involved. A new semester (even during the summer) is a new opportunity. Ask people what it would take to get them involved in a Growth Group. If there's something we can do to accommodate more folks, let me know and we'll see what we can do. Don't feel like you have to do everything yourself. Look for people in your group that you can recruit to help you.

I really appreciate you folks for helping get the Growth Groups ministry at Journey off the ground. No matter what is going on in your group, there's no reason to be discouraged, because even the smallest groups are showing evidence of changed lives . . . I see it in some of you, our Growth Group leaders, even if you don't see it in your group members. Press on! God is doing BIG things at Journey . . .

Andrew



Welcome to the first week of our new series. Before we begin, I want to put the proposed Summer Growth Groups Schedule in front of everyone so you can put each meeting on your calendar and plan accordingly . . . Also, don't forget "Bring a Friend" day on May 20 – be thinking and inviting now!

There are several good discussion questions in this week's Travel Guide. If any one of the discussions from the Bible go really well and are helpful to your group, feel free to focus on that one and pass over or skim through the others. Encourage your group to take the Travel Guide home and to use the questions you don't get to discuss thoroughly as a catalyst for them to think about in their personal worship times this week.

- **What is prayer to you?**

This is very purposefully a generic and open-ended question. If people look at you like your crazy, help them get started, but try to let them go. You will probably get answers ranging from "a conversation with God" to "a personal worship experience," to "a very serious and somber activity" (not in those words), to who knows what . . . This is a great opportunity for you to learn some of the spiritual background in your group, and to get a read on where they are in their walk with God. My only word of caution is that if someone gets too "philosophical" or "esoteric" or "mystical" in their perspective, you will probably want to reign them in and move on to keep others from getting confused or judgmental.

- **What do you usually pray for?**

Another generic question to help you get a little picture of your group members' hearts, passions, etc. Hearing what your folks are praying for will give you a good indication of their personalities, backgrounds, and what they are dealing with in their lives right now. File this in your head to use as a challenge later on . . .

- **Read Luke 11:1-5. What do we learn about prayer from this model prayer that Jesus used to teach the disciples?**

I would definitely use this as a reminder that none of Scripture is without purpose for us . . . So many of us were taught this prayer and can recite it from memory . . . But Jesus didn't intend for us to *just* recite this prayer . . . He gave it to us with meaning . . . This prayer is a model that helps us understand the affect that prayer can have on our relationship to God.

I also encourage you to maybe break the prayer down phrase by phrase and discuss how that thought or phrase helps us understand prayer . . .

"Father . . ." May represent the intimacy and care in our relationship with God. Particularly as we see the following stories in the next questions . . .

"Hallowed be your name," Takes the intimacy and care and raises the perspective do the greatness of God. Etc. Etc.

- **Read Luke 11:5-8. What do we learn from the boldness and persistence of the person in this parable? What does this tell us about how God wants us to approach Him?**

Be sure to remind your folks that this passage is part of Jesus' answer to the disciples' question in verse 1.

This passage is mainly supplied to teach us **boldness** in Prayer. We learn that we can come to God at any time and with any request, and expect Him to respond. We also learn that God does not feel *obligated* to answer our prayers because of our relationship with Him, but instead He has a *desire* to answer our requests simply because we are bold enough to ask.

- **Read Luke 18:1-8. Look at the widow's persistence . . . is there anything in your life that you have ever prayed that much for? How did God respond? How did you react to His response?**

Be sure to remind your folks that this passage is about prayer. As verse 1 clearly states, this parable is provided for us to encourage us to not give up praying for various circumstances (**persistence**). BUT, verse 8 raises a question: ". . . will he find faith on the earth?" Some people argue that if we pray for something in faith and believe God for it, we can leave it and move on . . . However, there is a balance between faith and persistence. The reality is, if we truly have faith and believe, we will continue to pray for something until God settles our heart on an answer to our prayer. Our persistence is a demonstration of our faith that God will answer.

This question is meant to challenge your folks to look at how they demonstrate their faith in their own prayers. If you get some good answers to this question, encourage your group to press on and continue to grow and demonstrate their faith in their current circumstances. If you don't get a good response, take advantage of the opportunity to grow their faith. You may even want to remind them that if the problem with not being consistent or persistent in prayer is because they are not confident in their faith, sometimes the disciples simply asked Jesus to "Increase our faith" (Luke 17:5). If it is more faith your folks need, this may be the best prayer to practice persistence with.

- **Read Luke 11:9-10. What is the biggest thing you want God to do right now? Is it consuming your mind, thoughts, and emotions? Would I believe it is your biggest concern if I were to listen in on your prayer life?**

Again, be sure to remind your folks that this passage is part of Jesus' answer to the disciples' question in verse 1. By this point, we have looked at a *model for prayer* to help us with the content of our prayers . . . we know to come to God with *boldness*, expecting Him to answer . . . we know to be *persistent*, continuing to pray until we receive an answer . . .

Here, we learn to be **comprehensive** with our prayers: The more we are asking God for, the more we can expect Him to answer. Ask, and keep on asking . . . Seek out an answer, and keep seeking it out. Keep knocking on doors and testing the waters until God opens up an opportunity or a clear answer to your prayers. God desires the best for us. If we ask for the best, we can expect Him to answer. If our asking is not for the best, we can expect God to answer our prayer by steering us in a better direction. Ultimately, no matter what we are praying for, verse 13 makes clear that the results of our praying for anything will be wisdom through the Holy Spirit to know the best answer to our prayer.

- **What BIG thing will you "ask, seek, and knock" for on a consistent basis for the rest of the year?**

To leave a discussion like this without a very real and practical application is a huge mistake. Challenge your folks to put the lesson in practice. This question challenges them on the *boldness* and *comprehensive* issues we talked about above . . . Even if their "BIG" things doesn't really seem that BIG, don't worry. The main purpose is that it is BIG to them, and it is building their faith. Just be sure they have SOMETHING to fill in here.

- **When will you set aside time this week to pray for something BIG?**

Again, this is a practical application question. This question takes the *boldness* and *comprehensive* challenge above and challenges them to be *persistent*. While you may not be able to get quite as specific of an answer here, to leave without answering to the challenge means we left our folks with a lot of information, but without the challenge to change their life.