

Teach Us to Pray

Session 4 Leader's Guide

This session is powerful. You'll spend most of the time sharing your **SHAPE** snapshots with each other that were completed as homework after Session 3. It's a good idea to send a reminder to the group a few days before you meet so everyone is prepared to share.

There are three main goals for the discussion time:

- **Gain insights into God's purpose for your prayer life.**
- **Learn to identify and celebrate how other people are "shaped."**
- **Make sure everyone feels heard, seen and valued.**

Guidelines to get the most out of this session:

Pray first. If you're comfortable praying out loud, ask God to lead and guide the discussion and to help you see each other the way He does.

Make sure everyone has a chance to share. Help manage the time to ensure that each person is able to share and feel valued by the group.

Affirm each "living stone." Every prayer life is precious in God's eyes. Each believer is needed in His house of prayer. For instance, no spiritual gift mix is better than another. Every life experience offers value in God's redemptive plan. Ask the group to be prepared to offer brief words of encouragement, insight and affirmation after each person shares.

Avoid counseling and cross-talk. This discussion is about how God made your prayer lives with purpose. It is not a time to offer counsel or opinions about what's shared. It's also best to avoid cross-talk such as, "Your experience of divorce reminds me of my divorce..." Stay focused on how God views each person and what He's doing.

Look for patterns in how the SHAPE snapshot is woven together. You might see how someone's spiritual gifts relate to their main job assignment, or how a life experience is also a heart passion. It's OK to help people connect these dots during the affirmation time. It can help bring clarity and confirmation to them.

Incorporate the living Word of God. As someone shares, it might bring a confirming Scripture passage to mind. Don't hesitate to share an encouraging verse or two.

Enjoy this time together!