

CIRCLE MAKERS

WEEK 3 GROUP GUIDE | MESSAGE BY DOUG WEKENMAN

START

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

**If you could go anywhere in the world, where would it be?
Would you drive, fly, take a boat...etc.?**

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, the message was all about having a more accurate view of who God is. The idea being that once we better understand who God is, the bigger and bolder our prayers will become. It can be a difficult thing to grasp, and we will constantly struggle with the realities of a God who created the earth, the cosmos, every plant and animal on the earth, and every person you're sitting in the room with. And beyond just his creative might, God loves us and seeks relationship with people who constantly fail and make mistakes.

Let's read Ephesians 3:16-21

Notice how Paul says that this love "surpasses all knowledge," which should let us off the hook! No matter how hard we try, in our own strength we will never be able to comprehend this truth. That is why Paul prays that we will be given "power" to be able to grasp this love. With God's help, we'll spend the rest of our lives attempting to better understand this. Even when it feels beyond comprehension, let us choose to always seek to fully accept the love that He offers freely and unconditionally.

In your own mind and heart, what makes it difficult to accept God's love?

Have you ever been told by someone that they "love" you, and it turned out that this word eventually caused you a lot of pain? Does this color your view of God sometimes?

In verse 19 of the scripture we read, the thought is that once we know this love that comes from God, we can then be "filled to the measure of all the fullness of God." Why is it that we must first understand God's love before we pray big and bold prayers?

GROW

For many of us, we have spent years sitting in church services hearing about how God is an all-powerful God. For some, after a while this concept feels cliché and we can become jaded. Then, the reality of who God is becomes further and further removed from how we act and pray. Oftentimes, if we just stop, and think logically about some of the concepts that we read in scripture, instead of skimming over the familiar verses, there is fresh revelation and growth waiting in those verses.

Just think for a moment about the parting of the Red Sea. Think about the millions of sea creatures, about the millions of tons of water being moved aside like it was nothing. The truth of God being all-powerful is hugely important, and so easy to forget to live like this truth is ours to live out.

Name some other instances of miracles you've read or heard about in the Bible that illustrate God's might. Discuss the practical elements of what happened. (Discuss 4 or 5)

MOVE

Even while understanding the fact that there is nothing we can ask for that God cannot do, another hurdle that keeps us from praying big and bold prayers is the idea that there are things that God will not do. This is why it is so important that we first understand how much God loves us before we are able to believe that He wants good things for us just as much; if not more than, we do. When we pray for radical things with motives that honor God and reflect His heart, we can believe that God will come through. There is nothing impossible for God!

Why is it that we sometimes feel like there are things we cannot ask for?

Are there things in your life that you feel guilty to pray for? Is it something that you really should feel guilty for asking?

PRAY

As a group, spend some time praying for each other. Tonight, maybe go around and ask each person in the group if there is one specific, big, bold prayer that they have in their life. Try to leave some extra time at the end of the group so that everyone can be included, and pray for each person.

TO GO.

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

Psalm 29

Ascribe to the Lord, you heavenly beings, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness. The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord thunders over the mighty waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is majestic. The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon. He makes Lebanon leap like a calf, Sirion like a young wild ox. The voice of the Lord strikes with flashes of lightning. The voice of the Lord shakes the desert; the Lord shakes the Desert of Kadesh. The voice of the Lord twists the oaks and strips the forest bare. And in his temple all cry "Glory!" The Lord sits enthroned over the flood; the Lord is enthroned as King forever. The Lord gives strength to his people; the Lord blesses his people with peace.

Additional Reading Resources:

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