



Life Group Study Notes

“New Sanctuary Celebration: ”

Dr. Rice Brooks & Ps. James Lowe - March 5, 2017

Warm Up (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. No right or wrong answers.

- What is one thing you look forward to when you move into a new place to live?
- In what room do you usually entertain guests at your home? What do you like about it?
- If you could build the perfect room to have family gatherings, what is one thing you would want the room to have?

Word (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at www.bethelworld.org.

Psalm 122 (ESV) *I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord!" Our feet have been standing within your gates, O Jerusalem! Jerusalem—built as a city that is bound firmly together, to which the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, as was decreed for Israel, to give thanks to the name of the Lord. There thrones for judgment were set, the thrones of the house of David. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! "May they be secure who love you! Peace be within your walls and security within your towers!" For my brothers and companions' sake I will say, "Peace be within you!" For the sake of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek your good.*

God has blessed his dwelling place, whether that was the temple of old in ancient Israel or the church today. God has called his people to pray for his dwelling place. We are to seek its peace and prosperity. We are to love the dwelling place of God.

In the biblical record of the growth and expansion of the early church, we read that the first Christians were faithful to pray and seek God's blessing upon the church.

Acts 2:42-47 ESV *And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

Jesus was the focus of the early church. They were devoted to him above all things. Their devotion to him moved them to pray together passionately and often. God responded by continuing to fill them with his Spirit and to empower them to be his witnesses to the world. The end result was that many more people came to encounter Jesus through the church's witness and in turn surrendered their hearts and lives to him, becoming his followers.

1. Prayer

2. Power

3. People

If we will follow this pattern, we too can come closer to Jesus and become more effective as his witnesses in the hope that God will bring many more people into his kingdom through us. God has promised us a harvest, and we will surely bring it in, if we will be faithful to pray and spread the Gospel.

Discussion (10-15 minutes)

Choose an item below to discuss, or introduce another related point for discussion.

- Why is it so important to God that we pray for the church?
- Give an example of a time when God gave you special strength to do something for him or when he manifested his power in a special way to confirm the Gospel in some way?
- What kind of help does the church need to responsibly care for an influx of many new people? What could you do to help?

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- Ask God to stir the heart of your church to grow in prayer.
- Ask God to manifest his power in us and through us to others as a witness to Jesus.
- Ask God to use us to bring a harvest of people into his kingdom.