

DISCUSSION 1

A summary of desperation.

1. As we conclude this sermon series, how would you define desperation? Is that different from how you would have defined it four weeks ago? Explain.
2. What should be your posture when you think of desperation? Is it situational? Does desperation change?
3. Should desperation be the mark of a Christian's life? Explain.
4. Beyond being in desperate situations, how do you think we can cultivate desperation as an awareness of our need for Christ in everything?

DISCUSSION 2

Desperation and prayer.

1. How would you describe your prayer life? Be as specific as you can.
2. How would you describe your ideal prayer life? What prevents you from reaching greater fellowship with the Lord through prayer?
3. Have you ever been around someone who has a vibrant prayer life? How would you describe their prayers?
4. How does the above person's prayer display desperation? Is it based on a situation or based on their awareness of their need for God's presence, grace, and power in every aspect of life?

DISCUSSION 3

Desperation and prayer in the context of Luke 18.

1. Read Luke 18:1-8 together. What sticks out to you from this passage?
2. Have you ever prayed with as much persistence as the widow in Luke 18? If so, what was your prayer request? How long did you persevere in prayer? How did your desperation for God grow in this time?
3. What are some specific ways you can apply this parable to your own life?

DISCUSSION 4

Self-sufficiency and prayer.

1. In week two, we talked about self-sufficiency as the barrier to desperation. How would you define self-sufficiency?
2. Would you describe yourself as a spiritually desperate person? Why or why not? Do you need to repent of being self-sufficient and striving to control your own life vs. walking in desperate dependence on God each day?
3. Do you ever feel so overwhelmed by a situation that you don't know what to do? Prayer is a great place to start. Spend time praying as a group.

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. Read Luke 18:1-8 with your children and ask them to give you observations from the story. Model for your children some things you see in the story and talk about how you do or do not relate to the persistent widow. Give your children some examples of prayers you pray in desperation.
2. Talk with your children about the difference between self-sufficiency and desperation for God. Take some time to pray with them, modeling how to confess sin, ask for forgiveness, and petition the Lord for specific changes in your life. Make time this week to talk with your children about desperation and pray with them on several occasions.
3. As a parent, seek opportunities to help your children consider how to walk in desperation each day. What does desperation look like as a young child, as an adolescent, and as a young adult? What prayers are most important and express desperation for God Himself, and not just what He gives us? Ask God to show you and your children areas where you need to trust Him, and ways that you can grow a heart of desperation.
4. Put a date on your calendar each month to circle back with your children to continue the conversation on desperation, and talk with them about what they are learning and seeing God do.

APPLICATION

1. Search the Psalms and find a song/prayer that expresses the cry of your heart. Memorize that Psalm, or a portion of it, and meditate on it daily.

2. Make a short list of prayers that you want to pray persistently. Make sure your prayers align with God's heart for your life, and not simply with your desires for your life. The following are some prayers that are modeled for us in Scripture: Phil. 1:9-11, Col.1:9-12, Eph. 1:15-23, 3:14-21.

PRAYER

Group: Spend time as a group discussing how you would like to grow in prayer and desperation. Then, spend time asking God to grow you in those specific ways.

Personal: Take 5-10 minutes a day to be alone with God, and simply talk to Him. Communicate to Him, out loud, your desperate need for His presence, and ask Him to help you walk in deeper dependence each day.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

You can find these books in the Resource Area, located by the Next Steps Area:

The Power of Desperation by Michael Catt

Weakness is the Way by J.I. Packer

Waiting on God by Andrew Murray

Brokenness by Nancy Leigh DeMoss

Storm Clouds of Blessing by Janice M. Cappucci