

Gathering Guide

for Communities and Friends

The Insanity Loop -- Prayer

March 3, 2019

Where We Are In The Bible

Paul, the church leader that wrote Ephesians, was arrested in the Temple in Jerusalem for his faith. He was sent back and forth between the Jewish, local, and regional authorities, each time pleading his case. Each trial was just another way for Paul to share his faith, which enraged his opponents. Over 40 men took an oath never to eat and drink until Paul had died! But instead of winning his freedom, he used his right as a Roman citizen to appeal to Caesar. He could have gone home, but instead chose to be sent to Rome. It's in that Roman prison that Paul wrote this letter to Ephesians. In chapter 6:18, he says to "Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication."

Lean In

- Prayer can be challenging, making Paul's orders to "pray...at all times" to be a difficult one. What are some of your struggles in prayer?
- In the message an important understanding of prayer was given, that prayer is not simply about listing our requests to God. What are the damaging effects of this request-only approach to prayer?
- How does praying *in the Spirit* change the way we approach prayer?

The Big Idea

When we feel stuck in life and faith, we tend to think we should "step on the gas," trying harder and putting more pressure on ourselves. This "try harder" solution can damage our spirituality and belief in God. But if we simply make ourselves available, the Spirit intercedes for us in our weakness!

Where To?

- In the message, different "flight prayers" were listed. Which one resonates with you?
- Conversely, what does it look like for you to pray God *into* your heart or situation?
- What are some steps you can take to make yourself more available for the Spirit in prayer?
- Is there are time and space you can carve out for prayer? Could you close something off in life to take on more time for prayer?

Prayer Focus

Holy God let us be a praying people, abiding in your presence at all times and allowing the Spirit to intercede for us. Let us communicate and commune with you. Forgive us when we've treated you as our personal ATM, and like the disciples we ask that you teach us how to pray. Draw us ever closer to you in grace, and in that same grace never leave nor forsake us, Lord. We humbly surrender our whole selves to you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

