

## **CARING FOR THE CARER**



### *LEADER*

Those who want to be good care-givers must take care to be spiritually healthy and growing in the grace of God. This study from The Gospel of John, chapter 15 can be a quiet reflection for individuals or a discussion for groups...

*READ JOHN 15:1-8*

### **Gardener at Work vv. 1-2**

Jesus pictures the relationship between us and God in this fruit-bearing analogy.

1. Can you think of any 'pruning' activity in your life that has changed you?
2. What conditions of life may lead to being 'unfruitful'?
3. What are some obstacles to spiritual growth in your life?

### **The Vine, The Branch, The Fruit vv. 5-7**

The purpose of a branch is to bear fruit. It is critically important for us to maintain a close relationship with the Lord and his teaching.

4. What do you do to keep Bible reading and reflection regular and fresh in your life?
5. What other spiritual exercises/practices help you keep close to the Lord?

### **The Fruit v. 8**

Abundant fruit and discipleship is Jesus hope for you.

6. What sort of fruitfulness in the Christian life is Jesus pointing to?
7. What sort of 'fruit' do you need ripening in your life at present?



*A guide for pastoral care - one to another  
Study #6 — More skills for caring  
St Michael's Anglican Church, North Carlton*

## **INTRODUCTION**

This series of studies aims to assist church members to consider the importance and advantages of pastoral care which is shared one-to-another. The series titles are:

- #1 - Why Care?
- #2 - Qualities of a good carer
- #3 - Spiritual gifts & Spiritual maturity
- #4 - The PEACE model of pastoral care
- #5 - Skills for caring

To get the most out of this study:

- READ the text for the day
- MAKE time for silence and reflection before going on
- ASK yourself how this passage might be "speaking" to you today
- PRAY for the help of the Holy Spirit
- DISCUSS your thoughts with others

*LEADER*

Last study we looked at two essential resources for healthy Christian care-giving: 1) Listening skills, and 2) The Holy Scriptures (Bible). This session we look at more skills suited to care-giving and then consider the needs of the carer.

### **MORE SKILLS FOR CARE-GIVING**

#### **3. Praying**

*QUESTIONS*

Have you had anyone pray with you/for you when you were needy or ill? What form did the prayer(s) take? What was helpful about it?

*LEADER*

Put simply, prayer is simply communicating with God—listening and talking to God. The Bible gives us confidence to pray to our Heavenly Father, through the Son, in the Power of the Holy Spirit. The first mention of prayer is found in Genesis, chapter 4:26. Christians can pray from the heart, freely, spontaneously, and in their own words, just as Jesus did, or by using some words from the Scriptures or from prepared prayers written by ‘saints’ and scholars. If prayer is a difficult area for you, learn these basic principles of prayer and how to apply them in your own devotions and also in caring for others:



*DISCUSS*

- i. **Is there a Correct Posture for Prayer?**  
see 1 Kings 8:54, Exodus 4:31, 2 Chronicles 20:18, Matthew 26:39, and 1 Kings 8:22.

- ii. **Should You Use Eloquent Words?**  
see Matthew 6:7 & Ecclesiastes 5:2
- iii. **Is Prayer really that Important?**  
see John 15:7, Matthew 26:41, Luke 18:1, Ephesians 6:18, Matthew 7:7, 1 Timothy 2:8, 1 John 5:14-15
- iv. **What If I Don't Know How to Pray?**  
see Romans 8:26-27

*LEADER*

It is helpful when praying for others to have access to written prayers that are suited to different situations and intercessory needs. The Anglican Prayer Book is helpful in this regard. There are many good websites with written prayers such as [http://christianity.about.com/od/prayersforspecificneeds/Prayers\\_for\\_Specific\\_Needs.htm](http://christianity.about.com/od/prayersforspecificneeds/Prayers_for_Specific_Needs.htm). An excellent paperback available for about \$10 is Bill Hybels', "Too Busy Not To Pray." There are also great prayers written by faithful Christians past and present that you can research. The Bible, of course, contains great prayers from which we can learn something about the language and forms of prayers from the past. However, many such prayers, like Ezra's prayer in Ezra 9:9-15, are specific to an historical context and may not be suitable to pray word for word for a contemporary need. The Lord's Prayer (Luke 11), on the other hand, is was given by the Lord to his followers and is for broad application. Using written prayers can help to train us up for extemporary forms of prayer.



*DISCUSS*

Using a separate sheet of paper, work with someone else to write a paragraph of suitable prayer for God's help for each of the following three situations of need:

- 1st. for someone suffering an illness that confines them to bed
- 2nd. for someone facing a difficult choice in the workplace
- 3rd. for someone who feels alone and abandoned