



THE PRIVILEGE AND POWER OF PRAYER

Scriptures for further study

Jeremiah 33:3 | 1 John 5:14 | Deuteronomy 3:23-29

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Behind every "No" of God is His best "Yes."

Matthew 26:39-45

1. When do you find it easiest to pray? What time of day? When is it most difficult for you to pray?
2. How does the disciples' inability to stay awake reveal that they still did not understand Jesus' mission as the Suffering Servant and Messiah at this point? In Matthew 26:37-38, what should have tipped them off that the situation warranted prayer? Has there ever been a time when your involvement with earthly affairs (i.e. sleep, work, school, hobbies, etc.) has distracted you from opportunities for ministry?
3. In Matthew 26:39, how does the nature of our prayers this side of the crucifixion contrast with Jesus' prayers on the eve of the crucifixion? How does Jesus' agony and stress in that moment speak to us when we are in distress? Why should the disciples have been discerning enough of Jesus' emotional state in the garden to sense the need to pray with their friend? When have you missed out on an opportunity to pray for or minister to someone facing a serious situation?
4. In Matthew 26:40-43, what is the relationship between praying and submitting to God's will (verses 39 and 42)? How does prayer help us go from asking God, "my will be done" to asking, "Your will be done"? What is the relationship between knowing God's revealed will in Scripture and discovering His will through prayer?
5. Why should Jesus' experience of stress and temptation encourage us to pray? Why should the news of a sympathetic Savior who suffered with us and for us stimulate us to remain awake to God's purposes in our lives?
6. Jesus is convinced that: His Father always KNOWS what is best, His Father always WILLS what is best and His Father always DOES what is the best for His children. "If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ASK him [to those who pray!]." Matthew 7:11. How should we respond when God seems to say "No" to our prayers?
7. Given Jesus' openness with Peter, James and John about the severity of His sorrow, what do we learn about the need for transparency with Jesus and other believers here at CG and beyond?