PRAYING FOR PEOPLE

The School of Prayer

Pastor Derek Sanford

March 13, 2016

**Life Group Discussion Questions:**

1. Thinking back on this week’s sermon, was there a particular point or passage that challenged you, confused you, or caught your attention?
2. Pastor Derek’s Big Idea was: The Greatest Thing You Can Do for Someone Is to Pray.

What makes prayer the most powerful expression of love you can give to someone?

[Prayer brings unlimited resources into play for that person. Other sources of power at our disposal for getting things done on their behalf (our experiences, words, actions, money) are all limited by our own resources. Prayer is, therefore, our greatest ministry.]

1. Read aloud **1 Timothy 2:1**, part of a letter from the apostle Paul to his protégé Timothy. Why does it seem surprising that Paul would tell Timothy to make “*requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving”* for “*everyone*”? [As believers, we are to pray not only for our family and friends, but also for our enemies, people in authority that we don’t agree with.]
2. What do we mean when we say “God is sovereign”? [God can do what He wants when He wants.] How does this relate to prayer? [He will answer prayer as He wills. God’s answer can be “Yes” or “No” or “Not yet.” He sometimes does not do what we asked Him to do, but He never ignores our prayers.]
3. Pastor Derek said most of our prayers are about safety, success and comfort. Since these themes are rarely evident in biblical prayers, why are they common now? Are they wrong?
4. The prayers of Paul may give us some new ideas of what to pray for other people. Read aloud the verse for each of the following ideas, then spend 1-2 minutes of silent prayer asking God to meet this need in the life of a specific person you know:

wisdom – **Ephesians 1:16-17**   hope and power – **Ephesians 1:18-20**

strength and faith – **Ephesians 3:14-17**  knowledge of God’s love – **Ephesians 3:17-19**

spiritual discernment – **Philippians 1:9**  personal holiness – **Philippians 1:10-11**

knowing God’s will – **Colossians 1:9**  steadfastness – **2 Thessalonians 3:5**

boldness in sharing the faith – **Ephesians 6:19**

**Next Steps:** 1- To get beyond just surface prayers, write down your prayers this week.

2- Be watchful for people going through a time of testing, transition, or triumph. When they cross your path during the course of your day, practice on-the-spot praying.

**Memory Verse:** “Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.” **Colossians 4:2**