**WEEK 1**

dig deeper…

There are other scriptures that speak to our ability to have boldness or confidence as we approach God in prayer. Try going to **Biblehub.com** and typing the word **“confident”** in the search box near the top. Try searching for **“confidence”** and **“confidently”** as well! As you see the various scriptures where those words are used, which ones specifically address our ability to approach God or pray with confidence? Write down those references below along with a brief summary of each verse. (Spend some time playing around on this site. We’ll return to it regularly to take advantage of the online study tools it provides.)

Jesus gave His disciples a model prayer in Matthew 6:9-13. Many of us have memorized those familiar lines. But did you know that Jesus also taught about the attitudes we should have when we pray? Read the following parables about prayer and answer some questions related to how God wants us to approach Him.

**Luke 11:5-10 (An Embarrassed Host)**

Summarize this parable in a couple sentences.

According to this passage, how does God want us to approach Him in prayer?

**Luke 18:1-8 (A Troubled Widow)**

Summarize this parable in a couple of sentences.

Why do you think Jesus used a widow as a main character in this story?

Based on this parable, how does God want us to approach Him in prayer?

Why do you think He ends with these words: “But when the son of man comes will he find faith on the earth?”

What connection might there be between our faith in God and our prayer life?

**Luke 18:9-14  (An Ashamed Sinner)**

How does the Pharisee in this story approach God in prayer?

What do his prayers reveal about the condition of his heart?

How does the Tax Collector approach God? (Pay attention to his body language.)

Based on this parable, how does God want us to approach Him?

Do you see any conflict between this parable and the first two in regard to how we approach God in prayer? Elaborate.

**The Content of our Prayers**

Our attitudes in prayer are clearly important, but so is the content of our prayers. Notice how David devoted entire Psalms to just praising God for His greatness and goodness, like in **Psalm 145**. When we examine the prayers of Jesus, like the one in **John 17**, we see Him praying for the sanctification (purity/maturity) of His disciples as well as the unity of all believers. When we look at the prayers of the Apostle Paul, like the one in **Ephesians 1:15-22**, we see him praying that those who follow Christ would be spiritually enlightened so that they could know God in a deeper way. The passages below all speak about the content of our prayers. Read each one and write down what is being prayed for or what we are told to pray for.

Matt 9:38

Luke 22:40

II Thessalonians 3:1-2

James 1:5-8

James 5:16

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

**Putting it into Practice**

Set aside some time this week to pray. Pay attention to the attitudes you bring to this time as well as the content of the prayers. Pray not only for your wants and needs, but be sure to include some of the things listed above.

**Come to your group prepared to discuss the following questions:**

* Jesus tells us to pray with boldness, persistence, and humility. Which of those comes most easily for you? Which is the hardest and why?
* Have you ever kept a prayer journal? If so, describe. If not, what effect do you think it might have on your prayer life?
* What suggestions have you found helpful in developing your prayer life?
* After this study, what do you think God might be calling you to change about your prayer habits?
* What is something going on in your life about which the group can pray?