

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Message Series: SUPERNATURAL: When prayer invades the natural
Message Title: Supernatural Enthusiasm
Speaker: Pastor Kevin Myers
Date: October 23, 2011

Icebreaker:

While delivering the welcome at Central Campus this week, Travis Billman introduced some tongue-in-cheek prayer benches for multi-taskers. The benches were custom designed for busy moms, sports fans, Apple product users and fitness buffs. Are you a multi-tasking prayer warrior? What's an activity you tend to combine with praying? Have you ever prayed in a particularly unusual situation or location?

Message Overview:

Our mantra for this series is:

- Life's battle is **physical** and **spiritual**. I have to **fight** and **pray**. As I pray, the supernatural invades the natural. This is how I conquer!

Our prayer life can be described as one of either **Supernatural Enthusiasm** or **Supernatural Indifference**. This difference in attitude and expectancy is illustrated in Numbers chapters 13 and 14 as God's chosen people, the Israelites, approached the land that God had promised them. When Moses sent 12 men in to explore Canaan, 10 of them returned intimidated and discouraged by the size and strength of the people who lived there. They convinced the Israelites that they should not try to enter The Promised Land. Only Caleb and Joshua took God's power into account and believed His promises:

"Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, 'We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it.' Numbers 13:30 (NIV)

"If the LORD is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us." Numbers 14:8 (NIV)

Like Caleb and Joshua, we demonstrate Spiritual Enthusiasm when we:

- **Believe Better**
- **Believe Bigger**
- **Believe Longer**

Discussion:

(Leaders: The questions that follow are designed to stir reflection and discussion on this week's primary Message points. Please read through them prior to your meeting, so you can be prepared to prayerfully pace your group well. And remember, as leader, your goal is to promote increased *biblical* awareness, as well as individual *self* awareness – a combination that with the help of the Holy Spirit, results in revelation and...transformation!)

- Read Numbers 14:1-4. Overwhelmed by their present circumstances, the Israelites began to believe the worst about God. Can you relate? When have you found yourself doubting that God has good plans for you? Have you ever wanted to retreat backwards – to a place or lifestyle that wasn't good – rather than pressing forward toward something better God has for you?
- Read Matthew 7:7-11. Just as parents delight in giving their children good gifts, it's the heart of God to bless His children. Can you think of a time when God has given you something that was even better than what you could have imagined or hoped for?
- Caleb was born a slave. He had been rescued and freed. He knew that God had the power to change things. When he prayed, he knew who he was talking to. Do you feel like you know who you're talking to when you pray? How does it change your prayers when you truly remember and believe that "the earth is the Lord's, and everything in it"?
- Philippians 4:19 says, "My God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus." Sometimes we misunderstand our "needs" and expect God to deliver all the things that we want – right when we want them. Like Pastor Kevin's son Jadon, we're so caught up in our own little world (worrying about our metaphorical Legos) that we don't see the bigger picture of how our Heavenly Father is protecting us and caring for us. Looking back, can you see how God may have matured you and blessed you by *not* answering a prayer exactly the way you wanted Him to? Is there an area of your life right now where God hasn't answered a prayer the way you're hoping He will? Are you able to trust Him "in the driver's seat" of your life even when you can't see what He's up to?
- Read part of the scouting report from the land of Canaan in Numbers 13:31-33. When have you faced a task or challenge that made you feel small: ill-equipped, unqualified and generally "in over your head"? What do you usually do in those situations? Run the other way? Fake it and act stronger than you feel? Or pray hard and trust God to carry you?
- Pastor Kevin (PK) talked about how prayer can be humbling, saying that it always makes him feel like a boy instead of a man. Confessing our weaknesses leaves us vulnerable. The move of the Holy Spirit can stir our emotions; it's hard to feel strong and manly when you're crying. Do you avoid praying with intensity because it's uncomfortable? Do you avoid praying with others – even your spouse or close friends -- because it's awkward? How can we overcome our embarrassment and surrender ourselves more fully to the power of prayer?

Wrap-Up/Close:

In Numbers 14:21-23, God vowed that none of the Israelites who were grumbling and disobedient would live to enter The Promised Land. But in verse 24 He says, *“But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it.”*

Pray that we would be a people who have a different spirit – one of Supernatural Enthusiasm. PK challenged us to go after more of God in several ways:

- One more prayer time in the week
- One more conversation with God throughout the day
- One more fast: a 3-day fast sometime during November 1-20
- One more training: PK will offer “Teach Me to Pray” training on Saturdays Nov 5, 12 and 19 from 7:00 to 7:45 a.m.

Which of these challenges – any or all – are you going to participate in?

Throughout the Week: (Optional)

(Leaders: Share these optional exercises for further study and growth with your group.)

To memorize:

“If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!” Matthew 7:11 (NIV)

If you’re considering participating in the 3-day fast in November, be sure to go to <http://itk.12stone.com/> and click on the “Supernatural Prayer Series” to read the background information about the practice of fasting.