



DAYLIGHT ON PRAYER

Spending Time with God

1. What personal burdens or concerns for others would you like the group to pray about with you?
2. Conclude your prayer time by asking God to help your “folded arms” to become “extended arms” and to give you a right spirit to bless and love others—even enemies.



DAYLIGHT AHEAD

When Jesus took a trip up north with His disciples, they must have wondered why in the world He was taking them to Caesarea Philippi. This was the location of several idols of the Romans. Though it was a beautiful location at the foot of Mount Herman, it must also have been a little intimidating. But as we see in Session 9, Jesus took them there because it was a good backdrop for asking them an essential question—one that we will see Peter, who had been on hand at the Sermon on the Mount, answer correctly. And Jesus will use that answer as another reason Christians could overcome opposition.

1:04:50

The Example of Peter



DAYLIGHT PREVIEW

Who Am I?

What if it had been one of us who had delivered the Sermon on the Mount? Or what if it had been a person of the cloth such as your pastor? How powerful would those words have been? Would those words, presented by someone like us have been enough to cause the people of the second and third centuries to serve plague victims selflessly as Joe Stowell mentions in this session? Absolutely not. The only reason the Sermon on the Mount has power is because of the person who delivered those words. That is why Peter's declaration at Caesarea Philippi is so vital. He recognized rightly who Jesus is—that He is indeed the Messiah, the Anointed One, the Christ. That truth is at the center of any belief we have that following Jesus' words or trusting in His offer of salvation is worthwhile. “Who am I?” He asked Peter, and the mercurial disciple got it right. And so must we.

COME TOGETHER

Icebreaker Questions

1. Peter provides one of the best-known comeback stories in Scripture. What's your favorite comeback story, movie, etc.?

2. A focus of this session is the response of Christians to two devastating plagues during the era of the Roman Empire. Do you have any outstanding memories related to childhood diseases like chicken pox, measles, etc.? Who would take care of you when you got sick as a kid?

3. Name one thing you try to “avoid like the plague.”



FINDING DAYLIGHT

Experience the Video

Feel free to jot down Video Notes as you watch the presentation by Joe Stowell. Use the space below for those notes.

VIDEO NOTES

Peter's comeback

Peter's words

The power of the kingdom: Compassion

Two plagues and Christian love

Is our world a better place because of us?

Caesarea Philippi

The location

Jesus' question

Peter's answer

Jesus' proclamation



WALKING IN THE DAYLIGHT

Discussion Time

DISCOVER GOD'S WORD

Discussion/Application Questions

1. As Joe Stowell notes, Peter was among the crowd that listened to Jesus teach the Sermon on the Mount. Though he heard Jesus' words predicting His followers' persecution, Peter later caved in and denied Jesus. Read Mark's account of that scene in Mark 14:66-72.

Joe goes on to say that few of the disciples became more powerful in the face of persecution and intimidation than Peter. What do you find most impressive about Peter's comeback?

2. Joe points out that the early church took the words of Jesus seriously, shining out their light in a dark world through their works of compassion and love. Joe shares the example of how the early Christians did this in the way they responded to two plagues.
 - a. As people fled their villages and cities and ran into the mountains, casting their loved ones aside in the process, how could the Christians stay in the villages and cities?

- b. How dramatic would the effect of their actions be upon those they rescued, and later upon their loved ones who fled and returned?

3. Do you think non-Christians today believe that our world is a better place because Christians live here? Do they see Christians more as combatants or as people of active compassion?

4. Joe recounts a story in which Jesus intentionally takes His disciples well north of Capernaum, the base of Jesus' ministry in Galilee. Read Matthew 16:13-18.

Why would just the mention of Caesarea Philippi, according to Joe, "make any Jew worth their Torah break out into a cold sweat"?

5. Joe states that Jesus never asked a question because He didn't know the answer.

If Jesus already knew the answers to the two questions He posed to His disciples, why did He ask them?

6. When Peter spoke up and said, "You are the Christ," what do you think he had in mind?

7. Whether or not Peter fully understood his own confession about Jesus, how would this experience at Caesarea Philippi help prepare him and the other disciples to impact the Roman Empire with its paganism and emperor worship?

BRINGING IT HOME

Jesus' question to His disciples at Caesarea Philippi—"What about you? Who do you say I am?"—remains the most important question for every person to answer.

Who do you say Jesus is? How has your understanding of Jesus and your relationship with Him progressed over time?

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Spending Time with God

1. What prayer requests for yourself or others would you like to share with the group?
2. Pray for yourself and each other on two fronts: (1) that you would be completely committed to Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the Living God" (Matthew 16:16); (2) that you would be people of active compassion toward those who are in need.

DAYLIGHT AHEAD

If all you know of the city of Ephesus is what you can figure out by reading Paul's letter to the church there, Session 10 will come as a huge surprise. This city, which was a major center of commerce, was also immersed in what we can describe as an outlandish and bizarre worship pattern. At the center of town, as Joe Stowell will describe in this session, was a temple to Artemis, goddess of fertility. The details, which Stowell will provide, will indicate how difficult it must have been to live as a dedicated follower of Jesus in that community.