



DISCUSSION GUIDE

THIS WEEK: Various Scripture

The Weight of our Words: “I’ll pray about it / Praying for you”

GETTING STARTED

What is one thing you are thankful for this week and what is one thing we can pray for you this week?

Remind each other of our simple expectations for meeting together

How have you seen the power and joy of having people pray for you in a time of need?

In what way have you used the phrase (perhaps even unintentionally) “I’ll pray about it” or I’m praying for you only to find you really didn’t mean it? Why do we do that?

QUICK REACTIONS FROM THE MESSAGE

How would you summarize/paraphrase the message in your own words?

What point/idea resonated most with you? Why?

Dave said, “sometimes Christians learn to substitute phrases like “I’m praying for you, or “I’ll pray about it” as a way to both look and sound spiritual while at the same time avoiding taking responsibility for actually doing what God has called us to do, or not being honest. What do you think? What is a better idea?

Dave used Exodus 14:13-16 and James 2:14-17 to say that sometimes God would ask us to stop praying and get moving. How can talking about praying simply be a way to avoid doing what we may know God is asking?

In what way can you begin to say, do something different in a situation where someone is sharing something personal or difficult than simply saying “I’ll be praying for you”?

EXPLORE THE PASSAGE [Read Matthew 5:33-37]

(Yes, these questions can seem silly, however, good discussion and interpretation of the Bible begins with having a proper understanding of the basic facts; who, what, when, and where in the text.) Work through this quickly, the answers are fairly obvious.

What may be the significance of Jesus stating in verse 33-34 “You heard that our ancestors were told... but I say?

What vows did the audience that Jesus was teaching understand to be important to keep? (34-36)

What was Jesus critiquing about making these vows?

How can we look for “loopholes” in our own spiritual lives to avoid responsibility to living up to our word? Or create loopholes where it creates excuses for our own truthfulness?

In what way do the things we say, empty promises we make sound spiritual but are ineffective?

In what way is Jesus reinforcing that each person, as followers of Jesus are responsible to establish their own boundaries and to be truthful in what we say and what promises we make? How can we do that in relationships at work, church, family and friends?

APPLY THE PASSAGE

What do we learn about God and about ourselves in this passage?

What may God be asking you to change, do differently, repent of, pray about as a result of engaging with this passage?

How can we pray for each other?