

**BIG IDEA**

In order to BLESS our neighbor, Jesus invites us to begin with prayer.

**SCRIPTURE**

Luke 6:12-16

**ICEBREAKER & OPENING THOUGHT**

Help the group to explore their experience of prayer.

**BIBLE DISCUSSION**

- John Bunyan once said: “You can do more than pray, after you have prayed, but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed.” Jesus knows this, which is why whenever we see Jesus facing a critical decision or an important action, he spends extra time in prayer. Prayer was more important for Jesus than food or rest. Prayer was spiritual food. It is his open secret to being connected with God.
- We often think of the twelve apostles as the only disciples Jesus had, but that is not true. He had hundreds, and maybe thousands of other disciples. Out of them, Jesus chose twelve to give his time, energy, and attention. Those twelve we call apostles, which means “sent ones.”
- God’s way of fulfilling his purposes are not always obvious to our natural way of thinking. According to 1 Corinthians 1:26-29, God chooses the humble, the lowly, the weak, and the meek over the strong, talented, powerful, or the rich. God chooses those we might overlook, so when he works powerfully through them, his power and wisdom are made known among us. If you feel like you are not qualified to be a follower of Jesus or to be a person on mission, you are in good company. God’s people have often fit into this category.

**LIFE APPLICATION**

- Help the group understand that the goal of prayer is not just to talk to God, but also a time to listen to God and enjoy his presence in silence.
- Sometimes God speaks to us in a loud voice and sometimes in a whisper or a feeling. Help the group recognize there is no single way to “hear” from God.
- Luke 11:1-10 lists a number of ways that prayer can change us: it draws us to God (v2 Father, hallowed be), focuses our priorities (v2 thy kingdom come), reminds us of our dependence on God (v3 gives us each day), Softens our hearts (v4 forgive), keeps us on the right path (v4 lead us not), & moves us into action (v9-10 ask, seek & knock).

**CHALLENGE**

The challenge for all of us is to set apart some time to pray every day. We don’t have to start by praying all night as Jesus did, not even a whole hour as he asked his disciples to do, but we can all begin by praying at least 5 minutes in the morning and 1 or 2 minutes at night.