

# CIRCLE MAKERS

## WEEK 2 GROUP GUIDE | MESSAGE BY CHAD BRUEGMAN

### START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer this question:

**If you had to choose another job or career and money was not an option, what would it be and why?**

### SHARE

Welcome to our ongoing series entitled, "Circle Makers."

Bold prayer honors God, and God honors bold prayers. This series is based on the book *The Circle Maker* by Mark Batterson. It isn't just a book about prayer, but about big audacious prayers. The type of prayers that the only way they get answered is if God makes it happen. The type of prayer that invites us into the adventure that God is already writing. Many times when we think of prayer, we tend to think of it as an obligation, something that we are supposed to do if we are a good believer. Other times, we tend to think of prayer only when life isn't going the way we want. So how should we pray, when it comes to our hopes and dreams, fears and insecurities or when we are in desperate need of a miracle?

How big are your prayers? What happens when God doesn't seem to answer our prayers the way we were hoping? Throughout this series we are going to take a look at how we can begin making circles around our hopes and dreams. We will begin to pray specifically for our relationships, family, future and grow closer to God in the process.

This week's message is called "Living the dream." Ever bump into someone who seemed down and to cheer them up; asked how they were doing? Ever hear the sarcastic response, "Oh, just living the dream, man." The sad truth is that there are so many people today who feel trapped or destined to live out some mediocre existence, just trying to make it day to day. We have all been there at one time or another, where we feel powerless, unimaginative and maybe have succumbed to believe the lie that God will not or cannot intervene in our lives...we just stop dreaming about what God can do.

In Mark Batterson's book, *The Circle Maker*, he talks about a legendary story of a Jewish sage named, Honi who became famous for drawing a circle in the sand around himself and began to just pray for God to intervene. Honi was a dreamer, but he was also a prayer warrior. It is recorded that Honi's favorite verse was Psalm 126:1, "When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dreamed." He believed that God could indeed move and change things in His great power, if we are willing to seek Him.

### Let's read Ephesians 3:7-21

**'Manifold'** means multi-faceted, like the many cuts of diamond reflect the beauty of the stone. How does the church reflect "the manifold wisdom of God" to the world?

**Where do you think the church these days has done well at reflecting God's wisdom and heart for people?**

**Since we as believers are the church, where do you think you need to polish up, to better reflect the wisdom and heart of God to those around you?**

**Do you believe the promise of verse 20? Why or why not?**

### **GROW**

If we were all honest, most of us would say that we are not necessarily prayer warriors, but would like to be. Could it be that we have stopped dreaming and believing that God can do great things?

There are many hindrances to engaging in audacious and shameless prayers. Some of us just feel that we are not good enough or worthy enough to pray to God. Maybe it is your past failures, mistakes or insecurities that have seemed to quiet your prayer life. Perhaps you don't feel qualified to steward an answer to a God-sized prayer. You may doubt that you have what it takes to be a leader of what God might want to do in your life or others. Maybe you are just overly aware of your imperfect motives and seem paralyzed to ask God for big things. Lastly, you might find yourself afraid to fail or not sure how you will deal with an unanswered prayer. Don't allow these hurdles to stop you from praying. As Chad emphasized in this week's message, the most important aspect of a thriving prayer-life is knowing how the one you are praying to feels about you and second, knowing He is capable.

### Let's read Hebrews 4:14-16

**Of all the hindrances to a thriving prayer life, which one do you feel is your biggest obstacle and why?**

- *I feel that I am not good enough to talk to God.*
- *I feel that I am not qualified to steward a God-sized dream.*
- *My motives are imperfect and feel paralyzed to pray.*
- *I am afraid to fail or not sure how to deal with the feelings if God doesn't answer my prayer the way I think He should.*

### **MOVE**

Chad mentioned in the message that Honi was a dreamer and a prayer warrior. It is recorded that one of Honi's favorite verses was found in Psalm 126. We are going to finish by reading all of Psalm 126 and talking about the importance of this Psalm as it pertains to being a prayer warrior who still dreams. In other words, how we can begin 'Living the Dream' ourselves. The unique thing about this Psalm is that the people feel as though they are in a dream, almost in disbelief that God had delivered them and answered their prayers. They understand that there were times of difficult sowing and tears, yet God brought a harvest of joy. They then continue to ask God for restoration, remembering the great things he did for them.

## **Let's finish by reading Psalm 126**

Matthew Henry's Commentary gives some insight into this Psalm:

It was with reference to some great and surprising deliverance of the people of God out of bondage and distress that this psalm was penned, most likely their return out of Babylon in Ezra's time. Though Babylon be not mentioned here (as it is, Ps. 137) yet their captivity there was the most remarkable captivity both in itself and as their return out of it was typical of our redemption by Christ. Probably this psalm was penned by Ezra, or some of the prophets that came up with the first.

**Does difficulty or captivity seem to draw you closer to God in prayer or do you tend to lose your prayer life to feeling despair? Explain why you react the way you do?**

**The people in this Psalm recalled the great things God has done for them. What is one great thing God has done for you in the past?**

***This week, make a list of all of the things God has done for you, put it somewhere you can see it.***

## **PRAY**

As a group, spend some time praying for each other and the struggles that we all face. If you are in a co-ed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to talk more freely.

## **TO GO.**

Know that God is able. As you go throughout this week, continue to meditate on this word for you:

### **Ephesians 3:20-21**

*Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*

### ***Additional Reading Resources:***

*The Circle Maker* is a great book on praying specifically for our lives, relationships, hopes and fears by Mark Batterson