



Small Group Guide: The Forgotten Jesus

“The Kinds of Prayers God Answers”

Icebreaker

On a scale of one to ten, how would you honestly rate prayer as your first response to problems rather than your last resort? What does that number reveal about where you are right now?

Key Scripture

Matthew 7:7-12 CSB

“Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. Who among you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him. Therefore, whatever you want others to do for you, do also the same for them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Main Takeaways

- The word "shema" (hear) in Deuteronomy 6:4, the pinnacle of Hebrew scripture, does not simply mean to listen; it means to hear and obey. Genuine prayer leads to action.
 - Context matters when reading scripture. Matthew 7:7-12 is not a promise of material blessing but a call to seek God's wisdom in dealing with people and discerning truth.
 - The three commands, ask, seek, and knock, are all present-tense imperatives in Greek. They describe a continuous, non-optional posture of dependence on God.
 - God is not a "celestial slot machine." He responds to prayers that are precise, persistent, and rooted in genuine humility.
 - The question every believer must answer: Is God your first response or your last resort?
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Discussion Questions

The Text

- Read Matthew 7:3-6 together as a group. What is the most striking image Jesus uses in this passage, and why do you think he chose such extreme examples, a splinter versus a plank?
- Adam described the telescope illustration, looking at others' sins through the magnifying end while looking at our own through the small end. Where do you see this tendency most in your own life? At home? At work? On social media?
- The contrast between Saul and David is a powerful one. When you are confronted about sin or a blind spot, which response feels more natural to you, Saul's deflection or David's confession? What makes confession so difficult?

Going Deeper

- Adam said, "Until you understand what you have been forgiven from, you will have a hard time extending forgiveness to another person." Do you agree? How does a fresh awareness of your own forgiveness change the way you see others?
- Think about the idea of a "sensitive conscience" versus being "desensitized." What habits or inputs in your daily life are sharpening your spiritual sensitivity? What might be dulling it?
- James 1:19 says we should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger. Which of those three is hardest for you personally? What does it cost you when you get that order wrong?
- Adam mentioned that "our battle is not against flesh and blood." How does remembering that truth change the way you approach conflict with people, especially people who seem hostile to the gospel?

Personal Reflection

- Is there a relationship in your life where you have been throwing pearls, pushing truth on someone who has repeatedly rejected it? What might it look like to shift your approach toward love and invitation instead?
- Is there someone in your life who has tried to point out a blind spot in you, and you have resisted or rationalized it away? What would it look like to revisit that conversation with an open heart?
- Adam closed by saying Christians are often "masters of friendly fire, shooting people in the barracks who are on the same team." Have you experienced this, either as the one firing or the one being hit? How did it affect your faith?

Closing Prayer

- CONFESS where you have made God your last resort instead of your first response.
- ASK God specifically for what your group needs most right now.
- THANK God for prayers he has already answered, even ones you may have overlooked.
- COMMIT to returning to God first this week before turning to any other source.