

## WORSHIP

### SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

God is Here, We Praise Your Name, O Come Let Us Adore Him, Your Presence is Heaven to Me, Good, Good Father, People Need the Lord

## WELCOME

Christmas is just around the corner and most of us experience a higher level of stress at this time of the year with the deadlines before the holidays, traffic mess, shopping frenzy and the seemingly “unli” Christmas parties to go to. Share how you are like when stressed. How do you treat others around you? Are you guilty of being short-tempered or irritable when things don’t go your way?

## WORD

### MATTHEW 7:7-12

<sup>7</sup>“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>8</sup>For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. <sup>9</sup>Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone? <sup>10</sup>Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? <sup>11</sup>If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!

<sup>12</sup>“In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

### THE GOLDEN RULE VS. THE SILVER RULE

The last verse of the passage above is known as the “Golden Rule” and is unique to Christianity. Other religions have the “Silver Rule” which goes: “Do not do unto others what you do not want others to do to you.” However, the Silver Rule is more focused on our own benefit or self-preservation as we refrain from doing something because we do not want to be hurt (similar to **Philippians 2:20-21**). Jesus, on the other hand, Jesus taught his disciples to be proactive in treating others well. The focus is doing good to others for their benefit.

So how does the Golden Rule connect with the previous verses (**vv. 7-11**) on persistent prayer? Jesus knew that on our own, it is impossible to live by the Golden Rule. Within us is a natural tendency not to want to be inconvenienced. Easier way for human beings is the “Silver Rule.” But God’s way is the “Golden Rule” and only He can live that out perfectly. This is why we need the Holy Spirit to give us the power to treat others the way we want to be treated. Remember, Jesus says “IN EVERYTHING” we must treat people the way we want to be treated, not just in some things. Jesus wants us to apply this principle in the smallest things (like choosing to give the bigger slice of pizza to your wife, or letting someone else take the better parking slot you spotted), and in bigger things as well (such as choosing to have a

simpler Noche Buena celebration so that you can share your blessings to another family in need, etc.).

### ASK, SEEK, AND KNOCK

To ask (**v.7**) from God is to admit that we need something. It is a sign of humility. We are admitting that we need help to do His will (the Golden Rule, etc.). The idea is to “keep asking” until the help is given. This is the same idea behind “seeking” and “knocking”: the Lord wants us to ask, seek and knock for so much more than just our physical needs. Ask God’s help through the Holy Spirit for you to be able to live the life that Jesus described for us through the Beatitudes and for us to live by the Golden Rule.

What does God want us to seek? **Matthew 6:33** says to seek first God’s kingdom and his righteousness (**Matthew 6:33, Psalm 27:8, Jeremiah 29:13**). He wants us to pray for his will to be done in our lives, we are not only to pray for our daily needs. Seeking is more than just finding that dream job, future spouse, perfect health, etc., we are to seek God himself and His agenda, not ours.

When we “knock”, let us not expect a genie to open the door. God is not a genie who can be forced or obligated to grant our every desire. He is our Heavenly Father who will provide for us what we need and only what is good for us (**Matthew 7:9-11**).

# WORD (cont'd)

## GOD'S CONDITION FOR ANSWERED PRAYER

God's condition for answered prayers is found in **John 15:7**. We need to abide in Him—in other words, we need to be aligned with God, and when we are,

then whatever we ask will be in accordance to His will, and will be granted to us (**1 John 5:14**). This includes, of course, the desire and the ability to treat others the way we want them to treat us for the glory of God.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

*(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)*

1. What's one thing that you have been praying for a long time for that you have not received an answer to? How can you apply our lesson today to your situation?
2. Do you think you are aligned with God's will for your life? If not, what area of your life do you have to surrender to him?
3. Give one way you will apply the Golden Rule in your family this week.
4. How did today's lesson help you know God more? What did you learn about who God is from our discussion today

# WORKS

## PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

The best thing we can do for others is to point them to Jesus, He is our greatest need. This Christmas season, use the celebration of Jesus' birth to tell others about why he was born here on earth 2,000 years ago. To help you start a conversation on the gospel, share this Christmas evangelistic video to your unchurched family, friends and neighbors. Copy the link and send it to them through text message, or other social media platforms:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ow-zjl8BjjM&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR2CYxxQPwu1kCGK9KCXb1uIwW\\_Lk2OtxR5\\_m5R\\_WymPNOAfDlz3dlZdk3Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ow-zjl8BjjM&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR2CYxxQPwu1kCGK9KCXb1uIwW_Lk2OtxR5_m5R_WymPNOAfDlz3dlZdk3Q)

You can also watch this with your family at your Noche Buena gathering and share the real meaning of Christmas with them for a truly joyful celebration!

## WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

### I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

### II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants and a God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation

### III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

### IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

### V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends