

Lesson Plan & Study Guide



# Spiritual Disciplines: Prayer Part Two

Walking with Jesus

**iFOLLOW**

The iFollow Discipleship Series

Version 1.0 - 11/17/10



## About the iFollow Discipleship Series Pastor's Edition

### Categories

The iFollow Discipleship Series is designed to be used in congregations to assist people in their pursuit of God. This assumes that individuals are in unique places in their journey and there is no perfect set of lessons that everyone must complete to become a disciple—in fact discipleship is an eternal journey. Therefore the iFollow curriculum is a menu of milestones that an individual, small group, or even an entire church can choose from. The lessons can be placed in three general categories: **Meeting with Jesus** (does not assume a commitment to Jesus Christ); **Walking with Jesus** (assumes an acceptance of Jesus Christ); and **Working with Jesus** (assumes a desire to serve Jesus Christ).

### Components

Each lesson has a presenter's manuscript which can be read word for word, but will be stronger if the presenter puts it in his/her own words and uses personal illustrations. The graphic slides can be played directly from the Pastor's DVD or customized and played from a computer. There are also several group activities and discussion questions to choose from as well as printable student handouts.

### Usage

The lessons are designed to be used in small groups, pastor's Bible classes, prayer meetings, seminars, retreats, training sessions, discussion groups, and some lessons may be appropriate sermon outlines.

### Credits

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# The Spiritual Discipline of Prayer Part Two

*This presentation is designed for people who have decided to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.*

## Learning Objectives

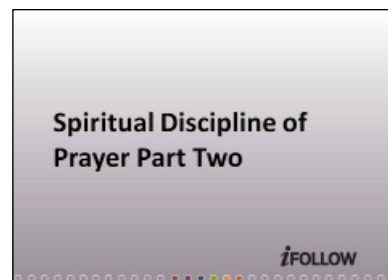
1. Learn to see prayer as relational communication
2. Learn how prayer can be a tool for bringing others to Christ
3. Learn about prayer partners and small prayer groups
4. Explore the role of prayer before, during and after outreach events

## Content Outline

1. Prayer as an invitation to relationship
2. Jesus' relationship with His Father
3. The Holy Spirit as a gift
4. Attitudes for prayer
5. Prayer partners
6. Claiming promises
7. The power of prayer in small groups
8. Public prayer
9. Prayer walks

## Background Material for the Presenter

Persons who have decided to become followers of Jesus begin to think immediately of individuals they love, friends they value and relatives who have not yet made that decision or are not seriously following through on it. Sometimes they are the only person in an entire network or community who has made the commitment to be a follower of Christ. This large group comes to their mind right away. It is only natural (and spiritual) to have a deep yearning to share faith with the people that are important in their life. The first step is to begin to pray for these individuals.



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God invites us to communicate with Him. God created humans like Himself intending to communicate with them. “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.’” (Gen. 1:26, NASB) The Contemporary English version reads, “God said, “Now we will make humans, and they will be like us. We will let them rule the fish, the birds, and all other living creatures.”

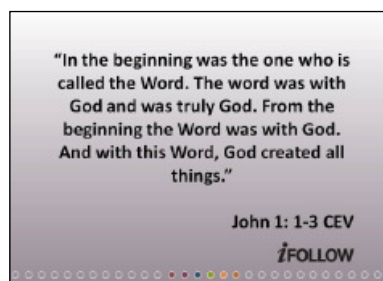
In the Garden of Eden, God came in the evening to walk and talk with the people He had made. They looked forward to their time with God. However, when they believed the serpent’s lies and did what the Serpent wanted instead of what God had asked them to do, the relationship was broken. Adam and Eve became afraid and hid from God. Sin divided.

God came and found them. He helped them by making clothes for them. He escorted them out of the garden away from the tree that would make them live forever in sin. And most importantly, He promised salvation and a reunion. Humans could no longer speak face to face with God, but God provided a way they could still communicate with Him. Through prayer they—and we—could still talk and walk with God. His promise of Jesus would make a relationship still possible.

John called Jesus “the Word,” meaning the same creative power that spoke the world into existence. “In the beginning was the one who is called the Word. The Word was with God and was truly God. From the beginning the Word was with God. And with this Word, God created all things.” (John 1:1-3, CEV) “The Word was in the world, but no one knew him, though God had made the world with his Word.” (John 1:10, CEV)

God’s Word, Jesus, has power—creative power. By speaking, God created the world. God’s words, God’s thoughts still have power. God still creates good in the world. Positively changed lives demonstrate God’s creative power. We can partner with God, joining in His creative work through communicating with Him in prayer.

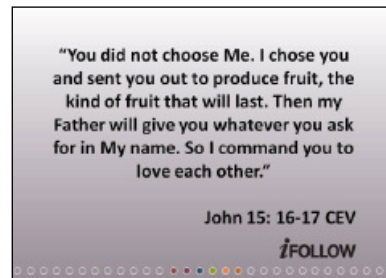
Although Jesus went back to heaven physically, God wants to live with us. “...If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him. (John 14:23-24 NASB) God wants to be with us through prayer. Even though we can’t see God now, prayer brings God into our lives.



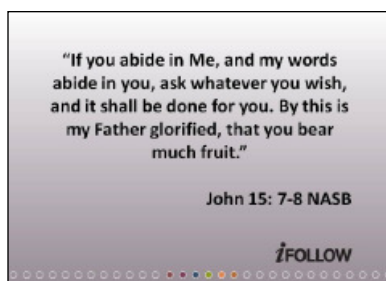
## Jesus' Relationship with His Father

When Jesus was on earth, He was one with God the Father. He would walk alone and pray with God. After one all night prayer time with God, Jesus named His twelve disciples. The Bible doesn't say much about what Jesus prayed about on these occasions, however, Jesus attributed all His miracles to God in heaven. He was one with His Father. He prayed that we also would be one with God. When we are one with God, we can know His will. When we know His will, we can pray prayers for others that are in line with what God wants to do. When we are one with God, we want to do the things God does.

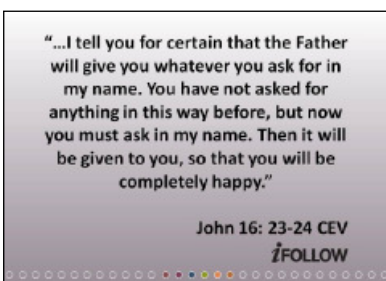
"You did not choose Me. I chose you and sent you out to produce fruit, the kind of fruit that will last. Then my Father will give you whatever you ask for in My name. So I command you to love each other." (John 15:16-17, CEV)



When we partner with God, we pray for others and God brings good to others' lives. Praying for others and watching God make their lives better is like watching fruit grow and ripen on a tree. God wants that fruit to grow and remain, not get blown in a wind storm. When we pray for anything that God wants, especially when we pray for other people, God gives good gifts. Praying for good for another person is a way of loving. "If you abide in Me," Jesus said, "and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit." (John 15:7-8, NASB)



Five times in His last conversations with His disciples before His death, Jesus told His disciples to ask. For example, "I tell you for certain that the Father will give you whatever you ask for in my name. You have not asked for anything in this way before, but now you must ask in my name. Then it will be given to you, so that you will be completely happy." (John 16:23-24, CEV) The other times Jesus said to ask are found in John 14:13, 14; John 15:7, 8; John 15:16; John 16:23-24; and John 16:26.



Jesus said the same thing in one of His first sermons, The Sermon on the Mount. (Matthew 7:7, 8) If He repeated this idea so many times, He must have really meant it.

Just before He was crucified, Jesus prayed for His disciples. Here is part of His prayer. "I

want all of them to be one with each other, just as I am one with you and you are one with me. I also want them to be one with us.” (John 17:21, CEV) During this same time, He promised the Holy Spirit many times.

## The Holy Spirit as a Gift

One of Jesus’ last promises was to send the Holy Spirit to be with us. “Then I will ask the Father to send you the Holy Spirit who will help you and always be with you.” (John 14:16, CEV) This is the highest form of personal relationship now possible for sinful humans. Just imagine it, God Himself lives with us!

This new relationship brings new thoughts into our minds. The things that God cares about, the people He loves, are now important to us, too. The Holy Spirit guides thoughts and decisions. Have you ever had another person suddenly pop into your mind? Some people pause briefly and pray for that person when that happens. Many have later found that at that very moment, that person needed God’s help.

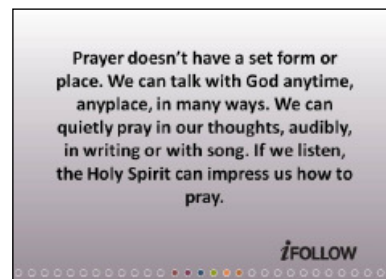
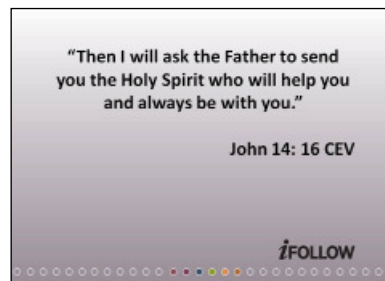
The Holy Spirit had impressed them to pray. In listening to the Holy Spirit’s prompting, those who pray join with God in bringing good things into another’s life. Creating God’s good through prayer, helping others to come closer to God, is evangelism at its best.

## Attitudes for Prayer

Prayer doesn’t have a set form or place. We can talk with God any time, any place, in many ways. We can pray quietly in our thoughts, pray audibly, or pray in writing or with song. If we listen, the Holy Spirit may impress us how to pray. Paul says, “In certain ways we are weak, but the Spirit is here to help us. For example, when we don’t know what to pray for, the Spirit prays for us in ways that cannot be put into words.” (Romans 8:26, CEV)

God’s word is powerful, powerful enough to create the world. God will do what He says He’ll do. (Isaiah 55:11) As we pray, we can acknowledge that greatness and power, requesting that God be present with us.

Tell God that you believe that He’ll honor any promise that you find in Scripture. The timing, though, is up to Him. For example, sometimes healing will happen only in heaven. But it will happen. Prayers which may be unanswered here on earth will be answered in



heaven. Continuing to pray builds treasure for heaven, like putting money in a savings account for later. So leave the timing with God.

Ask humbly, leaving room for God to work His will. Be willing to have your own plans changed if God has a different plan.

And ask with gratitude. A woman had been badly hurt by another. The pain was so great that she didn't think she could handle it. Sitting in church, she considered walking out. Suddenly, a thought popped into her head, **"Thank God for the pain."** Without even thinking about it she quietly whispered, "Oh God, thank you for this pain." Immediately the pain left. In its place was peace. Having pain shows us we are alive, and sensitive. If we didn't hurt when people do cruel things to us, we wouldn't be much good for loving, either.

We all need forgiveness. We all have done things that we wish we hadn't. We all have traits we wish were better. God promises to forgive those things and to cleanse us—to make us better. (1 John 1:9)

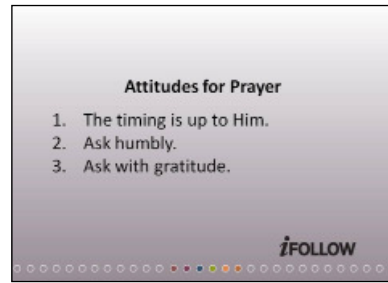
We all need to forgive, too. (Matthew 18:21-35; Matthew 6:14) Since forgiving others is God's will, we can ask God to give us the forgiveness we need to give.

Corrie ten Boom saw terrible things in German concentration camps during World War II. After the war she gave talks about God's forgiveness. The approach of a former German officer tested her attitude of forgiveness. Corrie recognized the man as one of her torturers. He did not recognize her.

"Your talk about forgiveness was wonderful," the man began. "I was a guard. I need to know that I'm forgiven for my atrocities. Will you forgive me?"

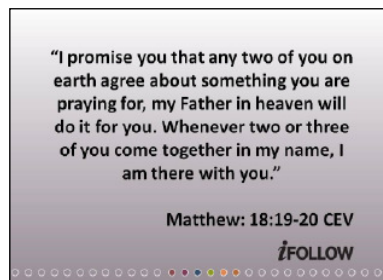
Corrie tried to lift her hand to shake his. She couldn't. Quickly she offered a silent prayer. "God, I will go through the motions, but you will have to supply the feeling." As she gripped his hand, warmth started in her hand and spread up her arm and through her body. Feelings of forgiveness washed over her.

When we are by ourselves with God we can say exactly what we feel. We can talk just as we would to a friend knowing that the friend knows us in good and bad times and will see us for our good. Alone with God we can pray about issues that we may not want to tell others. Laying it all out before Him, we can find peace, direction, guidance. And God can use our personal, individual prayers to lead others to Him and to His peace, as well.



## Prayer Partners

God always hears us. However, at times our sight may be clouded by our own experiences or perceptions. We need the view of others. A trusted friend can gently help us to see ourselves. “I promise you that when any two of you on earth agree about something you are praying for, my Father in heaven will do it for you. Whenever two or three of you come together in my name, I am there with you.” (Matthew 18:19-20, CEV)



When we have communicated and agree, we can pray together, and God will answer. When we gather together, God is there.

The best prayer partner is a trusted friend. Sometimes churches will assign people to each other as prayer partners. New friendships can grow from these partnerships, but developing enough trust to share at deeper levels takes time. With a trusted friend, one can share pains too deep to be shared with a whole church. Prayer partners watch out for each other spiritually. Times of prayer can be scheduled or they can happen spontaneously as needed. Prayer partners can communicate in person, by telephone or by email. Prayer partners bring each other's needs to God. Both grow in their relationships with God.

To be truly prayer partners, both people must feel comfortable enough with each other to be honest. A relationship in which one person shares while the other prays for him or her without sharing is more like a counseling situation than a partnership.

In describing the characteristics necessary for a prayer partner for a pastor, John Maxwell makes this statement. “The [two] must be of the same gender. You should never allow an intimate prayer relationship to develop between members of the opposite sex, unless, of course, they're married to each other.” (Maxwell) It is best to have a prayer partner who holds no possibility for romantic attraction. Intimate sharing can precipitate and/or enhance romantic feelings. In addition, men and women think differently about issues. For prayer, it's nice to partner with someone who can potentially better understand how you think.

Aside from praying for and supporting each other, prayer partners can also partner to pray for others, not only those they know, but for all who need God. Prayer partners can commit to praying regularly for those in their neighborhoods and workplaces to find a strong and loving relationship with God. They can especially commit to praying for the outreach of their church, particularly before, during, and after special outreach events. We will never know until we reach heaven how powerfully God used our prayers for others. Sometimes they help people we will never know. Often they help God mold **us** into the kind of people He needs to show His unconditional love to others.

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## Claiming Promises

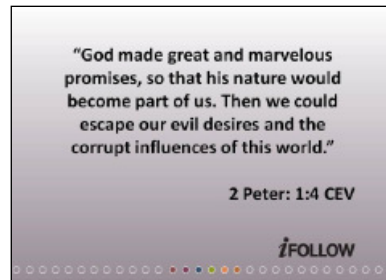
In prayer we ask for what we need. But prayer is more than asking for things. “God made great and marvelous promises, so that his nature would become part of us. Then we could escape our evil desires and the corrupt influences of this world.” (2 Peter 1:4, CEV) True prayer brings us into relationship with God. In that relationship we become more like Him and less like anything destructive around us.

I am sure you know how to look for some of those “great and marvelous promises,” those treasures of the Bible. You know how to look up a certain thing you need, such as faith, or patience, or healing, and find promises of those things. You probably know how to claim those promises for yourself, too. One of the most popular ways is the Ask, Believe, Claim method. You find the promise, hold it up to God, even put your finger on it if you wish, and ask Him for it. You believe that He promises it to you, and you claim it as your own. No doubt you remember to lean as hard as you can on **Thy will be done, not mine!** Remember, some things are fulfilled later than we wish, maybe not even on this earth.

But have you ever looked for those promises in the light of this passage? Have you ever looked for a promise of healing or protection and then asked God how the fulfillment of that promise would make you partake of the divine nature, or, as the Contemporary English Version has it, make God’s nature become a part of you? It’s a whole different thought, isn’t it? “He shall give His angels charge concerning you, and they will bear you up in their hands lest you dash your foot against a stone.” Why? So you don’t hurt your foot? Or so you will be more like Jesus? “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins.” Why? So we won’t feel bad anymore? Or so we’ll be more like Jesus?

Let’s look at a specific promise in the context of prayer as evangelism. It’s found in 1 John 5: 16-17. Here it is in New American Stand Bible: “If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not [leading] to death, he shall ask and [God] will for him give life to those who commit sin not [leading] to death. There is a sin [leading] to death; I do not say that he should make request for this. All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not [leading] to death.”

What do you suppose this means? Is it talking about the unforgiveable sin, the one where someone has thrown up so many brick walls against the voice of God that he can’t hear it anymore, won’t ask for forgiveness, and cannot be reached, even by the Spirit of God? If so, how could we know that? Only God knows that. I believe this verse means that we can always ask God for forgiveness and life for those around us, and trust that God will always give life where He can, and only He knows that.



We can walk through our lives on this earth, praying constantly for literally everyone who crosses our paths, praying for God's blessing on them, praying the covering of Jesus' blood over them, praying that if there's anything we can do for them, God will show us. This is the kind of open communication He needs, the kind of prayer with which He can change the world.

But we pray and pray, and nothing seems to be happening. How long? How many times?

## Ask—Repeatedly

Remember that Jesus said to ask and since He repeated the advice as many times as He did, He must have really meant it. Ask for anything within His will. Whatever He has promised must be within His will, because God can't lie. He can't be unfaithful to Himself. He will do what He has said He will do. He will do it on His time schedule and His timing may not be here on this earth, it may only be done in heaven. For example, some illnesses God will not cure here. Some deformities will be cured in heaven. In some cases, the tears will be wiped away in heaven. But no matter when it's done, God will do it.



Belief is an attitude. Belief grows as relationship with God grows, as trust grows. When it's hard to believe, it helps to say like one man said to Jesus, "Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief." The things we say react on our minds, making belief stronger. It's important to say the things we want to believe or choose to believe.

To claim is to receive. When I receive a gift, I reach out, take it and then say, "Thank you." Jesus said, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks the door will be opened." (Matthew 7:7, NIV)

The seeking and knocking imply action, taking action to receive what has been asked for. Going through the same actions we normally do when receiving a gift strengthens our belief. To claim the promise, thank God for it.

## The Power of Prayer in Small Groups

Take the power of prayer found in one faithful heart and add a prayer partner: their prayer becomes much more than the sum of the two of them. Then put a few prayer partners together into a small prayer group. Now the power explodes exponentially. Add groups together to



become a whole church, and let those groups pray fervently for the neighborhood of their church, for the neighborhoods of each member, for the work of God in the whole world. What might God be able to do with such a church?

A small group often includes study time as well as prayer time. The small group usually meets once a week, often in the middle of the week. By consensus, the group chooses a book of the Bible to systematically study, or they may choose another book to read through together. Prayer time follows during which individuals request prayer for themselves or situations they know about. Then they pray together. A group dedicated specifically to become prayer warriors will spend at least as much time in actual prayer as in study or in talking about prayer requests. The requests will be made known to God in each other's assenting presence, rather than to each other in God's presence. Instead of spending twenty minutes on "praises and concerns" and five minutes saying, "God, You know the needs of each person mentioned," prayer groups will spend the time in prayer, giving **God** the praises, telling **Him** the concerns.

This will help to avoid sanctified gossip. It is easy to talk about other people in their absence under the guise of "praying for that person." Sometimes this is well-intentioned. Sometimes pride and feeling better than the one prayed for plays a part. Make sure that you are not sharing confidential information. It's best to get another's permission to bring concerns to the group. Maintain loyalty in the absence of another. Show other people in the best light possible. When negatives come out remember that everyone has them. Admit your own weaknesses.

God works more easily when we are unified in purpose. When two or three people agree, God will hear their request. Does this mean that everyone needs to think alike, dress alike and live alike? Absolutely not. We are all different. Still, in spite of the differences, we can unite in purpose. Knowing the motives and intentions of others helps us focus on the important. To get past appearances to motives, we need to ask questions. What does this mean to you? What are your intentions? Then listen trying to see through the eyes of another person. Look for what will enhance God's kingdom. At times we have to give forgiveness to get beyond differences.

## Forgiveness

What is forgiveness? Forgiveness is a gift God gives us to give another. Sometimes we just don't feel forgiving, but God can supply that feeling. The feeling is secondary, anyway. We don't have to "feel like it" in order to obey any other commandment, why do we think we have to "feel" this one?

How did Corrie ten Boom come from hatred and bitterness to forgiveness? She tells of a time when she and her



sister Betsie picked up pieces of wrecked airplanes and loaded them onto trucks. Because she was frail, Betsie picked up the smaller pieces. Suddenly one of the guards noticed. Betsie said kindly to the guard, "Please don't give me more to do than I am trying to do already, because I am not strong enough to lift these heavy parts."

"You don't decide what to do. I do," the woman guard answered. With that she started beating Betsie. Other prisoners held Corrie back from grabbing the guard. Watching her sister get beaten was harder than getting a beating herself. Betsie urged her, "Don't hate. Love and forgive."

Corrie went off by herself. "I can't forgive that brutal woman," she prayed. The Lord reminded her of a text. "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us." (Romans 5:5, RSV)

Suddenly Corrie had an insight. What she could not do, the Lord, in her, was able to do. (ten Boom, pp. 36-38.)

Giving forgiveness doesn't always take away the hurt, the loneliness or the pain. It doesn't always fix one's reputation or put the missing money in the bank. Forgiveness puts the responsibility for taking vengeance, if any, on God. Romans 12:19 says, "Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay,' says the Lord." (NASB) When God takes revenge, He gives people what they need. He knows what's behind a problem or behavior and works to correct it, rather than merely punishing just to be punishing.

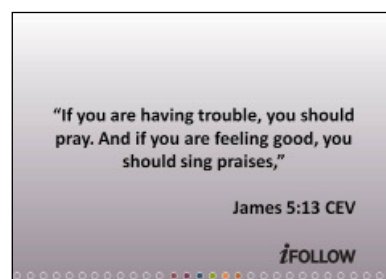
At its most mature, forgiveness enables us to see that sinning human being as one of God's beloved, mistaken children, one for whom Jesus died. Finally, it becomes possible to want that person to live a sanctified, forgiven life, and to join with God in His perfect kingdom of heaven.

Forgiveness allows us to take the action that will do the least harm possible to another. Forgiveness frees us from carrying the emotionally and physically damaging burden of bitterness. Forgiveness allows us to move forward focusing on important things that will build the people around us and ultimately God's kingdom.

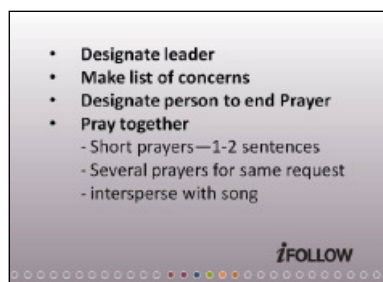
## Methods of Prayer in a Small Group

"If you are having trouble, you should pray. And if you are feeling good, you should sing praises." (James 5:13, CEV)

There are many ways to pray in a small group. Some choose to take turns, following in order around a circle. Some may designate a beginning person and an ending



person with anyone else praying as they desire. Another method is called conversational prayer, and can include both talking and singing. One way to do this is to have the leader or facilitator or a scribe write down requests as people mention them. The leader designates someone to offer the final prayer signaling the end of the prayer time. As the group bows in prayer, the leader starts praying a short prayer for one of the requests mentioned. Others add short prayers for that particular request claiming promises and praying for any aspect that comes to mind. When it seems right another person starts a short prayer for another request. Anyone can introduce the next topic as prayer for the first seems to wind down. People pray randomly as things come to mind. Some may pray several times; some not at all. Pray as the Holy Spirit brings things to mind. Feel free to sing songs during the prayer. Everyone will join the singing. Continue praying until all the items have been covered. The person designated to close will offer a short final prayer.

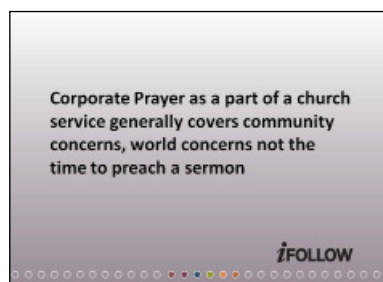


There are even materials available for small groups which explore different ways to pray, such as using art, writing poetry, or lighting candles to represent the brightness of God's presence, or to represent that we are holding someone in God's light.

## Public Prayer

What does "public prayer" bring to mind? Probably most people think of the long prayer during a church service. Certainly that is one kind of corporate prayer. We will be talking about other forms. People offer corporate prayers as part of a church service. The prayers generally cover community concerns, world concerns and a few individual requests, usually those already known by the whole church.

Corporate prayer often includes a general invitation for God to be present in the service. These public prayers are not the time to preach a sermon. We'll talk about prayer as evangelism in a few minutes. The best prayers are simple and to the point using language commonly understood by most people. Some people write out these prayers and memorize them make sure they include everything in a logical order. The point is that the person praying in front of a large group is to be understood as representing all present, and even some who are not present. That one is speaking the voice and will of all, praying for things for which the whole body shares a concern. Before, during, and after an outreach event, this prayer is crucially important, but if it isn't really the will of all, if it's just the head elder, or



pastor, or whoever, then it really isn't corporate prayer. "Corporate" means of or pertaining to the body, and in this case, it's the Body of Christ, the church we're talking about. If, when that person up front is praying, the whole body isn't praying along with him or her, in their own seats, then it isn't corporate prayer.

## Prayer as Evangelism

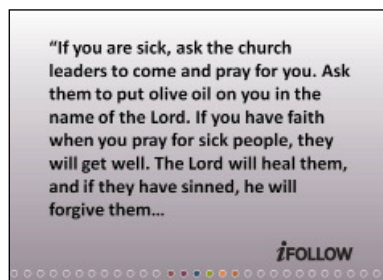
*Webster's Dictionary* defines evangelism "as the winning or revival of a personal commitment to Christ." People sometimes think of large meetings. Actually, people often make commitments in less public settings. Prayer plays a big part in those commitments. As people find their needs met through prayer, they come into relationship with God. With relationship comes commitment.



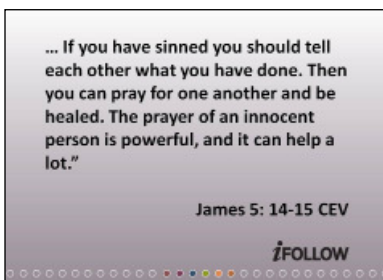
We will discuss several settings where people pray in ways that reach out to others. There are probably many more creative ways to pray as evangelism.

**Healing Prayer:** What better place to have a healing prayer service than at a Christian medical office or hospital? Including prayer in the treatment gives God the true credit for healing.

"If you are sick, ask the church leaders to come and pray for you. Ask them to put olive oil on you in the name of the Lord. If you have faith when you pray for sick people, they will get well. The Lord will heal them, and if they have sinned, he will forgive them. If you have sinned, you should tell each other what you have done. Then you can pray for one another and be healed. The prayer of an innocent person is powerful, and it can help a lot." (James 5:14-15, CEV)



At Pacific Cataract and Laser Institute doctors offer to pray with patients before surgery. At Walla Walla General Hospital patients can request staff to pray. Personnel announce "Code Love" over the intercom. All hospital workers who want to, pause briefly to offer a prayer for the person.



A story of healing prayer as evangelism comes from India.

"Doc, do you have a prayer meeting going on in this hospital? There are so many people

coming here. What an opportunity it would be to start a healing prayer meeting every Saturday.”

Dr. Philip from Puna Adventist Hospital in India looked at this former gambler, alcoholic and smoker, still stunned by the story the man had told.

“Most people thought I was a loafer, but for 35 years I longed to be changed. Every time I tried, I failed. I was fed up. A few months ago at the Khadki bazaar, I saw a house full of praying people and quietly joined the group. It seemed like the bearded lay-preacher spoke only to me, reminding me of my past life.

“At the end of the meeting, he prayed. And I had an experience I will never forget. I just couldn’t control myself. I wept and wept for quite a long time. I felt a longing to follow this preacher wherever he went.

“So during the evenings when I was free, I joined him. Over a couple of months, I had not even realized I had given up smoking, gambling and alcohol. I felt peace in my heart, and Jesus became my friend. I could pray to Him, and He listened to me like a friend and father.

“I began to witness to my workers in Bajaj Auto. I no longer skipped duty. Friends began to wonder at my changed attitude. Over the past six months, I have led many of my colleagues to Jesus Christ.”

Dr. Philip had known this man for years. Formerly he had come for many excuses for missed work. Dr. Philip had given up on him. Now he marveled at the remarkable change.

Dr. Philip liked the idea of a healing prayer service. Jesus had healed many people on Sabbath. In his experience, he had felt a significant healing presence on Saturday.

His former patient suggested that his preacher could help set up a healing prayer service. The preacher came a long way for several months, paying his own way. He invited Dr. Philip to join him in all-day prayer sessions on mountain sides.

Since 2000, the Saturday afternoon healing prayer service at Puna Adventist Hospital has grown. Fifty to 100 attend. Meeting on the badminton court, they sing, share stories of God’s working in response to healing prayer and most of all they pray. (McGhee et al, pp. 92-94)

It has been said that certain famous evangelists wouldn’t come to a region to do evangelistic campaigns unless the church(es) would pray for a full year first. What would happen if all churches prayed this way during all years? What if the burden of their prayers all the time was more on people who need God than on Aunt Martha’s broken hip, much though Aunt Martha’s hip (and her heart) is a good reason to pray?

**Prayer Walking:** Have you ever walked through a neighborhood praying for the inhabitants of each house as you walked? This is prayer walking. Prayer walking opens the praying person’s mind to see the needs. Prayer walking can be done alone, in small groups, or

larger groups. It is especially powerful if the prayer walkers are also watching for ways to put their hearts into real actions, whether official outreach events through the church as a whole, or just personal ways to meet the needs of those whose homes they are passing.

If walking with others, limit conversation to allow yourself to focus on prayer. If you meet someone greet them pleasantly and offer a silent prayer for that person. At times a person may feel impressed to meet the people in a particular house. One possible opening comment could be, “We are just walking through the neighborhood praying for people in each house. Is there something specific that you would like us to pray about today?” If a person answers, yes, and names a specific situation, then one could say, “Would you like me to pray with you now?”

However, suppose a person starts a prayer walk in a neighborhood without knowing anyone. No strong impressions come to initiate meeting any neighborhood residents. The big question comes, “What do I pray for?”

What are some things God promises to give us that everyone could use? (Write down ideas and corresponding promises on a whiteboard/blackboard/flip chart.) Here are some possibilities: Love, Peace, Guidance, Protection, Healing, The Holy Spirit, Wisdom, Forgiveness.

And here are some verses that promise to fill these needs. There are others.

Love—1 John 4:16-19

Peace—Isaiah 26:3

Guidance—Proverbs 6:3

Protection—Psalm 9:9

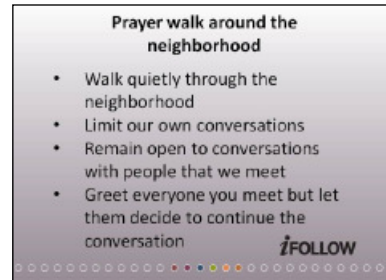
Healing—James 5:13-15

The Holy Spirit—John 14:15-16

Wisdom—James 1:5

Forgiveness—1 John 1:9

As we pray, we can remember this verse. “The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.” (James 5:16, NASB) A righteous man? Who is that? “There is no one who does good, not even one.” (Psalms 14:3, Romans 3:10, NASB) But we do not despair.

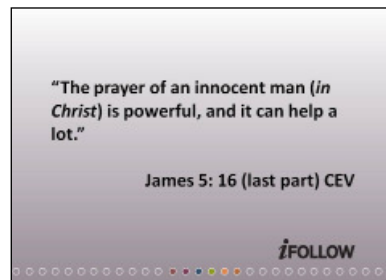
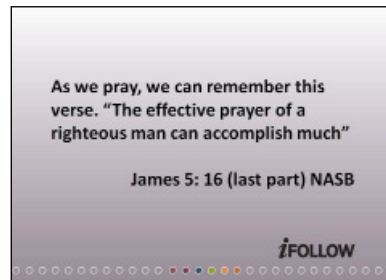




Remember, what I cannot do, Christ can do in me through His Holy Spirit that lives in me. As I hide myself in Christ, God sees me as innocent and righteous. God wants us to ask. Jesus told us to ask, over and over again.

As we claim Christ's righteousness in us, we lose pride in our own righteousness. When a prayer is answered, we don't know who among the group God was answering. Who hid themselves enough in Christ's righteousness to claim the answer? We don't know. It's useless trying to answer. The focus shifts to God's answer rather than who prayed the prayer. "The prayer of an innocent man [in Christ] is powerful and it can help a lot." (James 5:16)

Through our prayers God will help other people. Then they will know God, and they will pray for others, and they will pray for still others, and soon the whole earth will be filled with His glory and He'll come to take us home with Him, where once again, we will walk and talk face to face with God.



## Handouts in this Package

1. Prayer as Evangelism
2. Creative Ways to Pray
3. Some Promise Passages



## Additional Resources

Halvorsen, Ron (1995). *Prayer Warriors*. Fallbrook, CA: Hart Research Center.

Holford, Karen (2003). *100 Creative Prayer Ideas for Kids*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association.

Johnson, Kurt (2001). *Prayer Works*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association.

Lockyer, Herbert (1959). *All the Prayers of the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Maxwell, John (1996). *Partners in Prayer*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

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Morris, Derek (2008). *Radical Prayer*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association.

Rinker, Rosalind (1970). *Teaching Conversational Prayer*. Waco, TX: Word Books.

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## Discussion Questions

1. How is your prayer life? Are you happy and at peace about it? Do you feel a need for new life? If so, what will you do about it?
2. Which of the creative ideas for individual prayer appealed most to you? Do you have other ideas to share?
3. Do you have a prayer partner? If so, what are some of the blessings? If not, do you want to find one? How will you go about it?
4. Do you have a small prayer group? Do you want one? What are some of the issues that you want your group to pray for?
5. In what ways do you see prayer as evangelistic in and of itself? In what ways can prayer support more visible forms of evangelism?
6. How can we guard against defining evangelism so narrowly that all we do is have meetings and seminars, while neglecting personal and friendship evangelism? Do we pray enough separately and together, for our personal evangelism efforts?
7. On a scale of 1-10, how enriching and fulfilling is the public prayer life in your church? What will you do to help get it to 10?

## Group Activities

### Activity 1: Individual Prayer

**Purpose:** To experience creative forms of individual prayer.

**Preparation:** Look over the activity suggestions and prepare as needed. If you can go outside, that is best. If you cannot, then you will need stones and a bowl of water for Activity 2, paper or journals and writing materials for some, a safe place and way to make a small fire, etc.

**Assignment:** Choose one of the following activities. Take into account the location of the seminar and the environment available. Also take into account if you desire to encourage prayer about a particular upcoming evangelistic effort or for their personal ministries.

1. Have each person go outside, away from others, to a spot where each can speak quietly with God. Encourage them to use their own words as if talking with a friend. Encourage them to look around at God's creation and up to the vastness of the sky. Encourage each to tell God what's on their heart.
2. Have each person find a stone to represent a particular burden they carry. They can write the burden on the stone or merely think about the burden as they throw the stone into a lake, stream or large bucket of water in the room. Through action, they are making it real to themselves that they are asking God, the water of life, to carry the burden for them.
3. Pass out quarter sheets of paper. Have each person write down the things they'd like to be forgiven for or the anxieties that trouble them. After folding the papers, have each drop the paper into a fire.
4. On the beach when tide is coming in, have everyone spread out for privacy. Write or draw symbols in the sand close to the water. Claim God's forgiveness as the tide cleans and makes smooth. If not close to ocean, use a shallow stream or river and a long stick to write with. Ensure safety—no quicksand, undertow, swift, deep water. (Holford, Karen. 100 Creative Prayer Ideas for Kids. Pacific Press, 2003, p 44.)
5. For those who like to write, write out a prayer in journal form
6. For those who are spontaneously musical, sing a prayer. Or sing words of one's prayer to a familiar tune.

**Debrief:** Share experiences with the group if desired.

**Time:** Allow 15-30 minutes for private prayer, and another 10 to share.

## Activity 2: Partnered Prayer

**Purpose:** To practice prayer with a prayer partner.

**Preparation:** Before registration, here is a creative way to divide into prayer partners and small groups: During the seminar the larger group will divide into small groups of six to 10 and prayer partners of two or three. Depending on the number of people registered and the number of small groups desired, choose one Bible text from the Power Point material per desired small group of six to 10. Post these quotes on large paper in different spots around the meeting room.

Print each quote on 10 small cards of five colors. Within each stack of 10 cards, there will be two cards of the same color. Place the stacks of 10 cards each on the registration table. Have separate quote stacks for men and women. The cards chosen will designate prayer partners and small groups. While small groups work well with mixed genders, prayer partners should be of the same gender.

At registration, ask each participant to choose the quote that speaks most to him or her. Later the large group will divide into small groups based on the cards chosen. Participants will further divide into prayer partners (two or three) based on the color of the quote chosen. If there is an odd number of participants in a small group, meaning one person has a single color, that person will join the two people whose color is next on the rainbow.

**Assignment:** Have each person look at the card with the quote that they chose at registration and go to sit near the place where that particular quote has been posted around the room. This will be their small group for the term of the seminar. Next have them look at the color of their card and find the other person in their group who has the same color card. For this seminar, those two will be prayer partners. If there is an odd number in a group and someone has a color alone, have that one join the two people who are next to his/her color on the rainbow.

Have them introduce themselves to their prayer partner, find out just a bit about them, then share one favorite memory from their childhood. Now have the partners find a quiet spot where they can pray for each other. First they may share a personal need if they wish. Then they should share what their personal mission for God is, or that they are still seeking it. Have them find a promise that fits the situation and pray together, each praying specifically for the other, reminding God of the promise, asking Him to fulfill it, stating their belief and thanking Him for it.

**Debrief:** Do not share specifics of things prayed for unless they are public. But do share feelings and reactions to the experience of praying with a partner. Do you

think it helped that this partner was chosen on the basis of the fact that both of you responded to the same Bible text?

**Time:** Allow 10 minutes for people to find their prayer partners and do the first sharing. Be sure to discourage them from getting involved in chatting together. If they want to, it's a good sign that they are well matched, and they are welcome to talk all they like afterwards. Allow 15-20 minutes for them to share for prayer, look for their Bible promises, and pray together. Then allow 10-15 minutes for group sharing.

### **Activity 3: Prayer Groups**

**Purpose:** To experience the power of prayer in small groups

**Preparation:** You may simply have the groups meet and pray for each other and for whatever evangelistic efforts you wish to pray for. If so, you will need no special preparation, except for the Bible texts as explained above, in Activity Two, and to have room for small groups to meet in relative privacy.

If you choose to take the group on a prayer walk, then prior to the seminar ensure that the route for the prayer walk is safe. During advertising time, request that the participants bring good walking shoes and clothing appropriate for the weather.

**Assignment:** You may divide the group into the small groups or go as one large group, depending on the size of the audience and the neighborhood. Tell them: "We will walk quietly through the neighborhood, limiting our own conversations but remaining open to conversations with people that we meet who are out. Greet everyone you meet, but let them decide to continue the conversation or not. At the end of our walk we will pause at (designate a meeting spot; a park, a participant's yard or the building where the seminar has been held) to share, have one final prayer together and to end our seminar.

**Debrief:** Take a few minutes to share experiences from the prayer walk. If people have discovered needs in the neighborhood, take time to pray for those needs immediately.

**Time:** This will vary. If you have prayer groups meeting inside, allow about 15 minutes for sharing requests and expressing the evangelistic needs to be prayed for, and as long as possible, up to 45 minutes, for actual prayer. If you walk, you will probably need an hour or so for the whole thing, from giving instructions, to walking, to sharing at your final meeting place.

# Handout 1

**Evangelism** = the initiation or revival of a personal commitment to Christ

No better way to inspire commitment to Christ than to relate to God through prayer for others and with others. Prayer supports more visible forms of evangelism, and is also evangelism in its own right, both directly and indirectly.

## Individual Prayer:

- Any time
- Many forms
- Many places
- Many ways

## Prayer Partners

- Trusted friend
- Same gender unless married

## Claiming Promises

- Ask
- Believe
- Claim (Receive with gratitude)

## Small Prayer Group

Many ways to pray—around the circle, silently, with partners, one chosen to pray  
Conversational Prayer (one good way to be sure all are included and to deepen relationships, both with God and with others)

## Public prayer

## Healing prayer

## Prayer walk

- Combines walking and praying
- Opens one's mind to needs
- Alone, small groups or larger groups

“The prayer of an innocent man [in Christ] is powerful, and it can help a lot.”  
(James 5:16, CEV)

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## Handout 2

### Creative Forms of Prayer

Why be creative? Isn't prayer simply talking to a friend, and doesn't God hear in any case? Yes, to both. The purpose of adding creativity to prayer is not to change anything about the content of the prayer, but to recognize that God created you as a whole person with five senses and many abilities. When you use the following or other creative methods of praying, you will find that your prayer becomes more real to you. These can be aids to your faith. For instance, you already know that when you confess a sin to God He throws it "as far as the east is from the west." So when you write down that sin which has broken your heart, as well as others perhaps, and throw it into an ocean or into a fire, it can help you to accept and live in the forgiveness of God. It doesn't make His love or forgiveness any more real. It just makes you more able to accept it.

So try any of the following that appeal to you, and think of others as well. God is walking with you, listening to all you say, and waiting for you to listen, too.

- 1. Outdoor prayer:** Go outside, away from others, to a spot where you can speak quietly with God. Look around at God's creation and up to the vastness of the sky. Tell God what's on your heart. Then wait quietly for the thoughts and reassurances He will send you.
- 2. Let go of the stone:** Find a stone to represent a particular burden you carry. You may write the burden on the stone or merely think about the burden as you throw the stone into a lake, or stream. Through this action, you can become more conscious that God, the water of life, wants to carry your burdens for you. When you let go of the stone, let go of the burden, too. Ask God to show you specific actions He wants you to do to ease, lighten, or be patient about this burden.
- 3. Burn it up:** Write down the things you'd like to be forgiven for or the anxieties that trouble you. Fold the paper and consciously and deliberately offer it to God. Then drop the paper into a fire.
- 4. Out to sea:** On the beach when tide is coming in, write or draw symbols in the sand close to the water, of sins or things you wish to give up. Claim God's forgiveness as the tide cleans and makes smooth. If not close to ocean, use a shallow stream or river and a long stick to write with. Ensure safety; no quicksand, undertow, swift, deep water. (Holford, p. 44)



**5. Keep a prayer journal:** Write out your prayers in journal form. Keep track of changes in your attitudes and actions that come as a result of faithful prayer.

**6. Sing it:** Sing a prayer. Or sing words of your prayer to a familiar tune.

**7. Find a prayer partner:** Ask God to lead you to the person with whom you can have a blessed, deep prayer life.

**8. Prayer Walk:** You need to walk more, anyway, right? Walk around your neighborhood and pray for the people in each house. Those you know, you may have an idea of what to pray for. Those you don't know, praying for them may make you realize you'd like to get to know them better. This sort of walk won't just burn calories, it could change your whole neighborhood!

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## Handout 3

### Some Bible Promises

Here are some passages in the Bible in which God makes promises. As you look them up and read them, first decide into what category they might fall into, such as healing, protection, etc. List the category next to each text or in your prayer journal. Next, ask God what part of His divine nature He wants to build into you with this promise. Write that down, too. Ask Him to make you willing to have that characteristic, and watch for the ways He will use to do that.

Psalms 34

Psalms 37

John 16

John 17

Philippians 4

1 John 1 and 2

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