



THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER

ARRIVAL / CONNECTING and SNACK: (15 minutes)

Spend the first 15 minutes or so of your time together catching up and socializing with one another. Follow up on prayer requests and any action steps from your last time together.

SHORT OPENING PRAYER FOR YOUR TIME TOGETHER: (2 minutes)

SCRIPTURE and DISCUSSION: (50 minutes) Have everyone open their Bibles to **Matthew 6:5-13**. Have one person read slowly enough for everyone to enjoy. Take a minute for silent reflection, consider re-reading, then discuss the questions that follow.

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 on 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."

- What is the difference between "fake prayer" and authentic prayer, according to these verses?
- If God really is in control of the universe, why do we find it so hard to pray?
- How have you seen prayer impact the world around you?
- How does prayer lead us to experience forgiveness and give forgiveness to others?
- How are you using prayer to fight the spiritual battles you face?

SURRENDER: (10 minutes) What is an area of need in your life that you are asking God to meet? Share with your group.

CLOSING PRAYER: (10 minutes) Spend time praying for and encouraging one another.