

- Digging Deeper -

For personal and small group study

Week of September 20, 2009

- God's purpose for prayer... is a way for us to develop the love relationship with Him that we were created for.

- It is through the process of prayer that we learn to trust God more fully and discover the peace we are longing for in the middle of our struggles.

*"God's purpose in guidance is not to get us to perform right actions. His purpose is to help us become the **right sort** of people." ~ John Ortberg*

2. A TIME IN SOLITUDE

- Solitude is an avenue that can allow the peace of God to bring us a peace of mind in our busy world.

- We need brief periods of solitude on a regular basis.

Matthew 14:23 "After he had sent them away, he went by himself up into the hills to pray. It was late, and Jesus was there alone."

- We also need extended periods of solitude.

Psalms 46:10 "Be still and know that I am God."

3. A TIME IN JOURNALING

- Journaling is a tool for reflecting on God's presence and guidance in your normal day or during your prayer and/or Bible reading time.

- A journal is a place to write down your unedited thoughts, feelings, and reactions.

- It has been discovered that the people who have grown closer to God, and have more peace than most, have one thing in common ... **they journal**.

4. A TIME IN HUMBLE CONFESSION

- Confession provides us peace by erasing our guilt. It is part of the process that allows us to live **beyond regrets**.

James 5:16 NCV "Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so God can heal you. When a believing person prays, great things happen."

"He who is alone with his sins is utterly alone." ~ Dietrich Bonhoeffer

These spiritual exercises that we are learning and practicing are designed to help us **make space for God in our lives.**

1. If someone asked you, "How is your spiritual life going?", how would you respond? How is practicing the suggested spiritual exercises found in your Energy Pack affecting your spiritual condition and how you are evaluating it? In what ways do the spiritual habits that you are learning and putting into practice help you "make space" for God in your life?
2. Read Exodus 14:9-15. What are some of the terms we use when we are facing a difficult or troubling situation? [i.e. between a rock and a hard place] How did God rescue the Hebrews from a humanly impossible situation? How do you identify with the Hebrews? ...with Moses? Are they different? What spiritual disciplines do you find in these verses?
3. How do you respond, and where do you turn, when you find your *plate of life* too full and your world turned upside down? To what degree, if any, is your peace of mind replaced with worry? What hinders you from totally believing and trusting that God is able and willing to help you? How can these difficulties ever be considered a friend? [Philippians 4:6-9; Matthew 11:28-30; John 14:27; 16:33; Psalm 46:10]
4. If the spiritual disciplines are part of the process -- and not an end in themselves -- what should "the end" be for you as a Christian? Where will you find your real staying power that will produce the peace of mind you are searching for? [Matthew 6:33; John 14:6; 15:1-5; Mark 12:30-31; Galatians 2:20; 5:22-23]
5. Prayer doesn't flow out of us without some concentrated effort or discipline. Describe what you would like to see your prayer life become and what changes you plan to make. Look at Cards 7-10 in your Energy Pack. These suggestions will surely help you, if you assimilate them into your everyday life. [Colossians 3:1-2; 4:2-6]
6. Confession is not something that is talked about much. With whom do you talk about your spiritual life? Are you comfortable sharing your life journey with another? What is the purpose of confession? Is confessing to someone other than God needed? Why or why not? [James 5:16; Romans 3:23; Galatians 6:1-5, 9-10]

If you would like to have a life coach or prayer partner to share with, begin by asking God to bring someone to mind of the same gender. When you do find someone, mutually share struggles and temptations and pray for and encourage each other. Seek guidance from a mature Christian in helping in this process.

Welcome to New Life !

We are very pleased you are here. It is an honor to have you worshipping with us today! This information is provided to help you feel welcome and "at home."

Worship in Singing & Giving

- We leave how to worship up to you as an individual. During **singing** worship some people remain seated, some stand, others kneel, many clap, and some lift their hands. The outward expression is not the issue - it is what is in your heart that counts. Just relax and enjoy the presence of God.
- If you would like to receive personal **prayer** during worship with singing, you may go to one of the Prayer Teams located at the back of the sanctuary.
- Invitation is given for **tithes and offerings**. If you are our guest, please do not feel obligated to contribute when God's tithes and offerings are received.

Worship in Sharing God's Love

Expressions of greeting and God's love are extended to all, especially to our guests.

Worship in Meditating on God's Word

Teaching from the Bible for about 35 minutes.

We encourage you to use our **staffed Nursery** [which has a private nursing room] and **Children's Churches** during the service. Please ask an usher for assistance in locating the various rooms.

{turn page over}

Pastor Roger Wendt

September 20, 2009

FUEL FOR THE JOURNEY II

"Peace in the Process ..."

Matthew 11:28

*"Nothing dictates our life like our desires.
So we need to want what we need." ~ Beth Moore*

- **We need to want** to have passion for the greatest love **relationship** with God possible and to follow Jesus with all of our heart.
 - We must focus on the process leading us to becoming like Jesus
 - The enemy of your soul wants to steal your peace by turning your world upside down...God wants to give you inner peace in your upside down world.
 - *Peace of mind* ... God wants to give it to us more than we actually want it ourselves.
- John 14:27** "I leave you peace; **my peace** I give you. I do not give it to you as the world does. So don't let your hearts be troubled or afraid."
- John 14:33** "I told you these things so that you can have **peace in me**. In this world you will have trouble, **but be brave!** I have defeated the world."

HOW DO WE FIND PEACE OF MIND AND HEART?

Matthew 11:28 "Then Jesus said, "**Come to me**, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."

Ephesians 2:14 "**Christ himself is our peace.**"

- Peace is found in **the process** when we humble our hearts and learn to depend totally on God ...**by focusing on the process of ...**

1. A TIME IN **PRAYER**

Philippians 4:6-7 WE "Do not worry about anything. **Talk to God about everything**. Thank him for what you have. Ask him for what you need. Then God will **give you peace**, a peace which is too wonderful to understand. That peace will keep your hearts and minds safe as you trust in Christ Jesus."

WHY do we pray?

- Prayer is the term we use for **conversation** with God. It is the primary way in which we connect and get in contact with God.