

## C'Nex Group Discussion Guide

Use the following questions to guide your C'Nex discussion. The focus should be to clarify meaning and develop application of this week's biblical message from our Sunday Experience.

### Week #12: Praying through the Gray of Problems (James 5:13-20)

1. Complete the sentence and explain: My prayer life is like (a) a 4G network—always connected, always clear; (b) a midnight snack—I gobble it up when needed; (c) my 30% return on investments—it isn't happening; (d) my understanding of nuclear physics—I just don't get it.
2. Since we should pray about everything and continually, when is it easiest for you to pray? When is it most difficult? Why?
3. Explain a time in your life when you experienced both the power and effectiveness of prayer (James 5:16).
4. Read James 5:15, Matthew 7:7, 18:19, and John 14:13. How do these verses impact you? Explain how you understand the promises of James and the rest of the Bible about how God will answer prayers of faith. What do we do with unanswered prayers? Where does faith come in? Does it help to see them for what they are (God's assurance that he can do all things, that he is generous, and that he will withhold nothing from us that is good when we ask) and NOT a blanket promise that we can have whatever we ask for?
5. What about the story of Elijah (1 Kings 17-19) is most helpful to you? Why?
6. What do you need to do to develop your prayer life? How can this group help?
7. Name some ways a true believer can "wander from the truth" (James 5:19). Explain *why* you think someone would do this. In what way do you relate to the dilemmas that King David (2 Samuel 11) and/or Peter (Galatians 2:11-14) found themselves in as they "wandered?"
8. When you see someone wandering from the truth today, what do you normally do? Do you own the responsibility to "turn a sinner from the error of his or her way" (James 5:20)? Explain. How can this small group do better at that and live out Proverbs 27:17?
9. Do you agree that being "isolated" (not allowing others to challenge your beliefs or behavior) will hinder your spiritual growth? Why and how?
10. Looking back over the entire James series, did the series help you see how to study the Bible better on your own? Is there something significant you are taking away from the lessons learned?

## Daily Time with God Guide

Use the following questions to guide your Daily Time with God. Set aside time each day to pray, read your Bible, and seek God's mind. Days 1-5 follow up on this week's Sunday message and Day 6 assists you in preparing for the upcoming biblical message. Instead, you could simply read systematically through a book of the Bible, like Matthew.

November 21-26, 2011

- ❑ **Day One:** "True prayer is an approach of the soul by the Spirit of God to the throne of God. [It] is neither a mere mental exercise nor a vocal performance. It is far deeper than that. It is spiritual commerce with the Creator of heaven and earth" (Spurgeon). Read Hebrews 4:1-16. Focus today your attention on your attitude in and about prayer.
- ❑ **Day Two:** Read Hebrews 4:16 again today and meditate on the idea that you are approaching God on his "throne." Here are five words that represent five aspects of praying to the King of the universe: reverence, joy, submission, expectation, and sincerity. Focus on these today and they may just transform your prayer life.
- ❑ **Day Three:** Look at Hebrews 4:16 one more time. Meditate on the type of throne: "grace." Here are three awesome components of God's grace being poured out to us as we pray: faults overlooked, desires understood, needs supplied. Ask God to "wake up" your soul to these components of your relationship with him. Pray Psalm 95:1-7.
- ❑ **Day Four:** Read "The Lord's Prayer" and Jesus' other teachings on prayer in the Sermon on the Mount in Matt. 5:23-24; 6:1, 5-8, 9-13, 7:7-11. Is God revealing anything to you about his character that you should count on or anything about your conduct that you should change? Ask for his help and do it!
- ❑ **Day Five:** Read the promise of prayer in Hebrews 11:6. When you seek God, do you do it "earnestly" and with "faith?" Meditate on that thought and ask God to reveal to you where your prayer life could improve. Focus on the idea that the more mature our relationship with God becomes, the more in tune we are to his will, and so the more accurate we can pray.
- ❑ **Day One:** We are now finished with our study through James. The goal was not just to learn the truths God revealed through James, but also to "do what it says" (James 1:22). How have you changed because of this study? Perhaps God would bless you if you would set aside time today to prayerfully read through the entire letter in one sitting. As you do, ask God to remind you of lessons that he has taught you and, most importantly, of applications that you should be making.