



GREETINGS TO THE EMMAUS COMMUNITY

Are you fit for prayer?

By that I am not asking if you are worthy of praying. God wants us all to come to him in prayer. In fact you might say that the worse you are the more he wants you to pray. Both the men hanging on crosses with Jesus deserved the punishment they had received (if anyone could deserve such a cruel fate) but only one of them prayed. He simply said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." (Luke 23:42) Jesus immediately answered his "prayer". "Truly I tell you; today you will be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:43). God longs for us to come to him. That is why he first came to us in Jesus. "While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly." (Rom 5:6 NRSV)

No, I am not talking about our worthiness but about our capacity. Are our minds and hearts as fit for prayer as our bodies are (or once were) for work?

You see prayer fitness is a lot like bodily fitness. You need to keep at prayer in order to be able to express yourself to God. I am not talking about theological language. That kind of stuff is part of what we need to work at getting OUT of our prayers. Religious jargon is one sure sign of someone who is not often in the garden of prayer. Without practice we will soon fall into the "crisis" mode of "Please God, give me; Please God, help me. Please God arrange this." God does want to hear our needs. Jesus said: "If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!" (Matt 7:11 NRSV) Did you notice the scripture reference? Like the convenience store – just go to the 7 11. Seriously, we are not talking about God's attitude toward us but about our confidence in our relationship with God. If it seems as though our prayers aren't going any higher than the ceiling it is because we have not practiced realizing they don't have to. God is present right with us where we are and loves us perfectly. It is like the prodigal son who before he went home couldn't imagine being received back as a son. He was going to try out for "hired hand."

Even occasionally tossing a few thanks skyward when some especially wonderful blessings come our way isn't going to make us fit for prayer. Even once in a while confessing our momentary lapse of judgment when we get caught with our hands in the cookie jar isn't going to help our condition.

How do I know all this? Because in the "unfit for prayer" department I have been known to be the 500-pound slob. I know from experience that prayerlessness brings guilt and guilt leads to even more prayerlessness. It is like not calling mom because you should have called two weeks ago and didn't so you don't call this week either. I know. I've been there too.

STOP IT NOW. That is all in your head and getting you nowhere fast.

Instead determine that you are going to get into a routine of prayer; talking with God on a regular basis. After all, if you want to get to know God who loves you, you have to communicate like you do with anyone else.

What do you say to God?

When I was a teenager I used to never know what to say to girls. That was a mystery I felt I would never master.

Well, talking to God need be no mystery to you even if you are a child in prayer.

Just follow this simple pattern: **ACTS.**

Adoration. Get your attention off yourself and focus it in God. Tell God how wonderful and awesome he is. It isn't that God needs to know. **YOU** need to be aware and focused on his majesty and might. As we lift up his qualities we remind ourselves of who we are talking to and the resources at his disposal and the power of the love God has for us. He is omnipotent (all-powerful) – no problem is too tough.

He is omniscient (He knows everything). No issue is too complicated.

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He is omnipresent (everywhere at once). So he is right here with you.

As we focus on God our sense of desperation eases and our heart is quieted. One of my favorite praise songs is "I Have Stilled and Quieted My Soul." Well, this is how you do that. Have trouble finding the words? Go to Psalm 23. You can probably recite that from memory. Or try Psalm 100

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.
Worship the LORD with gladness;
come into his presence with singing.
Know that the LORD is God.
It is he that made us, and we are his;
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
and his courts with praise.
Give thanks to him, bless his name.
For the LORD is good;
his steadfast love endures forever,
and his faithfulness to all generations.
(Ps 100 NRSV)

We will go into more detail on the other three next month. Here is a synopsis of them.

They are:

Confession – don't just throw all your sins in a dirty heap like your clothes and expect God to sort out and wash them like your wife or mother. **OH YES YOU DO!** Confess the lie!

Thanksgiving – there is a distinct difference between feeling grateful and giving thanks. Make the distinction.

Supplication – NOW we are ready to ask God for what others and we need. Yes. Start with others. Intercede for them and then deal with yourself.

For this month if you establish a daily routine of just adoring God every morning when you rise you will be well on your way to saying, "Yes! I am fit for prayer!"

Your Community Spiritual Co-Director
Bill Kelley

SPRINGFIELD AREA EMMAUS WOMEN'S WALK #60

LD	Belinda Montgomery	TL	Corina Bowen
BR	Sherry Porter	TL	Sandy Falkner
SD	Rev. Carolyn Peacock	TL	Phyllis Garber
ASD	Rev. John Eshelman	TL	Dorinda Jones
ALD	Yvonne Dobbins	TL	Karen Packer
ALD	Judie Myers	TL	Michelle Rockfield
ALD	Kim Stehle	TL	TBD
LOG	JoAnn Horrocks	ATL	Robbin Ferriman
LOG	Joyce Penwell	ATL	Jacky Lee
MD	Kelly Crain	ATL	Robin Henry
AMD	Char Combs	ATL	Linda Peca
		ATL	Lisa Sites
		ATL	Shirley Teets
		ATL	Mary Wilson

QUESTIONS???

If you “hear” something that causes you concern regarding Springfield Area Emmaus and want to find the answer, please contact any Board member. Board meetings are held prior to each Gathering at 5:30 p.m. in the Carr Room and are open to all Emmaus members.

THANK YOU, COMMUNITY

We wish to express our deepest gratitude to all of you who give up so much of your free time to serve the Pilgrims for the Lord before and during each Walk. God has blessed your efforts to create an environment that welcomes the Holy Spirit. We are a Community that **CHRIST CAN COUNT ON!** In Christ,
Board of Directories

SHARE GROUPS

Share Groups – Why are they needed? – To stay closely in touch with Christ!

A group of Christians in fellowship is not an Emmaus invention. The scriptures report many stories of fellowship. The New Testament recognizes a special fellowship among those who share a common knowledge of Christ and those who want to grow in that knowledge by sharing with others in a life of grace. Acts 1:42 says, *“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayers.”* That’s what we did on our Emmaus weekends and it’s what we need to continue to do in order to grow spiritual and maintain that feeling of well-being.

Regular participation in a Share Group can be a renewal of your Emmaus weekend experience. Share Groups hold us accountable for spiritual growth and Christian action. As we learn to trust our brothers/sisters in our Share Groups we are confident that we can reveal our deepest fears and feelings to them knowing they will share it only with God in prayer.

A Share Group is a comfortable group with whom to share our “closest to Christ” experiences. “Closest to Christ” is when the focus of the moment was on Christ, a time in which we experienced something which was Christ-like. For instance, we saw the image of Christ in the actions of another person or we witnessed a situation in which we can say, “This represents Christ’s activity in the world.” A “close moment to Christ” keeps us in conscious touch with Christ and builds us up in Him. We are able to do this by dying to self and by being able to see Christ working in the lives of those around us. It’s a memorable experience to share with our Share Groups as it gives us an opportunity to grow bolder in our witness.

As Christians we always find ourselves in a three dimensional relationship—three sided, with God, with others, and with ourselves. In Romans 12: 1-2, Paul calls us to “offer ourselves as a *‘living sacrifice to God, dedicated to his service and pleasing to Him;*” Ephesians 4: 2-3 *“Do your best to preserve the unity which the Spirit gives by means of the peace that binds you together.”* God desires His people bond to Him and to one another.

Blessings, Mary Ahlborn

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Non-Profit
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Permit No. 27

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www.highstreetumc.com

UPCOMING GATHERINGS!

October 10, 2010 at 7 PM

FOOD & FELLOWSHIP:

After each gathering, there will be a time of fellowship and food.

If you plan to stay, please bring a dish to share.

2010 WALK DATES:

Women's Walks

60 NOVEMBER 4-7

REUNION:

**October 10, 2010 at 6 PM
WW #45 Choir Room
Mary Beth Cheeseman LD**

Rather, you must grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

All glory to him, both now and forever! Amen.