

# I Am Most Like Jesus When...

## Discussion Guide

Week of March 19- **"I Pray"**

**Scripture verse: John 17**

### **LOOKING BACK:**

Last week, we learned about God's mercy... how He has made a way for us to live this life without the punishment we deserve for our sins. Jesus' mercy extended even to those who were slandering and viciously beating him. This included people who would find it hard to turn the other cheek – even one time. In light of His mercy for you, who did you practice showing mercy to this week?

**OPENING QUESTIONS:** If you are a regular church attender or spend any time in a small group, prayer is generally a topic you hear about a lot. Generally speaking, when do you pray? Is it when you're by yourself, or do you regularly pray with others?

### **LOOKING UP:**

Sometimes life is hard. Sometimes it doesn't matter how hard you try, how much patience you have, how many times you try again, things just don't seem to go your way. When you've come to the end of your rope, where do you naturally turn? Many of us turn to a spouse, a parent, or a trusted friend. Maybe you don't turn to people, instead, you just become angry or bitter, or perhaps choose some coping mechanism to work through your emotions and difficulties. God's word tells us there will be trials in this life, but He goes on to tell us He will always work all things together for good. There will be struggle and failure and things that seem unjust, but God's plan results in something

good. But, without communication with God, we can easily lose sight of the good that is being worked out.

Ask your group to share their response to this question, “Why do we pray?”

**Leader note:** Members of the group may lack confidence in prayer and determine their prayers are not worthy ones. Let’s prepare to examine what elements in the passage are worthy to ask God for.

**Leader Tip:** Tonight’s passage is rather long. Instead of having one group member read the entire chapter, break it down by the 3 sections, selecting a different reader for each section. You may stop at the end of each section to gather responses to questions 1 and 2 below. **You will also want to watch your time.** If it seems like time is passing too quickly, you may wish to forgo reading the passage in another translation (a 2<sup>nd</sup> time); in that case, only answer question 3 or 4 below.

**READ THE PASSAGE: John 17**  
(entire chapter)  
Answer the first 2 questions  
in the center

1. What stood out to you most?
2. What was challenging or hard to understand?
3. What does this teach us about people?
4. What does this teach us about God?

**SKIP RE-READING**  
ONLY answer 1 of the last 2  
questions

## **LOOKING FORWARD:**

The Gospel records Jesus praying many times in many different ways: in groups, in nature, and alone. It also records him praying with others and for others; but tonight’s passage also vividly revealed Jesus praying for himself. Jesus obviously had a very intimate relationship with God. What are some reasons Jesus needed to pray?

Jesus often prayed alone, but he never hid his prayer life from his disciples and others. Jesus led by example, even in prayer. He modeled solitary prayer, group prayer, praying for oneself and praying for others. Prayer is simply a conversation with God. He wants to work things together for your good, but He wants to know that you trust Him enough **to ask** for His help. He's waiting for you to call!

**Set a timer:** ONLY 5 minutes per prompt... Have someone spontaneously start to pray after the prompt is read.

**Praise** – Praise God for things that are on your mind right now. Praise him for one special thing He has done in your life this past week.

**Intercede** – Make requests to God on behalf of others.

**Thanksgiving** – Give thanks to the Lord for things in your life, on behalf of your family, & on behalf of your church.

**Assignment:** Find someone to pray for this week and go pray over them.