**Fellowship CommUnity Group**

 **Discussion Guide for Leaders**

*Series: Lord, Teach Us to Pray*

*Sermon: “Unanswered Prayer” (10-21-18)*

**Group Announcements (Leaders: Please review prior to start)**

**1)** Welcome everyone to your group.

**2) Leaders: Please note special instructions for prayer time.**

1. **Getting To Know Each Other** *Please use these questions as a time for people to informally talk and get to know each other.*

Go around the room and have everyone answer this question: **Throughout your life, what was your least favorite job and why?** (Be as specific as you can)

* **Opening Prayer**. (Either leader, host home or someone who is willing to pray out loud)

*(Notes from message for reference only – use only as needed)*

**\*\***Use Sermon notes bulletin insert

**Causes of Unanswered Prayer**

1) You don’t pray.

2) You don’t pray with the right motives.

**Wrong Motives in Prayer**

1) You ask for things that satisfy your desire for pleasure.

2) You ask for things that satisfy your desire for comfort and convenience.

3) You ask for things that satisfy your desire for affirmation.

**Into The Text** (15 Minutes) (Leaders: This time is not meant to be application yet, this is time in the Word, before we seek to apply truth, we need to understand the meaning of the text. The section after this one will focus on application.)

1. Ask someone to read the following passages Psalm 13:1-4; Psalm 77:1-9; Lamentations 3:55-57. *Ask*: *How do each of these writers feel? What are they trying to express to God? Is it surprising to you that the writers of scripture felt this way sometimes? How does that encourage you?*
2. Ask someone to read 1 John 5:14*. Ask: Does this verse teach that we will always get whatever we ask for? What does it teach?*
3. Ask someone to read James 4:1-3. *Ask: What two causes does James give us for ‘unanswered prayer’? What does he mean by ‘spend’? What does he mean when he says ‘passions’? How do we ‘spend’ God’s answers to our prayers on our ‘passions’?*

**Application & Discussion** (15-20 Minutes)

1. Say: Let’s move to application. One of the causes of unanswered prayer is ‘not praying’. *Ask: Have you ever found yourself wanting something from God but not actually taking the time to make it a matter of prayer? Do you think this happens suddenly or more gradually?*
2. *Ask: Have you ever taken the time to genuinely consider the true motives behind your prayers? Is it possible that some of your motives may not be according to God’s will?*
3. *Ask: What are some examples of praying for things that we plan to spend on our passions?* (Remember, James says we do this, so it happens) *What are some examples of praying for things we plan to spend on our comfort and convenience? What are some examples of praying for things we plan to spend on our need for affirmation?*
4. *Ask:* *What needs to happen if God does not want you to have what you are praying for? What could that reveal about our motives? Does he just need to be convinced or do we need to change?*
5. *Ask: Discuss this quote: God is giving us all what we would have asked for if we knew everything he knows.*

**\*\*Prayer Time**: **(Leader Say:**) We will now close with a time of prayer. *Take some time to consider your most pressing prayer requests and ask God to help you understand what your true motives are in those prayers*.

* As we have done before, ask someone to start and then have each person go around the room and pray a one sentence prayer out loud to the Lord, with all of your heart: This sentence can either be prayed as is or in your own words.
* Make sure everyone knows who is starting the prayer and the direction you are going.
* The sentence is…. *“Lord, please forgive me for praying to you with wrong motives, teach me to pray with pure, God-glorifying motives.”*
* *(****Leader****: Encourage those uncomfortable with praying out loud to try this, even if it is just a short sentence, they can still pass if they choose but do ask for this prayer to go around the room in a certain order so everyone knows – give room for learning to pray)*
* Once everyone has prayed this prayer in their own words, you can either open it up for prayer or just close. Lord, teach us to pray.