**“PRAY” SERIES PREACHING/STUDY NOTES**

**Week 2: THE COMMUNITY OF PRAYER**

**The Community of Believers**

God is relational (the Holy Trinity – one God in Three Persons). We are made in God's image to be relational as He is *(See Genesis 1:27; 2:18)*. His community on earth is the Church.

God puts us together in local churches to encourage, help and strengthen one another in mutual love and servant-heartedness *(see Proverbs 27:17, Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; Hebrew 10:24-25)*

A strong church is fit to fulfil its purpose *(our purpose: Matthew 28:19-20; Ephesians 3:10).*

**God's call to pray for and with one another**

*Ephesians 6:18-20* – A call to pray for all the Lord's people and individuals.

*Matthew 18:19-20* – A call for two or more to join in agreement and pray accordingly.

*Matthew 6:9-13* - The Lord's Prayer: a community prayer.

We value and encourage praying for and with one another at CONNECT because it is what we are called to do.

**Praying for beyond the four walls**

The church is also called to pray for those beyond our congregation and the wider church: for individuals; the communities where we live; governments; nations. *(see 1 Timothy 2:1-8; 2 Chronicles 7:14)*.

**Imitating God**

The Holy Spirit and Jesus both intercede (pray) for us - the Holy Spirit by guiding our prayers and Jesus by interceding before God the Father on our behalf *(See Romans 8:26-27,34)*.

Being made in the image of God, we should likewise do as He does and pray for one another.

**Reasons why some struggle to pray with others**

1. Lack of (or perceived lack of) understanding.
2. A fear of speaking in front of others.
3. Inferiority about the words we use/our eloquence.
4. Inferiority due to our perceived spiritual state.

**Response**

1. God gives understanding through the Holy Spirit and God’s word *(in this regard see Job 32:8; Psalm 119:130; Proverbs 2:6; Colossians 1:9)*.
2. God gives His people courage and capability beyond their expectation *(think about Moses, Gideon and Peter).*
3. Prayer is not a performance. God wants to hear your prayers. Be yourself in prayer.
4. We have equality with each other through the cross; being made righteous through Jesus we can pray with confidence that our prayers will be “powerful and effective” *(see James 5:16; 2 Corinthians 5:21)*.

**THINK BIG AND ACT SMALL!**

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. *(Colossians 4:2 NIV)*

They devoted themselves to ... prayer. *(Acts 2:42 NIV)*

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. *(1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NIV)*