

# Begin a New Life

## Group Meeting #3 Pray to the Lord

### Meeting Outline

Note: For a full description of how this meeting runs, go to the *Begin a New Life* website ([www.BeginaNewLife.info](http://www.BeginaNewLife.info)), the page titled, *Six-Week Program for Small Groups*, and view the pdf titled, *General Description of Meetings*.

**Quiet music can be played while people arrive and during the first two opening activities—Opening Prayer and Readings.**

#### 7:00 p.m. Opening activities

1. Opening prayer

2. Readings:

Hear my cry, O God;

Attend to my prayer.

From the end of the earth I will cry to You,

When my heart is overwhelmed;

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

For You have been a shelter for me,

A strong tower from the enemy.

I will abide in Your tabernacle forever;

I will trust in the shelter of Your wings. (Psalm 61:1-4)

The smallest amount of divine power, every time it is called on, to tame instantly the entire devil's crew, even if it consisted of millions. (Emanuel Swedenborg, *Secrets of Heaven* 8626)

The power to resist sins, when prayed for, is never denied anyone, but is granted to all. (Emanuel Swedenborg, *Charity* 203, 204)

People who believe in God say to themselves, "With God's help I will conquer this." And they pray for it and obtain it. (Emanuel Swedenborg, *Charity* 203)

The Lord's constant effort to reform and regenerate us, and so to purify us from evils, is realized when we will and intend it. (Emanuel Swedenborg, *Charity* 203)

3. Check-in

a. One highlight from each person's day or week, or one opening thought.

b. No cross talk or conversation.

c. Acknowledge each person's contribution with brief words of "Thank you" before moving on to the next person.

d. Groups larger than eight are broken into groups of four to eight.

4. Group business
  - a. Any announcements or group decisions that need to be made.
5. Reading of the task for this week
  - a. Read (out loud) the task that was assigned for this meeting. Here it is:  
**Step 3: Pray to the Lord**
    - 1) Do *one* of the following:
      - a) Use a new set of worksheets and go through all four steps of the *BNL* process relative to the issue you've chosen to work on.
      - b) Use a new set of worksheets for Steps 1-3 and go through these steps relative to the issue you've been working on.
      - c) Review the Step 1 and Step 2 worksheets that you filled out during the seminar-workshop, then fill in the Step 3 worksheet again.
    - 2) Come to the group meeting ready to share your experience of practicing Step 3 of the process—*Beg for the Lord's Help and Power in Resisting Your Sin*.

#### 7:20 Group sharing

1. People talk about their experience of doing the task. Sharing is initiated by the question, "What was your experience of doing the task for this week?"
2. Note: In the event that sharing lags, there is a set of questions that can elicit further sharing (see below following the meeting outline). Your job as group leader is to listen to the sharing that is going on, and decide which of the questions is an appropriate "next step" in *Group Sharing*. Then you pose that question at an appropriate time. (Note: Some of the questions may have already been answered in the initial sharing.) This continues as needed until the end of *Group Sharing*.

#### 8:05 Closure

1. Task for the next meeting
  - a. Read the assignment for the next meeting out loud, and answer any questions about it. Here is that assignment:  
**Step 4: Begin a New Life**
    - 1) Do *one* of the following:
      - a) Use a new set of worksheets and go through all four steps of the process relative to the issue you've chosen to work on.
      - b) Review the Step 1, Step 2, and Step 3 worksheets that you filled out at the seminar-workshop, then go through a set of Step 4 worksheets relative to the issue you've chosen to work on.
    - 2) Come to the group meeting ready to share your experience of practicing Step 4 of the process—*Begin a New Life*.
2. Closing thoughts
  - a. One closing thought per person.
  - b. No cross talk or conversation.
  - c. Acknowledge each person's contribution with brief words of "Thank you" before moving on to the next person.
  - d. Groups larger than eight are broken into groups of four to eight.

3. The Lord's Prayer
  - b. The group stands, holds hands, and says the prayer together. Those who prefer to listen may do so.

**8:15 End time**

## Additional Questions for Sharing

1. What was your experience of prayer when you were a child? What is your experience of it now?
2. What does prayer mean to you? In other words, what value, place, or importance does it hold in your life? Please explain.
3. What is one way that you pray, or one thing that you do when you pray, that is helpful or effective? What effect(s) does this have? Please explain.
4. What is your experience of needing help from someone else and asking for it?
5. What is your experience of needing help from the Lord God and asking for it?
6. What was your state of mind as you departed from Step 2 of the process and entered Step 3—*Pray to the Lord*?
7. What thoughts, feelings, or experiences have you had around “pleading” or “begging” for help and power from the Lord God?
8. What was your experience of turning to the Lord and asking for His help and power during Step 3? How easy or difficult was it to do? Please explain.
9. Were there barriers that you experienced to doing Step 3? If so, what were they, and how did you address them?
10. The prayer that you said and/or wrote during Step 3 was a prayer for the Lord’s “help and power in resisting your sin”. What do “help,” and “power” mean to you? In other words, what are you personally praying for when you pray for “help” and what are you praying for when you pray for “power”? What do you hope the Lord will *do* or *provide* in each case, in each case?
11. There’s a quotation at the bottom of the Step 3 worksheet which says, “The smallest amount of divine power is enough, every time it is called on, to tame instantly the entire devil’s crew, even if it consisted of millions.” This statement suggests that any time you call on the Lord to help you during times of spiritual conflict, trial, or temptation, there is a powerful effect that He is able to have. In general, what is your experience of calling on the Lord’s divine power in time of need? How do you do it, and what happens when you do? Describe one experience you’ve had with this and what effect(s) it had.
12. Are there any other thoughts, feelings, or insights about this part of the process that you’d like to share?
13. What meaning or value did this part of the process have for you?