

# Sermon Discussion Guide

## How to Pray for Healing and Restoration 40 Days of Prayer – Week 6

(Note – may only be reproduced for use as a participant in MCF's 40 Day of Prayer campaign)

*Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land. 2 Chronicles 7:14 (NLT)*

We live in unusual times. In America, our economy is currently doing great, but nothing else is. It's a time of economic prosperity but moral poverty. America needs a national healing: in our government, in our schools, in our businesses, in our neighborhoods, in our families, in our homes, in our bodies, and in our hearts and minds. But how do we do it? How do we pray for healing and restoration? To discover God's four conditions, we are going to unpack the promise God made to King Solomon over 3,000 years ago. It's a promise that still stands today.

### OPEN YOUR GROUP WITH A PRAYER. THIS IS ONLY A GUIDE – SELECT THE POINTS YOU WANT TO DISCUSS.

1. Re-read 2 Chronicles 7:14 above. God's first condition is that we humble ourselves. That means admitting we are not in control. If we are humble, God will guide us (Psalm 25:9), bless us (Isaiah 66:2), give us the power to change (James 4:6) and relieve our stress (Matthew 11:29). Read these verses and ask God to show you which you need most right now. Share with your group.

*Pray in the Spirit at all times with all kinds of prayers, asking for all you need. To do this you must always be ready and never give up! Always pray for all God's people. Ephesians 6:18 (NCV)*

2. Examining Ephesians 6:18, what words stand out to you? Go through the verse point by point. What do these directions mean to you? How can we accomplish these in our prayers?
3. When we ask God for help we need to remember five things: 1) Jesus wants us to ask; 2) ask in Jesus' name; 3) get other people to pray with you; 4) believe and expect an answer; and 5) keep on praying until God tells you to stop. Why do you think these things matter so much to God?

*Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Matthew 6:33 (NIV)*

4. What does Matthew 6:33 say to do above all else? What will be the ultimate result?

*You have forgotten God your Savior; you have not remembered the Rock, your fortress. Isaiah 17:10 (NIV)*

5. How easy it is to forget God and think we are okay. Discuss ways you can remember God throughout your day.
6. When we think of the word "wicked" we think of really horrendous acts. Yet the Bible defines wicked as simply forgetting God. With that in mind, how can we turn from our "wicked" ways? Consider the word: repent.

### Diving Deeper (optional)

*The LORD looks down from heaven on the entire human race;*

*he looks to see if anyone is truly wise, if anyone seeks God. Psalm 14:2 (NLT)*

*And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him. Hebrews 11:6 (NLT)*

*But from there you will search again for the LORD your God. And if you search for him with all your heart and soul, you will find him. Deuteronomy 4:29 (NLT)*

*Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.*

*Matthew 6:33 (NLT)*

After reviewing these verses above, how would you describe the difference between wanting a miracle and seeking God?

REVIEW ANY ASSIGNMENTS OR COMMITMENTS MADE DURING YOUR PREVIOUS MEETING.

## Sermon Discussion Guide Leader Notes

### Suggestions for This Week's Study

- **Icebreaker:** Recall a time as a child when you were showing off and it didn't go as planned. What happened?
- **Goals:** Seek to understand the conditions for healing God lays out for us in 2 Chronicles 7:14
- **Final Prayer:** Read 2 Chronicles 7:14 back to God in prayer and ask him to help you take these steps. Admit you're not in control; ask God for help; seek God, not a miracle; and turn your attention from the world to God's Word. Remember that God just wants you to talk to him. Ask him to forgive you for seeking a blessing and not seeking his face. Consider finding and playing the song, "Lord, I Need You" during your prayer time.

### Preparing to Lead Your Group

- ✓ **PRAY** for insight as you begin to prepare for leading your group. Ask for God's wisdom, that the Holy Spirit will be the teacher and that you will be God's instrument to lead the group to greater understanding and a willingness to commit to becoming more like God. Prayer should be your primary source of personal preparation for leading your group.
- ✓ **PLAN** where you want to take your group in the next 60-90 days. Is your group strong in some areas and weak in others? How can you challenge the members to live more balanced Christian lives? Consider God's five purposes for the church: Fellowship, Discipleship, Ministry, Mission and Worship, and make a plan to encourage your group members to growth and commitment in their weak areas.
- ✓ **PONDER YOUR PROGRESS** after each session and at the end of a series. Reflect on what went well and what didn't. Re-evaluation is key to your growth as a leader. Consider whether your plan is being effective in moving the group to greater understanding and commitment. How are you doing with leading the discussion: is it stimulating, challenging, and meaningful? Are you able to keep the group on track? Do you need to make some changes?

### Using This Sermon Discussion Guide

- Talk It Over is a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. We've designed it so it can be completed easily within 30-45 minutes. As the discussion leader, you should preview and evaluate the questions based on the needs of your group. Decide in advance what is most important to focus on, should time not allow for the entire lesson.
- Feel free to adapt the format to meet the needs of your group. If your group is mature and wants to dig deeper, consider using the Diving Deeper section or add additional Scripture and ask suitable questions. Remember that this is only a guide.
- The questions relating to Bible study methods are helpful to develop Bible literacy and spiritual maturity in our lives. You can help your group be aware of their needs in these areas by using these questions as a regular part of each discussion.
- Personal applications are essential for growth and should be included in every discussion. When discussing how they will apply principles, group members may state very general goals such as "I need to spend more time in prayer." It is important for you to help people make goals that are very specific and commit to specific plans of action by asking, for example, "How are you going to begin?" An example is to get up 25 minutes earlier each morning, spending 15 minutes reading the Bible and 10 minutes in prayer. Encourage each group member to be accountable to the group for personal progress at the next meeting.
- Your goal as the leader is to bring the group into a stimulating discussion that helps the members recognize their needs for personal life change. Ultimately you want them to be willing to commit to change with accountability to the group. Accountability helps us to persevere in our commitments and achieve the blessings of success.