

SCRIPTURE CARD GUIDE FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

"AVOID PRAYING TOGETHER" JUNE 18 & 19

SERIES OVERVIEW: "7 EASY WAYS TO DERAIL THE CHURCH"

In the U.S. more churches are closing than opening. As the church, we need to recognize what causes this trend. While some might point to a changing culture, a deeper look into the churches that closed reveals several common denominators. In this series, we distill points from Thom Rainer's book, "Autopsy of a Deceased Church" to reveal seven main factors that lead to a church declining, and ultimately dying. Looking at how the church of Acts avoided these pitfalls, we better understand, not only why the early church grew, but how the church today, can avoid these traps and continue our mission of more people experiencing the power of the Gospel.

Follow the directions below for a guided group discussion with a friend, in a family, small group, etc.

1

Grab a Scripture Card (printed or electronic) and simply follow steps from 1 to 6 on this page and the next.

OPENING PRAYER AND SCRIPTURE:

About 5 minutes


Each person read a verse aloud from Psalm 103 until all are read. Ask a volunteer to open in prayer using one or more of the verses.

2

BIG IDEA:

A minute to read

Praying for one another is something that we see all the time in the church of Acts, and yet, we see very little of it in the church today. We pray individually, but we tend to avoid praying for and over one another. We are called to follow in the footsteps of these early believers and transform our prayer life by praying with each other, expecting God to do powerful things through prayer, and using prayer as not means to get more of our desires, but as a means to get more of God Himself.




weekend message series

7 EASY WAYS TO DERAIL THE CHURCH

WOODBURY LUTHERAN

June 18 & 19, 2022

After this prayer, the meeting place shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Then they preached the word of God with boldness.
- Acts 4:31 NLT

Reflect 

Read the full passage in your Bible - Acts 4:23-31

What word or phrase is the Holy Spirit highlighting from the scripture reading?

What might be God's invitation to you in this?

What might be God's challenge to you in this?

How might God be calling you to respond?
Be curious...and then do it.

DISCUSSION HELP:

Use follow-up questions to take the discussion deeper. Guide answers to be honest and real.

Can you say more about that?

How have you seen that play out in your life?

What does that stir up in you?

Has anyone else had a similar thought or experience?

What might God be inviting you to do?

4

SCRIPTURE READING + GROUP DISCUSSION

About 40-45 minutes

In this passage we see the believers recall the works of God from the past and quote Scripture in their prayer. How does it help change your perspective when you pray this way?

The believers pray for boldness to speak the Word of God, not for safety or to ease their situation even though Peter and John had just been in prison. Many of us today might ask God for the latter. How do you align your intentions with God's intentions? (See John 14:13-14)

Read Romans 15:30-33. What does Paul request and pray for here? Would your prayer requests change if you were to consider why you are asking for something?

What types of prayers do you generally pray and why? (For example: praise/worship to God, thanksgiving, intercession for others, petitions for yourself, confession, corporate prayer with others, prayer using Scripture) What area do you feel you could grow in as it relates to prayer?

3

INTRO QUESTION:

About 10 minutes

What are the benefits of praying *together* with other Jesus followers? Of praying on your own? Of asking for prayers from others for yourself?

5 CLOSING GROUP PRAYER:

About 10 minutes

Explain the "ACTS" prayer acronym prompts below to the group and invite them to jump in with popcorn prayer as they are prompted. The leader or apprentice will guide the prayer with the following:

- A Adoration** "Lord we praise You for who You are and lift these praises of adoration to You now..."
- C Confession** "Dear Jesus, we fall short in so many areas of our life. We confess these things to you now ..."
- T Thanksgiving** "Thank you Jesus for your forgiveness and mercy. We also thank you for these blessings now..."
- S Supplication** "Jesus, you know our needs. Please here these requests for ourselves and others now..."

TAKE IT DEEPER



Pray

Take a moment to be still in God's presence...(after a moment) offer this prayer: "Lord Jesus, I'm here to connect with you, to just be with you as your child."

Invite God to show you any resistance in you related to praying with others.

Thank God that he has made you to experience community, including praying with others in the family of God.

Live It Out

Start with prayer, inviting God to remove any obstacles in you related to praying with others. Who is someone that you could pray with this week? Reach out to them, inviting them to pray together with you, whether in person or over the phone. Identify a few things to pray for and then jump in, simply praying from the heart.

6

LIVE IT OUT:

About 5 minutes

Read the "Live It Out" section and invite the group to take the steps noted.