

Series: 6:8@Six:Eight	Reference: Various passages	Title: Mission	Date: 10.21.18
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Community Group Questions

Take time to pray through the Six:Eight Prayer Foci for 2018/19

*If the Holy Spirit gives anyone a specific word for the church
share them with the other Community Group Leaders.*

- 1. FREEDOM:** Pray against spiritual attack on our church body & it's members, so that kingdom ministry goes unhindered.
- 2. SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION:** Pray we'd abide in the Presence of Christ, honoring the Word & Spirit of God, being transformed & becoming more effective in witness. That we'd be drawn deeply into worship & prayer in powerful ways this year.
- 3. LEADERSHIP:** Pray for leadership to be filled with the knowledge of the Word & power of the Spirit, operating out of the two as gracious strong servant leaders.
- 4. MINISTRIES:** For all 8 church ministries to run smoothly, having all current & future resources provided for them to thrive (*Kids, Community Groups, Kingdom Opportunities, Stewardship, Impressions, Worship Arts, Prayer, Missions*).
- 5. LOCAL EVANGELISM:** That we'd preach the Word boldly & minister in the power of the Spirit to see people come to faith & publicly declare that through baptism. - for divine openings with neighbors, coworkers, friends & Community Partners.
- 6. CROSS-CULTURAL MISSION:** To be a *'House of Prayer for all Nations'* (Isaiah 56:7), obedient to the Great Commission (Mt 28:18-20), overflowing to our Kinship Network relationships reaching Arab world Muslims, and other mission endeavors of the church.
- 7. GIVING:** Pray that we'd be stretched in faithful giving of our financial resources in order not to be hindered in our kingdom ministry as a church.

Study Questions

Read together our first church value: **Community Matters**

Every person's infinitely valuable to God; we value people & what each person brings to the table. We welcome the curious, disillusioned & the skeptic. Faith's an adventure to be lived; we're here to help each other on that journey. We intentionally seek to serve one another & the surrounding community in the practical love & message of Jesus. Our decisions together are based on faith, risk & love. We're a prayerful community, led by the Holy Spirit & Scriptures. We're externally focused, engaging the surrounding community mainly through their established avenues of service. Our commitment to community drives us to plant new families of faith as far as we can reach.

Along with that we have our Mature Christian Profile which outlines what the mature Christian may look like in light of this value...

Mature Christians in community are open, available, reliable, and sought for counsel. Positions of leadership are unimportant, and are taken with utmost humility. More importantly, they serve naturally out of a heart of God. Influence in relationship is more important than the institutional structure; the power of love vs. the love of power. They value others enough not to shy away from loving, healthy confrontation, and always seek reconciliation when needed. They are quick to admit their faulty heart and attitudes in situations. Even when things are very hard, there is a solid hope and realism exhibited by them.

They do not isolate themselves from those outside the faith community; they realize the importance of bringing the Kingdom to others. Prayer, reliance on the Holy Spirit, and words/ideas which reflect God's Word, are indicative of their nature. As a result, they can easily and gently lead others in understanding their spiritual poverty and need for Christ. They serve where needed, not complaining, and seek communally beneficial answers on all issues.

They see themselves less as an individual, and more a part of the family of faith - self is diminished. They may frustrate others since what is important to everyone else is not important to them - they are seeking God. They do not act alone or in isolation, but open themselves up to the grace and direction God offers through the faith community. Patience in the process of spiritual formation is evident in their lives with others. Out of grace they sacrifice themselves for others which sometimes looks illogical. They do not burn out and are very aware of their boundaries. They give freely in all ways.

1. What sticks out to you in these writings?
2. Are you this person? Would you like to be?
3. Where are you doing well?
4. Where are your areas of growth?

Remembering Micah 6:8 and how God called Israel back to be a community reflecting him in humility, justice & mercy, have everyone do a version of Lectio Divina with these different translations of Ephesians 2:19–22...directions are below, this should take about 5-10 minutes of silent reflection...

1. Pray, asking the Holy Spirit to speak to you.
2. Read all three versions through slowly first.
3. Read through them a 2nd time, highlight/underline words or phrases which stick out.
4. Ask the Holy Spirit to interpret for you what this means to you & how to apply it, write down what you believe to be hearing from Him.
5. Share your thoughts with others when done.

(NIV)¹⁹ Consequently, you are no longer foreigners & strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people & also members of his household, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles & prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹ In him the whole building is joined together & rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²² And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

(TPT) ¹⁹So, you are not foreigners or guests, but rather you are the children of the city of the holy ones,[a] with all the rights as family members of the household of God. ²⁰You are rising like the perfectly fitted stones of the temple;[b] and your lives are being built up together upon

the ideal foundation laid by the apostles and prophets, and best of all, you are connected to the Head Cornerstone of the building, the Anointed One, Jesus Christ himself!

²¹This entire building is under construction and is continually growing under his supervision until it rises up completed as the holy temple of the Lord himself. ²²This means that God is transforming each one of you into *the Holy of Holies*, his dwelling place, through the power of the Holy Spirit living in you!

(AMP) ¹⁹So then you are no longer strangers and aliens [outsiders without rights of citizenship], but you are fellow citizens with the saints (God's people), and are [members] of God's household, ²⁰having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the [chief] Cornerstone, ²¹in whom the whole structure is joined together, and it continues [to increase] growing into a holy temple in the Lord [a sanctuary dedicated, set apart, and sacred to the presence of the Lord]. ²²In Him [and in fellowship with one another] you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Further Passages & Questions...

Read the following verses

¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it

(Mt 16:18)

²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them"

(Mt 18:20)

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer

(Ac 2:42)

As a result they were...enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved

(Ac 2:47)

1. What do all these passages (including Eph 2:19-22) say about God?
2. What do they say about the Believer?
3. What do they say about the Church?

Further Questions...

1. What did he mean when Calvin said, "*He who does not have the Church for his mother cannot have God for his father.*"?
2. Paul mentions being 'in Christ' 164 times in his Epistles, a term largely in reference to the local church body.
 1. What was Paul's view of 'being in Christ'?
 2. How is being in Christ synonymous with being a part of a local body of believers (church)?
3. Read Hebrews 10:25, what is the sentiment expressed there?
4. We said, *we have to be active members of our local church to know others & be known by them, which is to know & be known by Jesus.*
 1. Is that frightening to be known in such an intimate way in community?
5. We said, "*What you win them with, is what you win them to.*"
 1. What do we want to be winning people to as a local church?
 2. Describe how our church should look in character, and to what should it express & be devoted to?

If time allows, discuss the following...The local church is always 4 things...

1. **ONE** - a Local Church isn't disconnected from the Universal Church. We're one with the Universal Church in the present. What we do & teach affects them & them us.
2. **HOLY** - It's a community birthed & set apart by the Spirit. The presence of God must be there, it must be a community of the Spirit.
3. **CATHOLIC/UNIVERSAL** (*not Roman Catholic/not Universalists*) - we're tied to the past, tradition, creeds, prophets, apostles, etc. We don't make up our faith, we listen to the teaching & voices which have formed us, we stand in unity with the history of the Church on the non-negotiable issues all Christians have agreed upon through the centuries. This is why as members we sign a statement of faith (Ligonier Article).
4. **APOSTOLIC** ("To be sent") - God's missional, sending his local church out into community - being true to the past, relevant to the moment & a revelation for the future. Mission exists because worship doesn't among all nations. We don't focus on a building, but on Mission. Mission to the church is like hydrogen to water. The church is sent as a local body, not just as individuals.