

WEEK 5 - SUN & SHADOW

Fall Focus 2023 // Canopy Guide

On Purpose // Spiritual Disciplines

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Use the questions below to kickstart a community building, all-play conversation that connects to our weekly topic. If your group meets for dinner, these might be great questions to share around a table.

- What has been a “mountain top” spiritual experience for you?
- When have you ever felt like God has abandoned you?
- How do you talk to God when you pray? Like a boss? Formal? Casual? Out loud? Silent? Looking up? Looking down? Hand positions?

YOUTUBE VIDEO INTRO

[Click here for the YouTube video intro!](#)

STUDY GUIDE

We often consider prayer as something we stop and do. In addition to this, we often think of prayer only from the standpoint of bringing our requests to the Lord. Both of these are true. However, we want us all to realize that the promise of prayer runs much deeper than this. Prayer is the lifeline of our relationship with the Lord. Because of this, prayer is the primary discipline that feeds all other disciplines. It exists in our words, our desires, and our thoughts. Prayer runs as deep as the groaning of our hearts. Jesus is with us in each moment, and in each moment our hearts and minds can turn to him. He longs for us to bring our joys, sorrows, troubles, and every moment to him in prayer.

Scripture to Read

- Matthew 6:5-15

- Philippians 4:6
- 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18

Deeper Discussion Questions

1. Talk about the different ways you practice prayer. Share ideas, and try some of the ones that are shared from the group.
2. Think through your own prayers. Do you focus on one form of prayer exclusively - requests, confession, thanksgiving? How might you expand your prayer repertoire this coming week?
3. Do you see prayer as an event you stop to practice, or a constant flowing stream? Can it be both?
4. What would happen in our lives, our church, our small groups if we took the promise of prayer more to heart?

PRAYER

ESPECIALLY THIS WEEK make sure to claim some time as a group each week to pray specifically for each other. Consider looking through the resources below with prayer ideas and integrate one here OR set aside some extra time to update each other on the sun and shadows you're experiencing and designate a way to pray for and follow up with each other over the next week.

EXTRA RESOURCES/ARTICLES/RESEARCH

1. <https://commonprayer.net/> - This is a daily updated online edition of the liturgy we use for Morning Prayer. If you haven't participated, it happens live at 7am on weekdays on our Grandview Facebook Group
2. Timothy Keller, *Prayer* - <https://books.google.com/books/about/Prayer.html?id=7XaBAwAAQBAJ>
3. *Praying in Color*, Sybil MacBeth - great book resource with a creative, hands-on approach to prayer. Free templates and resources are here: <https://prayingincolor.com/resources>
4. Prayer of Confession: <https://reclaimtoday.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Confession-Prayer.pdf>
5. Book of Common Prayer - Thanksgivings <https://www.bcponline.org/Misc/Thanksgivings.html>