

**A Recipe for Flourishing**  
*Exodus: The God Who is With Series*  
**Exodus 18:1-27**  
Pastor Bryan Clark

I believe for the overwhelming majority of people, what they want is to live in a community where they feel safe, and people can flourish together. The big question is, “How do we get there?” I think it’s fairly obvious, as a culture, we don’t know. It’s not getting better; it’s getting worse, which raises the question of what to do? Well, perhaps we’ll learn something in our story this morning that will help us to answer that question. So, if you have a Bible, turn with us to Exodus, Chapter 18. If you’re new with us, we’ve been working our way through the book of Exodus. We have this great moment where God delivers Israel. He parts the sea. They’re coming through the desert. They’re afraid they’re going to die of thirst, so God gives them water. They’re afraid they’re going to starve to death, so God miraculously gives them food. Then they think they’re going to die of thirst again, so God miraculously provides water out of a rock. And then they go to war with the Amalekites, and God gives them a great victory. It’s all very dramatic!

And now we’re in chapter 18. Oh, and by the way, Moses’ father-in-law comes for a visit which doesn’t sound quite as dramatic. This is one of those chapters, if you’re just reading through the book of Exodus, you’d read it and you’d be like, “Whatever,” and you’d move on. But it’s good to remind ourselves that the writers of these narratives are known for their brevity. Just for example, Moses spent 40 years living in Egypt, 40 years living in the Sinai desert—80 years! —and we know almost nothing about that time. There are so many things I’d like to know. So why are you using up a whole chapter just to tell me Jethro came for a visit? So, whenever you get a chapter like this, you have to really pay attention to the features in the chapter because it helps you understand why this information matters. So, chapter 18, verse 1:

**Now Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses’ father-in-law, heard all that God had done for Moses and for Israel His people, how the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt. Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, took Moses’ wife Zipporah, after he had sent her away, and her two sons, of whom one was named Gershom, for Moses said, “I have been a sojourner in a foreign land.” The other was named Eliezer, for *he said*, “The God of my father was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh.”**

(\*NASB, Exodus 18:1-4)

So we first met Jethro all the way back in chapter two. He’s the priest of Midian. The Midianites were descendants of Abraham. After Sarah died, Abraham married Keturah, and Keturah had several sons, one of them named Midian, who was the father of the Midianites. What it means that he was the priest of Midian is really hard to figure out. It’s hard to understand exactly what he believed, what the Midianites believed, and what did it mean that he was a priest? But the more significant designation in this chapter is that he was Moses’ father-in-law. This will be repeated 13 times in this chapter. Now, once you tell me that at the beginning—that he’s Moses’ father-in-law—you wouldn’t need to keep repeating it. I get it. It was helpful once, but I don’t need it repeated 13 times. The repetition is telling us there’s something about that relationship that is significant to the meaning of the text.

The text tells us that Jethro **heard all that God had done for Moses and the people of Israel.** It's good to remind ourselves that these were normal human beings. So, think about this. You're the father-in-law. This person has married your daughter, and these are your grandsons. And he comes to you one day, and he says, "I don't know quite how to tell you this, but I just met God in the desert, and now I'm going to go back to Egypt, and I'm going to take on the most powerful ruler in the world. I'm going to take on the most powerful nation in the world, and I'm going to deliver an entire nation of slaves away from Egypt and lead them to the Promised Land." And if you're Jethro, what are you thinking in that moment?

So now what the text is saying is he's realizing he's heard the news that the God of Moses, his son-in-law, did exactly that. You'd have to say that would cause you to sit up and pay attention. He's coming with Zipporah and the two boys that Moses sent away. There's a lot of discussion about when Moses sent them away, but there's no way really to know this. Perhaps it was when things in Egypt seemed like they were getting too dangerous, and he sent them back home. I tend to think it's more likely that once they were on their way in the desert, Moses sent Zipporah and the boys ahead to Jethro to tell him that they were coming and to come meet us together in this place. Whatever the case is, they're going to meet together.

The two boys—the first one named Gershom—is the son we've already met. His name means, and the text tells us that Moses said, **"I have been a sojourner in a foreign land."** We talked about this all the way back in chapter two. This reflects Moses' hurt, his disappointment, his confusion over what's transpired. Whatever he thought God was going to do to use him, now just seems like a bad dream. He's a man without a country. He fled from Egypt, from his family, from the people he knew, and now he's in the land of Midian. But he doesn't belong there. He doesn't fit, and that's what he names his first son. But interestingly enough, this is the first time we meet the second son. We would refer to this as a flashback in the sense that this boy was born and named all the way back in chapter two. But we weren't told that. We're not told that until chapter 18 when we're told he's named Eliezer, and the text tells us the name means, **"The God of my father was my help,"** because He delivered Moses from the Pharaoh. Now, this is really helpful to understand, as there is the other part of what Moses will be dealing with at Mount Sinai. On one hand, it's disappointing. He's hurt; he's confused. He wonders what's going to happen, but it's also true when he named his second son, that he recognizes God was with him...God protected him...God delivered him, and there's a sense in which this story isn't over. God is still going to do something.

Last week, Ryan reminded us of the idea of the Wilderness School of Leadership. God can do things to us in the wilderness that changes us and makes us more like Jesus. That's true. But it's also true that that doesn't automatically happen in the wilderness. You can go into the wilderness, and you just become angry, and bitter, and you become less of a person. What this is saying is that Moses, in his hurt and confusion in the wilderness, still believed, still trusted, still saw that God was part of his story. And in the midst of all that, his father-in-law, Jethro, is now witness to that, and there's these little seeds that Moses is planting in the mind of his father-in-law, Jethro. Verse 5:

**Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness where he was camped, at the mount of God.**

So they're basically going to all meet together, close to Mount Horeb, better known as Mount Sinai. So, if you're what we refer to as a first reader—the first readers of this record—you would have known this story. You would have known that something spectacular happened with Moses and God on Mount Sinai that changed everything. So this text is just foreshadowing that. It's kind of hinting we're getting really close to Sinai, and something dramatic is about to happen. You would know that, and that foreshadowing kind of carries on throughout this text. Verse 6:

**He sent word to Moses, “I, your father-in-law Jethro, (*I think Moses would know that he's his father-in-law.*) am coming to you with your wife and her two sons with her.” Then Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, and he bowed down and kissed him; and they asked each other of their welfare and went into the tent. (Vs. 6-7)**

So word comes to Moses, and Moses comes and greets his father-in-law in the typical near-eastern greeting, and **they ask each other of their welfare**. That is the Hebrew word, *shalom*. It's important to understand that, because we're going to come back to that in just a few moments. Verse 8:

**Moses told his father-in-law all that the LORD had done to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, and all the hardship that had befallen them on the journey, and *how* the LORD had delivered them.**

So when the text says in verse eight, **Moses told his father-in-law**, that's the Hebrew word *proclaimed*. We saw this in chapter 10 when God told Moses, “This is what I'm going to do in order to proclaim to the nations that I am the one true God.” So now we have Jethro, who is a Midianite—a Midianite priest—and Moses is *proclaiming* the exact same word, proclaiming to Jethro, “This is what God has done.” He's going to tell him all about the strikes and the miracles. He's going to tell him all about the parting of the sea. He's going to tell him all about the water, and the manna, and more water, and the war with the Amalekites. So how is Jethro going to respond? Verse 9:

**Jethro rejoiced over all the goodness which the LORD had done to Israel, in delivering them from the hand of the Egyptians. So Jethro said, “Blessed be the LORD who delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of Pharaoh, *and* who delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians.” (Vs. 9-10)**

Jethro is worshiping Yahweh, the God of Moses. Now stop and think about this. I don't know what his belief system was. It would have been polytheistic—multiple gods—yet, in this moment, hearing Moses proclaim the amazing things that Yahweh has done, he's worshiping the God of Moses. We don't have time to go into all this, this morning, but there are a number of things in this chapter that correlate with the previous chapter. This is how the Amalekites responded to Yahweh God. They declared war against Him. This is how Pharaoh responded. This is how the Egyptians responded. But contrary to that, this is how Jethro responded. This is his family. This is Moses, and he's listening to what Yahweh has been doing, which leads to really the crescendo in verse 11:

**“Now I know that the LORD (*Yahweh*) is greater than all the gods; indeed, it was proven when they dealt proudly against the people.”**

Many commentators identified this as Jethro's moment of conversion. Whatever he believed before, as a result of the evidence of what God has done, he has come to the conclusion that Yahweh, the God of Moses, the God of Israel, is the one true God. Again, contrast that with the response of Pharaoh, and the Egyptians, and the Amalekites. As a matter of fact, the second half of verse 11 is kind of clumsy in the way it reads. But essentially what he's saying is, Pharaoh arrogantly thought his gods could take on Yahweh, and he lost. The Egyptians thought their gods could take on Yahweh, but they lost. The Amalekites arrogantly thought their gods could take on Yahweh, but they lost. And all this has led to his conclusion that the God of Israel, the God of Moses, is the one true God. Verse 12:

**Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God, and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat a meal with Moses' father-in-law before God.**

If you remember back when Moses was talking to the Pharaoh, he repeated it four times, ***"We must leave and go to the desert and offer burnt offerings and sacrifices to our God."*** But as far as we know, this is the first time that actually happened. And it's very interesting that this involves Jethro, the priest of Midian, as well as Moses, Aaron, and the elders of Israel. When God told Moses, "I am going to do this so that the message will be proclaimed to the nations that I am the one true God," it reminds us that's always been God's heart. It's never been that it's only Israel. Israel was simply a vehicle through which God would reveal Himself so that all of the nations would come together and worship Him as God. So you have this remarkable moment where Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, who's actually a priest in Midian, comes together with Moses, with Aaron, with the elders of Israel, and they *together* worship the one true God. Again, it's like a foreshadowing of God's vision and God's intent. As a matter of fact, when the text says he **took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God**—capital "G," small "od,"—we might read over that without even thinking about it. But the formula is always burnt offering and sacrifices for Yahweh, capital LORD. As a matter of fact, this is the only time in the entire Old Testament where it's God. I think what it's reflecting is Jethro, as the priest of Midian, has now concluded that the God of Moses is the one true God, and they experience that worship together. How you experience flourishing as a community of people, it has to start with acknowledgment there is only one true God. There's one Creator. There's one God. It's His roadmap. It's His plan. Without that, it's never going to work. So this is where the recipe starts, and is an acknowledgment there's one God, and He's the one that's going to get us there. Verse 13:

**It came about the next day that Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood about Moses from morning until the evening. Now when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, "What is this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as *judge* and all the people stand about you from morning until evening?" Moses said to his father-in-law, "Because the people come to me to inquire of God. When they have a dispute, it comes to me, and I judge between a man and his neighbor and make known the statutes of God and His laws."**  
(Vs. 13-16)

The opening line of the paragraph, **It came about the next day**, tells you that this is meant to be included in the previous conversation. That's why there is that reference. That's why the chapter break doesn't happen there. This is all part of the same story and the same point the writer is trying

to make. So Moses is sitting in judgment of the people. What that means is he's arbitrating the disputes among people. They come to him. He inquires of God. He tells them what God said. "These are God's ways, His statutes, His laws. This is the answer." And all day long, Moses does that, and all day long these people wait in line to get an answer to their dispute. You have to remember that these people had spent their entire lives as slaves. They're roughly 30 days out of that, and they have no idea how to live in freedom. They have no idea what it means to be a community. They have no idea what it means to be a nation, and so they have all these disputes and conflicts. So they come to Moses, and Moses inquires of God. God has to give them an answer.

All this, again, creates a foreshadowing and anticipation for what's about to happen on Mount Sinai. Think about God giving His law and His statutes and all that He gives Moses on Mount Sinai. And maybe our tendency is to think it was just a bunch of laws and rules, and God is just trying to control everybody. That's not what it is at all. These people need to know how to live together. They need to know what it means to be a community of people. Right now, they have no roadmap. Everybody is just trying to figure it out. That's why they all have to keep going to Moses. But when God delivers on Mount Sinai, He's going to lay out the roadmap. He's going to lay out the laws and the statutes, and this is how we do it. "I'm God. I'll tell Moses. Moses will tell you. You follow the roadmap, and we'll flourish together as a people." So, again, it's building this anticipation that this is what's coming. But for now, these people don't know that. So Jethro asked Moses, "*Why are you doing this?*" Moses explains it to him.

Now this is really interesting to think about. We live in a 21st century America that is full speed down the tracks of secularism. We are a long ways down those tracks. A result of that is we've convinced ourselves that all morality is relative, and everyone has the freedom to decide for themselves what is right and wrong. We believe that will lead to freedom, but actually it leads to bondage because nobody knows what the rules are. Nobody knows what defines right and wrong. Everybody is just doing their thing and deciding it for themselves. So as a result of that, our communities aren't safe. As a result of that, nobody quite knows who's doing what, so there's no roadmap to flourishing. This is why the government keeps getting bigger and bigger and bigger. Because the people are out of control, because there is no roadmap to follow, we need more laws; we need more statutes; we need more regulations; we need more guidelines; we need more ordinances. The people are out of control, so we must control them, or they're going to hurt everybody. Talk to anybody that runs a business. Talk to anybody in the medical community. People are buried in all these regulations, and all these laws and statutes and ordinances and all these things that we now have to do just to function. And at some point, you have to ask the question, "Why is that necessary?" Why do we have to tell people that, "That's right, and that's wrong?" Rather than freedom, what we're experiencing is bondage. Verse 17:

**Moses' father-in-law said to him, "The thing that you are doing is not good. You will surely wear out, (*The Hebrew there is literally you'll wilt.*) both yourself and these people who are with you, for the task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone. Now listen to me: I will give you counsel, and God be with you. You be the people's representative before God, and you bring the disputes to God, then teach them the statutes and the laws, make known to them the way into which they're to walk and the work they are to do. Furthermore, you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place *these***

**over them *as* leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. Let them judge the people at all times; and let it be that every major dispute they will bring to you, but every minor dispute they themselves will judge. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear *the burden* with you. If you do this thing and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all these people also will go to their place in peace.”** (Vs. 17-23)

So Jethro says to Moses, “This isn’t going to work, so maybe rethink this thing.” At one point he says, “This is what I’m telling you. Check and see if that’s what God wants you to do.” But essentially what he’s saying is, “You’ll be the connection with God, and God is going to tell you His statutes and His laws and His ways. Then you need to teach them to the people because this is the roadmap so that they know how to live together. But you’re also going to need some help, so you need to identify leaders.” This is really the first part of government among the nation of Israel. “This is how we need to organize ourselves, but you can’t just have anybody out there being a leader. They need to be qualified leaders.”

He identifies three things. Number one, they need to **fear God**, not afraid of God, but in awe, in respect, worshiping God. God is in charge. God is the Creator. It’s His roadmap. It’s His plan. We all have to agree, or this can’t work. So those leaders need to be on that same page. First of all, they need to **fear God**. Second of all, they need to be **men of truth**. No politics, no lying, no half-truths, just tell the truth. This is about justice, and fairness, and flourishing. No business, no family can flourish if people won’t tell the truth. It doesn’t work that way. Thirdly, he says they must be people who **hate dishonest gain**. In other words, he’s talking about bribery. They can’t be on the take. There can’t be an agenda...can’t be political. It’s about fairness. It’s about justice. It’s about doing the right thing so people can trust their leaders, so people can flourish!

As you know, this is an election year...and this is really going to be fun. (*laughter*) Fun here is defined as miserable. (*laughter*) It’s easy to kind of get caught up in the divide. It’s Democrat or Republican, but I’m not going to tell you who to vote for. That’s not my job. But it’s helpful to think about these things through a more biblical grid. When we were in Proverbs, we talked about this quite a bit. Proverbs divides people into two categories: the righteous and the wicked. The righteous is the Tzadik. It’s the person who is committed to the flourishing of the community. It’s a person who would be willing to disadvantage himself or herself in order to advantage the greater community. And again, and again, and again, Proverbs says, “When the righteous, when the Tzadik are in charge, the people rejoice because they flourish,” because the only way people can flourish is if the righteous are running the show. Contrary to that were the wicked. The wicked are not like that. The wicked are in it for themselves. The wicked are in it to win. The wicked will disadvantage the community in order to advantage themselves, and as long as the wicked are in charge, there’s no chance for flourishing...None! Proverbs goes over that and over that and over that again. And we reminded ourselves, that’s a much better grid to think through when you’re making your decisions.

That is very similar here in Exodus 18. What kind of leaders do we need for flourishing? They need to be people who **fear God**, who reverence God, who worship God. Not just that Christians are a voting bloc, but truly, with all their heart, they believe God is in charge. He’s got the roadmap to flourishing. He’s the one we need to follow. Second of all, they need to be **truth tellers**, not

truth as the culture wishes it was, but truth as God defines it. No politics, no agenda, but a commitment to truth. And thirdly, not in it for **personal gain**. Again, this is not politics. This is not advantaging myself. This is about fairness. This is about doing what's right. This is about trying to create a community where people can flourish together. What's the result if we follow the roadmap? Well, it's the end of verse 23. **Then you will be able to endure, and all these people also will go to their place in *shalom*.**

**Peace** is the Hebrew word *shalom*. They will go back home and flourish. The word *shalom* is a very important word in the Old Testament. It shows up a lot in the book of Proverbs. It only shows up three times in the book of Exodus, and all three have something to do with Jethro. In chapter 4 when Moses says they're heading back to Egypt, Jethro says, "Go in *peace*." The other two are right here in chapter 18. When Jethro and Moses got together, they checked on one another's *shalom*. The other place is at the end of verse 23. Here's the recipe. Here's the roadmap to flourishing. If you do it the way I tell you, everyone can go back to their home and flourish together in *peace*.

**So Moses listened to his father-in-law and did all that he had said. Moses chose able men out of all Israel and made them heads over the people, leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. They judged the people at all times; the difficult dispute they would bring to Moses, but every minor dispute they themselves would judge. Then Moses bade his father-in-law farewell, and he went his way into his land.**  
(Vs. 24-27)

As far as we know, it's the last time Moses ever saw his father-in-law, Jethro. All of this begins to foreshadow and anticipate something spectacular that's about to happen on Mount Sinai. That will lay out a roadmap so these people can learn what it means to live together as a community and flourish together as the people of God.

And we'll get there, but as we wrap this up this morning, certainly we can all agree that there is no athletic team, there is no business, there is no community, there is no family that can flourish if everybody is free to do their own thing. It can't work...and we know that. So why would anyone think that that will lead to flourishing in our culture? It won't! It can't!

For us, as the people of God, it starts with our acknowledgement that God is God. There is one true God. He's the creator God. He's in charge, and He's got the roadmap to flourishing. And we need to know it; we need to understand it; we need to obey it. So that's where it all starts. Then we follow and we obey. Then we take it out into the streets. When we start thinking of changing our country, when we start thinking of changing our community, it all seems overwhelming. Most people are like, "Uh...whatever." And that's why we often talk about creating pockets of flourishing, because this is very realistic. This is very doable. Wherever God has you at work; wherever God has you in your neighborhood; wherever God has you at school; wherever you find yourself, you represent God's vision for flourishing, and you can create pockets of flourishing that become the platform from which we will proclaim the message of Jesus.

But if that's going to work, if we're going to carry that message into the streets, then we must be people, number one, who **fear God**. God is in charge, not me. It's His roadmap. It's His way. I have to understand it. I have to obey it. Number two, it has to be about **truth**, not truth as everybody

thinks it is, but truth as defined by God. There has to be clarity around that. And number three, we ***can't be in it for ourselves***. I have to be willing to even disadvantage myself to advantage others. It's about fairness. It's about justice. It's about doing the right thing...and seeking to create little pockets of flourishing that become platforms to proclaim the message of Jesus. It seems to me that's a pretty clear recipe for flourishing.

*Our Father, we're thankful that You are the one true God and that You have called us to be Your people to proclaim Your message to the nations. Lord, may we be faithful in the places where You have us, to do our part to create pockets of flourishing, to become platforms to share the message of Jesus. May we give people just a glimpse of the world as You intended it to be for Your glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Scripture taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE  
Copyright 1960, 1962, 1963, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1987, 1988, 1995  
The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.  
Lincoln Berean Church, 6400 S. 70th, Lincoln, NE 68516 (402) 483-6512  
Copyright 2024 – Bryan Clark. All rights reserved.



## WINTER 2024 // WEEK 3

### Life Group Questions

Exodus – The God Who is With // January 27-28, 2024

A Recipe for Flourishing // Exodus 18:1-27



Make plans with your Life Group to join us at the Life Groups Winter Party! Cost is \$5/person (\$15 family max). Space is limited, register online or in the LBC App to reserve your spot!

## Introduction

Chapter 18 of Exodus gives us a reunion of Moses with his father-in-law Jethro. Moses tells Jethro of all that God has done for him and for Israel and Jethro gives Moses some good advice.

To think through the main ideas in the sermon and prepare for your discussion together, we invite you to look over all the questions on the following pages and write your thoughts down before you meet with your group. Due to preferences over a wide range of groups, we do not expect you will cover every question each week.

## Warm Up *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

- 1) Who is someone in your life that gives good advice? Share a bit about that person.
- 2) What outside influences have had the greatest influences on your life or your family's life?

## Getting Started

Transition into group discussion.

- 1) Open group discussion with prayer. Here are a few potential prayer items:
  - a. For the Spirit of God to lead you in truth
  - b. For the fruit of the Spirit to be cultivated in your lives
  - c. For grace to hear and apply what the Spirit says to you

- 2) Choose someone to read the passage aloud for the group.
- 

### Study Questions *(Suggested time: 40 min)*

- 1) What is one idea that stuck with you from Pastor Bryan's sermon this past weekend?
- 2) Look again at *Exodus 18:1-12* and the interaction between Moses and his father-in-law Jethro. **Compare Jethro's response to all that God has done for Moses and Israel to that of the Egyptians and/or the Amalekites.**

**How is Jethro's response (vv. 9-12) a fulfillment of one of God's purposes of the Exodus? (See Exodus 8:27 & 9:13-16)**

**What in your life or the lives of those around you has caused you to say, "Now I know, that the Lord is greater than all other gods"?**

- 3) **Who is someone in your life to whom you could begin talking about how the Lord has delivered you?**  
**What is preventing you from starting that conversation?**

**Take a moment as a group to pray together for the various people that you desire to come to know that "the Lord is greater than all other Gods".**

- 4) In Exodus 18:13-27, we find the advice that Jethro gave to Moses about helping the people settle their disputes. As we look at this passage, we need to remember that these people do not know how to live as a nation having been slaves the last 400 years. Pastor Bryan reminded us that this situation occurs before the Law is given at Mount Sinai which will happen in a few chapters. **How would the giving of the law affect this situation?**

**In our day, the culture of our world tends to throw off the idea that there is an absolute standard of right and wrong. How does this result in a similar situation to what Moses and the Israelites are facing?**

Jethro indicates that if Moses follows his advice (if God so commands) it will result in peace (Shalom = flourishing) for the people. The ultimate purpose of the law is also to lead to flourishing. Without absolute standards of right & wrong, human nature tends to look out for itself, not the flourishing of the community. **How have you seen this tendency in your own life?**

**What is one thing you could do this week to seek the flourishing of our community instead of just your own flourishing?** (community could be defined in many ways, i.e. your family, your Life Group, our church, our city)

## Personal Spiritual Exercises

---

Just like physical exercises help strengthen and stretch our bodies for healthy living, these spiritual exercises are meant to move us spiritually in ways that may be new so we might experience inner growth. Since God longs for us to experience Him with our whole selves—mind, body, spirit—we invite you along each week to strengthen your souls with suggestions and prompts. **Next week in Life Group, take a few moments to share how the Lord may have used this exercise in your life.**

**Prayer Focus:** This week pray each day for the person you identified above who does not know the Lord.

Pray for them to be open to the Lord.

Pray for the Holy Spirit to soften their heart.

Pray for God to orchestrate circumstances to draw them to Himself.

Pray for an opportunity to share what the Lord has done for you.

**Scripture Focus:** Psalm 119 refers to the value of God's law (Word, statutes, precepts, commands, etc.) in almost every verse. Take time over this week (and maybe part of next week) to meditatively read all of Psalm 119. It is naturally broken into 8 verse segments. Each morning, read a segment and listen for what the Holy Spirit wants to speak to you.

## Prayer *(Suggested time: 20 min)*

---

A significant part of "coming together" is being open and honest with our lives. Sitting in a group of people for prayer may be new or it may be familiar to you. If you would rather not pray aloud when it is your turn, feel free to pray silently and then say "Amen" aloud signaling the next person in the group to pray. Whether or not you choose to verbalize your prayer, everyone is a participant in sharing this time before God together.

Take a few moments to prepare a prayer request. What did the message, working through the above questions or the discussion cause you to notice about your own relationship with Jesus? Would you be willing to share your prayer request with the group?