

## Study Guide for the Week of April 2, 2006

### *Can You Hear Me Now? A Study on Prayer—The Benefits of Prayer*

*This study guide is designed to help you to become more familiar with the Bible. Study these passages on your own, with a friend, or with a group. If you or someone you know needs a Bible, please take one from under a chair in the Worship Center. They are there for you to take home and use! Sermon manuscripts are available at [www.saintpauls-umc.com](http://www.saintpauls-umc.com).*

**Monday – Read John 15:1-8.** In this passage Jesus tells us to stay connected to him. If we stay connected, what is the result? If we do not stay connected, what is the consequence? What does Jesus mean by bearing fruit? Prayer is the primary way that we stay connected to Jesus Christ. What are some other things that we can draw from this passage?

**Tuesday – Read John 15:9-17.** Again Jesus is speaking about remaining in him, or staying connected to him. Notice the powerful statement he makes about being our friend. What does this mean to you? What makes a friendship strong? How does prayer tie into developing our friendship with God through Jesus Christ? One of the things Aaron said was a benefit of prayer was that we begin to take on the characteristics of Christ, one of which is love, or compassion, toward others. How might an active prayer life help you to be more compassionate toward others? Another benefit of staying connected to Christ that's mentioned here is joy. How might joy be a benefit of prayer?

**Wednesday – Read Exodus 17:8-13** in the Old Testament. In this story the Israelites are battling an enemy and while Moses has his hands lifted in prayer, his people begin to win the battle, but when he lowers his hands, they begin to lose. This story points to the power of God released in our lives through prayer. Moses realized that he had to keep his hands stretched toward heaven in prayer to keep the door open for God's supernatural intervention in the battle. **Read Romans 8:26.** How does this passage relate to prayer and God's power? What draws you to prayer? What makes you resist praying? What power do you need in your life that only God can give?

**Thursday** – Today we'll read about Jesus' prayer life and see what we can learn to apply to ourselves. **Read Luke 3:21-22.** Notice that Jesus is praying as the Holy Spirit comes down upon him. Prayer opens us up to the filling of the Holy Spirit. **Read Luke 6:12-13.** Jesus spent the entire night in prayer as he prepared to choose his 12 disciples. He was modeling times of intense prayer before making big decisions. **Read Luke 9:28-32.** As Jesus prays, his appearance changes. Prayer also changes us. It opens us to have our anger transformed into patience, our sadness into joy, our shallowness into a depth of soul. **Read Mark 1:21-35.** This is a day in the life of Jesus. Notice all the ministry that he does. There is no time to rest. People come to him through the night and he heals them and teaches them. And then early the next morning he goes out by himself to pray. What does this teach you about prayer? What can you learn and apply from Jesus' prayer life?

**Friday – Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17.** Rewrite this passage in your own words and memorize it. Spend time in prayer asking God to guide you into a deeper prayer life and a deeper connection to him through prayer. Make a commitment here and now that you will not go a day without some time spent in prayer and that you will stake out a regular time each day to talk to and listen for the voice of God. Spend time in prayer...