

Faith In Community, January 29, 2006
THE JESUS JOURNEY: SEVEN THINGS TO PACK
“Access the Power”, Ephesians 13, 12-21
By Al Conway

CHARTING THE COURSE

“When ever God determines to do a great work, He first sets His people to pray.”
--C.H. Spurgeon

“When we work, we work; but when we pray, God works.”
--Max Lucado

PACKING TRAIT #3: PRAY-ER. A Pray-er seeks to have a continuous dialogue with God. (10 minutes)

How would you describe your current prayer life?

- A. Eating a bologna sandwich
- B. Checking out the menu
- C. Sampling the hors d’oeuvres
- D. Feasting at the banquet
- E. Feasting and bringing others along with you to the banquet.

What is the greatest “Answered Prayer” story you’ve ever heard?

COME, FOLLOW ME . . . (20 minutes)

Read Ephesians 3:12-21.

From prison Paul writes to the church at Ephesus in a world remarkably like our own; tense with political intrigue and prejudices divided between affluent, ambitious masters and a needy, dehumanized underclass, and strangely hopeful about its future.

Study Paul’s use of the word “power”. Where does this power come from? How does the believer access power? What are the blessings it brings?

Paul encouraged his readers to develop and maintain God’s perspective on their lives and faith. How is it possible for mere humans to gain God’s perspective?

Our troubles can easily cause us to lose the larger picture about life. What pressures and difficulties keep you from the big picture?

In Revelation 2:4, Jesus calls the Ephesian church to “*return to the love you had at first.*”
What doubts and stresses have caused you to lose your first love?

How are you being “rooted and grounded in love”?

AT THE CROSSROAD: WHERE PRAYER CONNECTS WITH LIFE (15 minutes)
Read Acts 2:42-47

The converts from Peter’s sermon remained in Jerusalem for a while. In what ways did they celebrate their new life in Christ?

How can we as believers incorporate these behaviors in our busy daily lives?

How can a new believer begin to develop his/her prayer life (Col 4:2)?

Have you used the **ACTS** format of prayer as a tool?

Adoration (Psalm 145:21, Hebrews 13:15)

Confession (1 John 1:9)

Thanksgiving (Philippians 4:6)

Supplication (1 Timothy 2:1)

As we grow in our prayer life we become more comfortable in individual, small group and corporate prayer. (Acts 6:6 Acts 1:13-14). How can a prayer journal help?

In continuing to grow in our prayer discipline we will reach a level of comfort to lead and help others to grow in their prayer life (Acts 14:23, Acts 13:3)

STEPS IN MY PERSONAL JOURNEY (10 minutes)

Many of us know those giants of faith whose prayer life are so far beyond anything we have experienced. This can lead to discouragement and despair. We need to remember that God always meets us where we are and slowly moves us to deeper things. As an athlete prepares and trains over a period of time, so should we with our prayer discipline.

Open your devotional to the center page to find the “Jesus Journey” path. The signposts mark some steps we can take as Pray-ers, who “seek to have a continuous dialogue with God.” The rocks along the path indicate the scriptures that guide our steps. Consider where you are on the path. Pray for the Holy Spirit to direct this reflection time. Look up scriptures as you are led. What step will you take to intentionally grow during “The Jesus Journey”? Circle the step and the scripture. If you are led to take a step that is not on the path, write or

draw this in. Write down any thoughts or prayers that come to mind. Use this reflection page to guide you through the week. If there is time, share your “next step” with the class.

Markers in the Road.

What a Friend We Have In Jesus

Joseph M. Scriven

What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.

Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged; take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness; take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge; take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee? Take it to the Lord in Prayer!
In his arms he'll take and shield thee; thou wilt find a solace there

CLOSING PRAYER (5 minutes)

Aided by:

Partners in Prayer John Maxwell; Thomas Nelson Publishers
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