

“What’s going on?”

+ Denman Prayer Stations will be held Monday, June 17th - We are a church that values prayer. One of the ways we will engage in prayer is through prayer stations, which are stations (usually small tables) placed throughout the church that will help guide us on how to pray. The prayer stations are self-guided, meaning people/families are free to come and go as they please, visit the station in any order, visit one and/or all of the stations, and spend as little time as they'd like, etc. There will be four stations in the sanctuary and four in the multipurpose room where we will focus on praying for the staff and children of Denman Elementary School. The church will be open from 6:30a-8:00p.

+ Parking - It's our hope that a person visiting LifePoint will experience a lot of great things. One of those things is an easy parking experience. As we grow, our parking options shrink. Denman Elementary School has graciously offered their parking lot to us on Sundays. If you're able, please enjoy the warmer weather by parking over at the school to make more room for our guests. As you walk over to LifePoint, what a great time to pray for the school and the service at LifePoint as well!

MATTHEW 5:7

ICE BREAKER

Question: During your childhood were you and your siblings treated equally and fairly or was one spoiled or treated differently than others? Or, if you were an only child, do you feel like you were treated different as an only child? Share a funny or memorable story.

Question: Think of an experience where someone received credit for something you did (group project, etc.).

CENTERING FOCUS

Everyone close their eyes and ask someone read this passage slowly, taking pauses between each sentence. Make this your prayer as you enter into this time together.

Psalm 139:23-24 (TPT)

*“God, I invite your searching gaze into my heart.
Examine me through and through;
find out everything that may be hidden within me.
Put me to the test and sift through all my anxious cares.
See if there is any path of pain I’m walking on,
and lead me back to your glorious, everlasting ways—
the path that brings me back to you.”*

Close this reading with prayer as you begin your study together.

LAST WEEK'S CHALLENGE

Last week's challenge was to practice studying your Bible by using the tool of observation. You were challenged to list 20 observations on Acts 1:8.

Question: How was this challenge for you? If you did it, would you share one of your observations and what your experience was like?

THOUGHT PROVOKING QUESTION

Question: How would you describe fair?

Question: Name a time you feel like you were taken advantage of.

ENGAGING WITH SCRIPTURE

Matthew 5:7 (ESV)

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy."

Question: According to the passage, who will receive mercy?

Question: The main subject of this passage is "the merciful." What is the difference between someone who is merciful versus someone who has shown mercy?

Matthew 18: 21-35 (ESV)

Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?"²² Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times."²³ "Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants."²⁴ When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents.²⁵ And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made.²⁶ So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.'²⁷ And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt.²⁸ But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.'²⁹ So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.'³⁰ He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt.³¹ When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place.³² Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me.³³ And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?'³⁴ And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt.³⁵ So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.

Question: According to this passage, why did Jesus tell this story?

Question: As a group recap the story, naming the characters and the details surrounding them. (If it helps, draw or write out the characters, their roles and how much they owed.)

Question: Why did the master forgive the servant's debt?

Question: What does it mean to "have pity" on someone? What are some synonyms for the word pity?

Question: How much did the second servant owe versus the first servant? (**see note for further explanation)

Question: What is the first thing the servant does once his debt has been forgiven? (Look specifically at verse 28)

Question: What are the differences in the response to the debts that were owed? What emotion does this stir up in you?

Mercy is showing compassion or forgiveness to the offender by withholding a deserved punishment or judgment.

Question: Where do you see someone showing mercy? Where do you see mercy withheld?

Question: Who does Jesus identify with in this story? How does this character reflect Jesus?

Question: Who do you identify with in the story? Who do you admire or long to identify with in this story?

1 Peter 2:21-23 (ESV)-

²¹For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. ²²He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. ²³When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

Question: According to this passage, what can we know about Jesus?

Question: This passage tells us that Jesus left us an example to follow. Looking at the list you made above, does your life look like Jesus'? In what ways does your life need to be reshaped to look like Jesus?

Galatians 3:13-15 (TPT)

“Yet, Christ paid the full price to set us free from the curse of the law. He absorbed it completely as he became a curse in our place. For it is written: “Everyone who is hung upon a tree is doubly cursed.” “Jesus, our Messiah, was cursed in our place and in so doing, dissolved the curse from our lives, so that all the blessings of Abraham can be poured out upon even non-Jewish believers. And now God gives us the promise of the wonderful Holy Spirit who lives within us when we believe in him.

Question: When you read this and realize the mercy that has been shown towards you, what thoughts or emotions do you experience?

****10,000 talents** is equivalent to about 200,000 years of wages. The average income in the US is about \$60,000, so 10,000 talents would be about 12 billion dollars today. **100 denarii** was equivalent to about 20 weeks of wages, which would be about \$23,000 dollars today.

NEW CHALLENGE

Last week we practiced observing Acts 1:8 by making a list of 20 observations. This week's challenge will be to continue observing by either a.) Making a list of an additional 20 observations, or b.) making your first list of 20 if you didn't practice this last week.

(This is a very hard task! First, ask the Spirit to help you. Do not be discouraged if you cannot come up with 20 observations, but use this as a time to work together as a group or ask for help from someone.)