

## **LIFE Group Leader Handout**

March 4, 2016

### **Remarkable Responses**

Pastor Mike O'Connor

#### **Scripture--Mark 10, Various Sections**

46 And they came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside. 47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" 48 And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" 49 And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart. Get up; he is calling you." 50 And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. 51 And Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" And the blind man said to him, "Rabbi, let me recover my sight." 52 And Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.

#### **Main Idea--How to Get a "Yes" from Jesus**

**See**--His future revealed--vs. 32-34

Jesus tells His followers what is coming soon. He knew all the details.

**Let**--His heart expressed--vs. 13-16

In the midst of His anguish, He welcomes children

**No**--His ways enforced--vs. 35-45

His closest followers get a "No" when they ask with wrong motives. He not only is the example, not the exception, but He and He alone can and did give His life a ransom for many.

**Go**--His power released

- Bartimaeus is not deterred by the objections of others.
- He persists in calling out to Jesus.
- He has a ready, concise, God-sized answer to the question from Jesus: "*What do you want me to do for you?*"
- He is healed and follows.

#### **Application--**

- Parent or not a parent--am I giving children (my own and others) a priority in my life? How does my concern for the generations to come show up in my schedule?
- What did I learn from James and John and Bartimaeus?
- What is my answer: "*What do you want me to do for you?*"

# PRAYER IN GROUP LIFE

By C.J. Stephens

One of the most difficult, yet rewarding parts of group life is prayer. It's something that is incredibly difficult for some of our people. Maybe you're one of those people. Some of us have never learned to pray. Some of us make it harder on ourselves than we need to. But most of all, we don't know how to incorporate it into our group time in a healthy way.

**What is prayer?** For me, this has been a question that I've been asking myself as I'm raising my kids. Right now we have our kids say prayers before bed and before meals. However, like most parents I'm struggling with the concept of teaching them what prayer really is. As I was thinking about this, I was reminded what some friends of mine say when they are teaching their children. They say "OK, it's time to talk to God". It's really that simple. Prayer is really just talking to God. When I'm discussing these things with groups and leaders, that's the way I try to frame it. God knows everything about you, but He wants you to tell Him. He wants to know what is on your heart and your mind. He wants to hear from you. For some of us this is tough. So many people I know are afraid to be too frank with God. or don't want to upset Him, I guess. But the Bible is full of all kinds of prayer. Some are prayers of thankfulness, some are prayers asking God for something. Some are prayers of anger or lament. God knows your heart. He simply wants to hear from you.

**How does prayer fit into my group?** In most of our groups, we have a time for prayer requests. As you are well aware, this can be a double-edged sword. Sometimes people in your group honestly share their hearts with the others. It can be a time where people really grow closer to each other. It can be a time of vulnerability and leaning on one another. That's the point in the group prayer time.

However, you know that it can be a time for endless requests. It can seem like a litany of dismay coming from the people in your group. It can honestly just go on too long. That's the downside. Despite all of that, I am a big believer in corporate prayer in your group. I think that the benefits far outweigh the negatives. Where else do people have the opportunity to share the difficult and challenging things in their life with people who care for them? Where else will you find out about the things the people in your group have weighing on them?

That being said, there are opportunities for improvement. If you find that this time is beginning to feel stale or rote, change it up. Ask everyone for the top issue you can pray for. Do a popcorn style where you pray as a group and challenge your people to say a short request. Do prayer time at a different time in your group meeting. Sometimes making it the first thing you do can shorten it up. I would also suggest changing who is doing the praying. As the group leader, it is often your job to start things rolling. However if everyone feels they are in a safe environment, they should feel comfortable to pray.

Lastly, I want to encourage you to be in prayer for your group members between meetings. Sometimes this is something that we let go by the wayside as leaders. However, praying for your members between sessions can be powerful. Take some time during the week to pray for them and their needs. This can draw you together and strengthen your group.

*"Prayer does not fit us for the greater work; prayer is the greater work." Oswald Chambers*