

## Study Guide for the Week of March 5, 2006

*Can You Hear Me Now? A Study on Prayer—What is 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 Matthew 6:7-8.** We will look at the rest of this passage next week, but it is important to note that Jesus says, “**when** you pray” not “**if** you pray.” God expects us to take time to connect with him. Why would God want us to take this time to talk and listen to him? How often do you pray? Would you say that your times of prayer are deep or rather superficial? **Read Revelation 3:20.** This passage is a simple reminder from Jesus that he desires to be in relationship with us. At the heart of this relationship is that we pray. That is how we open the door. Spend a few moments in prayer now. Imagine Jesus outside of your life, waiting to be invited in. Allow that to happen.

**Tuesday – Read Psalm 8.** This is a Psalm, or song, of praise. It is a prayer where the writer is articulating his praise for God. Rewrite this psalm in your own words. Notice how we are created, just a little lower than the angels, so that we could be in communion with God. The fact is that God wants to be in fellowship with us. How do you view this fellowship? What difference does prayer make in your life? How close do you feel to God? How close do you want to be?

**Wednesday – Read John 15:5-8.** Jesus wants us to be connected to him. He asks us to “abide” in him like a grape vine is connected to the main branch. What happens when that vine is connected? What happens when it is severed? Prayer is our connection to God through Jesus Christ. We want fruitful lives, lives that overflow with peace and joy, purpose and passion. Jesus would tell us that the only way for that to happen is to stay connected to him and that happens through prayer. Are you bearing fruit in your life? Are you connected through times of intentional prayer? What can you do to change for the better? **Read John 15:15-16.** What does this passage teach about the power of prayer and staying connected to Christ?

**Thursday – Read 1 Kings 19:1-8** in the Old Testament. Elijah was one of the most powerful prophets of the Old Testament. Because he often had to confront kings and queens on their evil deeds, his life was often in jeopardy. Here, Queen Jezebel is trying to find him and kill him. He is understandably distraught and even asks God to take his life. But God is not finished with him yet. What happens through that time of prayer? What does this teach us about God? What does it teach us about human beings? What does it teach us about the relationship between God and human beings?

**Friday – Read 1 Kings 19:9-13** in the Old Testament. We often want God to shout to us, or, as Aaron put it, paint a sign in our front yards. But as we see in this passage God often chooses not to speak through the raging noise of a storm, or the power of an earthquake, or in the roar of a fire. God speaks to us in a still, small voice; in a whisper. How would you describe the noise in your life? What can you do to find a quiet place so that you can hear God’s whisper? It’s not that God can’t speak in a roar, it’s that he desires for us to stop what we’re doing, to eliminate some of the noise, and be still. **Read Psalm 46:10-11** in the Old Testament. Put this passage in your own words and then take the time to do it. Be still!