

Outline One



WELCOME

When have you felt closest to God and why?



WORSHIP

Objects

Requires preparation: 8 everyday objects.

Make a collection of 8 ordinary, everyday objects from around the home. Lay them out so everyone can see them as you come to worship. Ask the Holy Spirit to remind you of aspects of God's character or of what he has done as you reflect on the items.

For example, someone might say, "The keys remind me that God knows everything. You can't lock things away and hide them from him." Or "The bank statement reminds me that God has cancelled every single one of my debts when Jesus died in my place."



WORD

1 Timothy 2:1

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people-'

Background to the passage

There are a number of different forms of prayer that are outlined in this passage. The word 'prayer' as it is used here is the word to 'pour out'. This speaks of the devotional side of our prayer lives, by which I mean where we are not asking on behalf of other people. We are not necessarily asking for things at all. It is about our soul, our life and what we are going through.

In the Psalms we get an amazing glimpse into David's prayer life. Many of these Psalms are in the nature of prayers. They record David pouring out what he is involved in and how he feels. They are quite surprising; they are negative, raw, questioning the presence of God and his love. They deal with the 'nitty gritty' and emotion of his everyday life. Psalm 10 is a good example of this and starts with the shout 'Oh God, where are you?' which I am sure we have all echoed at some time in our life.

This speaks to us about telling God everything, what we are honestly going through, our difficulties, our inappropriate thoughts, anger etc. The things we are ashamed about.

We know we can be honest about these things with God as we share our shame, our raw emotions and our questions as to whether God is with us or not. The pattern in Psalm 10 is that the psalmist pours out his negativity and pain but in the end he declares that God is with him.

Honestly opening our hearts to God builds relationship with him. Knowing his love for us, we can receive forgiveness which is the beginning of our transformation and strengthening.

Questions

What does the word 'prayer' mean to you?

How have you found it most helpful to build a relationship with God?

What do you think is the next step for you in developing your relationship with God?

Pray in the Word

Lead a time of thanksgiving for the steps along the way with God and the keys you have all learnt that help with this journey. If you have time you could give the group paper and felt tips and ask them to draw their journey marking the highlights, the learning times, the times of struggle.

What emerges from reflection of this picture?



WITNESS

The needs of the community

One of the primary ways that people have found guidance time after time, for this type of project is to ask what are the needs of the particular community or village? Are there elderly people who might need help, are there teenagers with little to do? Does the village or town lack a place to gather, for example, a coffee shop? The more you understand the needs of the community the better it will be. So, a good suggestion would be for the whole group to meet in the village, walk around it, gather information and then make a list of the needs that you have found out and place them in order of priority and begin to pray for the top three.

Why not organise now where you will meet next week to walk around and make your list together. You can also encourage some informal research over the next week by encouraging each other to ask neighbours and friends what the needs are locally.

