

MEDITATION

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GROUP LEADERS

1. After you have arrived, take time to pray before entering the host home.
2. Thank the host for their hospitality.
3. Open with a prayer. Ask your co-leader to take notes of prayer requests.
4. Begin with introductions. Ask if anyone has questions or comments about the weekend so far.
5. Read the mediation aloud, slowly, beginning with the instructions.
6. Read the question and let the Peace of silence wash over you. Facilitate by letting the others speak, but do not require anyone to speak.
7. If you feel you must talk because no one else will, remain silent. Pray.
8. Reject the temptation to dominate the discussion, however strong it is. Develop a signal with your co-leader to alert each other if one of you begins talking too much.
9. If you find someone else is dominating the discussion, politely reaffirm their point and restate the question asking for others' thoughts.
10. Be mindful of the presence of the Holy Spirit and pay attention.
11. The point of the weekend is for the church members to get to know each other better and grow together, not to know you better.
12. Be aware of the time. If the discussion is lively or thoughtful, don't feel pressured to have the group answer all the questions. Bring the discussion to an end with enough time to pray at the end.
13. Close with a prayer circle, going around the circle for prayers, beginning with your co-leader and the prayer requests. Give those who don't care to pray aloud the opportunity to pray silently then signal the next person they are finished (hand squeeze, for example).
14. Thank your group and invite them to attend the remaining events.

THE QUIET TIME TOGETHER

1. Get seated comfortably, relaxed and expectant.
2. Become conscious of the Presence of Christ... He said, *Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them.*
3. Think about Who God is, about Who Jesus is... God with us, truth, love, power, forgiveness, release, purpose...
4. Let us ask God together to pour out His love and power upon the members of this Group. Let us hold each person up in prayer into the Presence of Christ, believing He is speaking to him or her.
5. Ask Jesus to unite this group in fellowship by letting His Spirit flow into and through each of us, making us one in love by His love.
6. Follow the Meditation as it is read slowly and thoughtfully. Let the thoughts grip your mind... Make them yours... Let the Holy Spirit speak to you.
7. Remain quiet for a few minutes after reading and think about your relationship with our Lord and what this reading has meant.

THE MEDITATION

Prayer brings us into contact with God! What a wonderful thought that we can come to Him, talk with Him, and experience His love, joy and power in our lives! Why we do not spend more time in seeking closer contact with Him we find difficult to explain.

Oh, Jesus, as You stand in our midst at this very moment, we recall the great amount of time You gave to prayer when You were among us in the flesh. As we remember how You spent all night in prayer, how You prayed before every decision, how You depended constantly on prayer, we realize how seldom we pray and how often we make decisions without asking for Your guidance.

Lord, we also recall times of crisis, distress, and feelings of helplessness in our lives when our need for You was great. During those times when we came to You for help, our prayers were especially meaningful and Your Presence very real. We have felt Your Presence also in times of joy and blessings and know they were of You. Yet, at many of these times, we did not give You the credit, honor and glory.

We do want to know and practice the way of prayer as a daily way of life. As Your early followers asked, "Lord, teach us to pray!" We wait here before You... quietly... confident You will fill us with the desire and will to make this real. In our awareness of Your Presence, the thrilling adventure of knowing You better grips our minds. Show us all there is to know about life lived in Your Presence Help us relate Your love to every experience of life, the difficult and the joyous. How glorious is the thought of even trying this.

And finally, Lord, it is good to know that we are not alone in this great and exciting adventure. Thank You for the fellowship and strength of others in this room who feel a kindred hunger. Bless and guide each one of us this morning... and always.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. In your life, whose faith has encouraged you?
2. At what time in your life was God the most real to you?
3. When has prayer been most meaningful to you?
4. What is the most pressing need in your life?

Close with Prayer Circle