

# FBC Small-Group Materials

Week of March 19th, 2006

Matthew 6:1-18; When Love Seems Impossible

"The truth of the matter is, we all come to prayer with a tangled mass of motives - altruistic and selfish, merciful and hateful, loving and bitter. Frankly, this side of eternity we will never unravel the good from the bad, the pure from the impure. But what I have come to see is that God is big enough to receive us with all our mixture. We do not have to be bright, or pure, or filled with faith, or anything. That is what grace means, and not only are we saved by grace, we live by it as well. And we pray by it." Richard Foster, "Prayer"

## **For Small-Group Leaders**

Dear Leaders,

The quote above is probably one of my favorite quotes on prayer. The reason I resonate with it so well is because prayer does not always come naturally to me. To know that God delights in hearing from me, mixed motives and all, is refreshing and promising. Suddenly, I can pray again. I hope this week's study on prayer is a blessing to you and your group. Enjoy.

Blessings to you and your group,

Scott

These small group materials are available at the info table each Sunday and at [www.fbcdavis.org](http://www.fbcdavis.org).

### **Discussion Starters:**

- **Famous prayers:** What are some of the most famous prayers known to mankind?
- **Beginning to Pray:** When did you start praying? (How old were you and under what circumstances?)
- **Mass of Motives:** What do you think of Richard Foster's words on prayer? (Foster's quote can be found above)

### **Discussion Questions:**

Introduction: Read Matthew 6:5-15.

1. When Jesus gave us "his prayer," did he mean for us to recite it, model our prayers after it, or both? In other words, just what did Jesus mean for us to learn from it?
2. According to Jesus, how do the prayers of unbelievers differ from the kind of prayer he is advocating?
3. We all fall into the pattern of mindless, meaningless prayers from time to time. Why do we tend to do that?
4. If God already knows our needs (verse 8), why do we need to pray?
5. **Leaders:** Have your group look at the Lord's Prayer, one phrase at a time (e.g. "Our Father in heaven"). After reading a phrase, ask them to share what they think Jesus was getting at. Continue going through the prayer one phrase at a time.
6. Jesus' prayer is God-centric. Ours are frequently me-centric. How can we address this tendency in our praying?
7. Why does Jesus make such a big thing of forgiveness?

### **Getting Personal:**

In what way(s) do your prayers need to be more like Jesus'?

### **Living it this Week:**

Close your group time in a time of prayer, modeled after the Lord's Prayer.