



Check In

Connect with God honestly about where you are at



Reflect

"Review until" something pops to talk to God about



Share

Talk with God & others about what is now on your heart to do

Matthew

Session 11 - A Community of Prayerful Love

Check-In

God is glad to connect with you. He wants to hear about how you are doing. Take a moment to notice your primary emotion of the day to help yourself be fully present. Consider whether you are primarily sad, angry, scared, happy, tender, etc. Share with God that emotion. Write out: What are you thankful about? Ask him, "How does he feel about you?"

Reflect

Spend some time with the biblical texts and the resources below. Do so until something pops out to you; feel free to stop when the Lord prompts you this way. Talk with God about what encourages, challenges, or confuses you.

Read Matthew 7:1-12

Jesus' vision for the heavenly life is a relationship with God the Father that enables his disciples to love their enemies spontaneously. Dallas Willard summarizes the Sermon to this point: "We recall, as we approach these passages, that we have already laid aside anger and contempt, cultivation of lust, verbal manipulation, payback and getting even, along with the burdens and anxieties of 'looking good' and securing ourselves through wealth."¹ And these verses, 1-12, "illustrate the inner texture of kingdom life with family, friends, co-workers, and 'next door' neighbors." Willard summarizes Jesus by saying we cultivate a community of prayerful love when we are not condemning or blaming others, not pressing "wonderful things" on them, and simply asking for what we want from them - and God. This kind of relational strength and unity is only possible in dependence upon God through prayer.

Pay attention to these recurring themes in *The Gospel of Matthew*:

Immanuel, God With Us - What is it like to be with Jesus?

Teaching, as revelation - What does Jesus' teaching reveal about reality? God? People? The world? The enemy?

The Church - What do you learn about the true Israel and the community of people shaped by life with Jesus?

Read this excerpt from [*The Gospel of Matthew: Torah for the Church*](#) by Farley

NOTE: Is there something you, or your family, need in light of this part of the Sermon? To be heard, prayer, time to practice, or shepherding (truth-telling, encouragement, or support)?

Share

Be quiet for 3 minutes. What do you sense God is saying to you? How will you pursue being faithful with that this week? The community is blessed when we share out of our life experiences, gifts, time with God, and reflect on scripture. We believe everyone contributes to teaching. What insight, question, or experience do you want to share with us?

Steps for Church Families of Prayerful Love:

- What are you thankful for? What challenges are happening in your life, family, and community?
- What did you like/not like about the Scripture?
- What did you learn about God and people from the Scripture?
- What do you think God is inviting you to live with him this week?
- Who do you know who needs to hear this?

¹ Willard, Dallas. *The Divine Conspiracy* (p. 238). HarperCollins. Kindle Edition.

- Ask God: How can I bless (body, labor, emotions, social, spiritual) those people who need this?