**The Circle Maker Leader Guide**

**Session 4: Praying Is Like Planting**

**Introduction:**

 Picture a grandmother standing in the kitchen watching her grandson toss a bag of popcorn into the microwave and hit the popcorn button. She marvels as he fidgets impatiently, waiting “forever” for his snack to be ready. So, she sits him down for a chat as he munches on his popcorn and she tells him about how things used to be.

 “You know, honey, when we wanted some popcorn when I was a little girl we had to take a pot out of the cabinet, pour some oil into it, and put it on the stove and wait as the oil heated up. Then, we would pour some popcorn kernels into the hot oil, put a lid on the pot, and jiggle and shake the pot even harder as the rest of the kernels popped so they would not burn. Next, we would pour the kernels into a big bowl. If we wanted butter, we would melt it in another pan on the stove and pour it over the popcorn. Finally, we would put on as much salt as we liked and we were ready to snack. Oh, and we had to clean up all the dishes when we were done and then put them away. But it was so delicious and fun?

 The grandmother looks into her grandson’s glazed eyes and realizes she might have given more of the history of popcorn that he wanted to hear but she dares to ask him, “Would you like to make some the old-fashioned way?”

 He thinks for a moment and says, “That sounds like it would take all day. It takes long enough in the microwave,” and he wanders from the room.

 We live in a world where virtually everything comes quickly… or we want it to. But prayer is like planting and then waiting for the harvest time. God does not promise instant results at the speed of light or even the speed of a microwave. Many prayers stay buried, growing slowly in the fertile soil of God’s heart. But they are growing and they will bring a harvest. We just need to remain patient and keep praying!

**Video Notes:**

Time capsule prayers

Praying is like planting

Proximity and posture

David’s 21-day breakthrough

Fasting as one form of circling

Michael’s circle maker’s story

All it takes is one person

White chalk circling

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Look back through your life and identify some places where God was working long before you began praying and before a dream was ever ignited in your heart. Share one instance with your group.
2. As a church, it is important to look back and recognize the people who have served and prayed in ways that prepared the way for what we are experiencing today. Talk about some of the faithful saints in your church who have served, sacrificed, prayed, and believed God would do great things for His glory. What are some ways you can remember, honor bless and emulate their examples of faith?
3. Mark recalls his grandfather kneeling at his bedside and praying over him with passion and consistency. Who is a person who did this for you and how are his or her prayers being answered? Who can you pray for in the same way?
4. What are some ways that life, and even our culture, can get in the way of us praying and devoting the time and passion we need to this important ministry?
5. What are ways we can get in closer proximity to our dreams so we can pray with greater passion and focus?
6. What is happening in your life right now that demands such immediate prayer attention, but your schedule and responsibilities have gotten in the way?
7. What do you learn about the reality of spiritual warfare and the battles we face as followers of Jesus? Why is it important that we recognize spiritual conflicts and are willing to enter into the battle in prayer?
8. What is the place of fasting, partnered with prayer, as we battle against the work of the enemy in this world? Tell about a time you fasted in partnership with prayer and the results of this pairing of two essential spiritual disciplines.