

Community Groups are used extensively as the primary vehicle for discipleship at The Gathering and run on a quarter system. There is one in the fall, one in the winter and one in the spring. During the summer weeks we don't meet in Community Groups but we still offer the Growth Guides as a tool to help you grow personally. The Growth Guides are designed to help you dig deeper into the weekly sermon on your own or with your family and are available each week along with the note sheets at church as well as online.

**COMMUNITY GROUPS ARE BETTER WHEN MEMBERS COME PREPARED. THIS GUIDE HAS BEEN PROVIDED AS A TOOL FOR THAT.**

## Consider...

Use the summary and discussion below to review and apply this week's message:

### Message Summary

In this week's passage, found in Luke 19:45-48, we find Jesus having a very strong response to the men who had replaced the culture that He desired with something drastically different. In fact, the very people who should have been praying for people were actually preying on people. Jesus, in a moment of righteous and holy anger, cleared that culture out and brought a shift back to prayer.

1. **Deal with culture vultures.** A culture vulture is someone who kills a culture by feeding off of it. When Jesus stepped into the Temple, He was horrified to find that the priests who should have been helping people were instead cheating people! Their predatory actions had killed the culture of prayer that God intended and had replaced it with a culture of corruption and power. Jesus wasted no time clearing them out. Culture vultures must be dealt with!
2. **Out with the old and in with the original.** Jesus didn't just get rid of the corrupt priests; He also reclaimed the Temple for what it was originally intended to be: a house of prayer where men could draw near to God. Sometimes all we do is repent and get rid of bad things without ever replacing it with good things. Verse 47 says that after Jesus had cleared out the temple, He was able to teach daily. Out with the old and in with the original!
3. **The shift from preying to praying.** It sounds a little brutal, but the reason most people don't pray is because they start to believe that the really don't need God's help. Naturally, that leads to a life in which we act as if we're the center of it all and so whatever benefits us the most is best. Preying happens when we believe WE'RE all-powerful. Praying happens when we believe that GOD is all-powerful. Preying hurts others. Praying humbles us.

### Discuss

Use the following questions to review and apply the points learned in the message.

- Are you the type of person who speaks up for others who are being mistreated? Describe a time that you came to aid of someone being hurt by another.
- Why did Jesus come (see Luke 19:10 for a hint)? How did His purpose fuel His anger here?
- Read Jeremiah 7:1-11. Look at verses 5,6, and 9. What were the priests doing to the people? Why do you think Jesus chose to quote from this passage when He dealt with the moneychangers?
- Read Isaiah 56:1-8. Pay close attention to the first part of verse 3 as well as verses 6-8. Who did God desire to see in the "house of prayer?" Why do you think Jesus chose to quote from this passage when He dealt with the moneychangers?
- The point of Jesus clearing out the moneychangers was so that the "den of thieves" could return to its original purpose, which was a "house of prayer" that included a diversity of people (foreigners, outcasts, eunuchs, etc.). Read Ephesians 2:11-18 to hear a picture of how Jesus accomplished that (by the way, it's REALLY good in the NLT version!). Why do you think prayer is so important for this to be accomplished?
- Paul showed us how the acrostic P.R.A.Y. can help walk us through our prayer times. It stands for Praise, Repent, Ask, Yield. Which comes easiest for you? Hardest?
- What takeaway did you have from this week's message? What is the Lord telling you to do in response to it?

## **PREYING**

**P**rioritize men

**R**equire of men

**E**xort from men

**Y**ield to no one

## **PRAYING**

**P**raise God

**R**epent before God

**A**sk of God

**Y**ield to God

*shift*