

# How to Spend a Day in Prayer

"I never thought a day could make such a difference," a friend said to me. "My relationship to everyone seems improved."

"Why don't I do it more often?"

Comments like these come from those who set aside a personal day of prayer.

With so many activities—important ones—clamoring for our time, real prayer is considered more a luxury than a necessity. How much more so spending a day in prayer!

The Bible gives us three time-guides for personal prayer. There is the command to "pray without ceasing"—the spirit of prayer—keeping so in tune with God that we can lift our hearts in request or praise anytime through the day.

There is also the practice of a quiet time or morning watch—seen in the life of David (Psalm 5:3), of Daniel (6:10), and of the Lord Jesus (Mark 1:35). This daily time specified for meditation in the Word of God and prayer is indispensable to the growing, healthy Christian.

Then there are examples in Scripture of extended time given to prayer alone. Jesus spent whole nights praying. Nehemiah prayed upon hearing of the plight of Jerusalem. Three times Moses spent forty days and forty nights alone with God.

## How to Go About It

Having set aside a day or portion of a day for prayer, pack a lunch and start out. Find a place where you can be alone, away from distractions. This may be a wooded area near home or your backyard. An outdoor spot is excellent if you can find it but don't get sidetracked into nature studies and fritter away your time. If you find yourself watching the squirrels or the ants, direct your observation by reading Psalm 104 and meditating on the power of God in creation.

Take along a Bible, a notebook and pencil, a hymnbook, and perhaps a devotional book. I like to have with me the booklet *Power Through Prayer* by E.M. Bounds and read a chapter or two as a challenge to the strategic value of prayer.

Even if you have all day, you will want to use it profitably. Lose no time in starting, and start purposefully.

### Prayer and Fasting!

"They are more ready for active labor than for humble devotion, more ready to engage in outward religious service than in the inner work of the heart. Meditation and prayer are neglected for bustle and show. Religion must begin with emptying and purifying the heart, and must be nurtured by daily prayer... There is need of fasting, humiliation and prayer over our decaying zeal and languishing spirituality" (4T 535).

## Wait on the Lord

Divide the day into three parts: waiting on the Lord, prayer for others, and prayer for yourself.

As you wait on the Lord, don't hurry. You will miss the point if you look for some mystical or ecstatic experience. Just seek the Lord, waiting on Him. Isaiah 40:31 promises that those who wait upon the Lord will renew their strength. Psalm 27:14 is one of dozens of verses which mention waiting on Him, as in Psalm 62:5, which says, "Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from Him."

Wait on Him first to realize His presence. Read through a passage like Psalm 139, grasping the truth of His presence with you as you read each verse. Ponder the impossibility of being anywhere in the

universe where He is not. Often we are like Jacob when he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not!" (Genesis 28:16, KJV).

Wait on Him also for cleansing. The last two verses of Psalm 139 lead you into this. Ask God to search your heart as these verses suggest. When we search our own hearts it can lead to imaginations, morbid introspection, or anything the enemy may want to throw before us. But when the Holy Spirit searches, He will bring to your attention that which should be confessed and cleansed. Psalms 51 and 32, David's songs of confession, will help you. Stand upon the firm ground of 1 John 1:9 and claim God's faithfulness to forgive whatever specific sins you confess.

If you realize you've sinned against a brother or sister, make a note of it so you won't forget to set it right. Otherwise, the rest of the day will be hindered. God won't be speaking to you if there is something between you and someone else that you haven't planned to take care of at the earliest possible moment.

As you wait on God, ask for the power of concentration. Bring yourself back from daydreaming.

Next, wait on God to worship Him. Psalms 103, 111, and 145 are wonderful portions to follow as you praise the Lord for the greatness of His power. Most of the Psalms are prayers. Or turn to Revelation 4 and 5, and use them in your praise to Him. There is no better way to pray scripturally than to pray Scripture.

If you brought a hymnbook you can sing to the Lord. Some wonderful hymns have been written that put into words what we could scarcely express ourselves. Maybe you don't sing very well—be sure you're out of earshot of someone else and "make a joyful noise unto the Lord." He will appreciate it.

This will lead you naturally into thanksgiving. Reflect upon the wonderful things God has done for you and thank Him for these—for your own salvation and spiritual blessings, for your family, friends, and opportunities. Go beyond that which you thank the Lord for daily and take time to express appreciation to Him for countless things He's given.

## Pray for Others

Now is the time for the unhurried, more detailed prayer for others you don't get to ordinarily. Remember people in addition to those for whom you usually pray. Trace your way around the world, praying for people by countries.

### Here are three suggestions as to what to pray:

1. Ask specific things for them. Perhaps you remember or have jotted down various needs people have mentioned. Use requests from missionary prayer letters. Pray for spiritual strength, courage, physical stamina, mental alertness, and so on. Imagine yourself in the situations where these people are and pray accordingly.
2. Look up some of the prayers in Scripture. Pray what Paul prayed for other people in the first chapter of Philippians and Colossians and in the first and third chapter of Ephesians. This will help you advance in your prayer from the stage of "Lord, bless so and so and help them to do such and such."
3. Ask for others what you are praying for yourself. Desire for them what the Lord has shown you.

If you pray a certain verse or promise of Scripture for a person, you may want to put the reference by his or her name on your prayer list, and use this verse as you pray for that person the next time. Then use it for thanksgiving as you see the Lord answer.

## Pray for Yourself

The third part of your day will be prayer for yourself. Again, let your prayer be ordered by Scripture and ask the Lord for understanding according to Psalm 119:18. Meditate upon verses of Scripture you have memorized or promises you have previously claimed from the Word. Reading a whole book of the Bible through, perhaps aloud, is a good idea. Consider how it might apply to your life.

"Lord, what do You think of my life?" is the attitude of this portion of your day of prayer. Consider your main objectives in the light of what you know to be God's will for you. Jesus said, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish His work" (John 4:34). Do you want to do God's will more than anything else? Is it really your highest desire?

Then consider your activities—what you do—in the context of your objectives. God may speak to you about rearranging your schedule, cutting out certain activities that are good but not best, or some things that are entanglements or impediments to progress. Strip them off. You may be convicted about how you spend your evenings or weekends, when you could use the time more advantageously and still get the recreation you need.

As you pray, record your thoughts on your activities and use of time, and plan for better scheduling. Perhaps the need for better preparation for your Sabbath school class or a personal visit with an individual will come to your mind. The Lord may impress you to do something special for someone. Make a note of it.

During this part of your day, bring any problems or decisions you are facing and seek the mind of God on them. It helps to list the factors involved in these decisions or problems. Pray over these factors and look into the Scriptures for guidance. You may be led to a promise or direction from the passages with which you have already filled your mind during the day.

After prayer, you may reach some definite conclusions upon which you can base firm convictions. It should be your aim in a day of prayer to come away with some conclusions and specific direction—some stakes driven. However, do not be discouraged if this is not the case. It may not be God's time for a conclusive answer to your problem. And you may discover that your real need was not to know the next step, but to have a new revelation of God himself.

In looking for promises to claim, there's no need to thumb through looking for new or startling ones. Just start with the promises you already know. Chew over some old familiar promises the Lord has given you before, ones you remember as you think back. Pray about applying these verses to your life.

I have found some of the greatest blessings from a new realization of promises I already knew, the familiar promises the Lord gives during these protracted times alone, and put the date and a word or two in the margin beside them.

Variety is important during your day of prayer. Read and pray a while, then walk around. A friend of mine paces the floor of his room for his prayer time. Rather than get cramped in one position, take a walk and stretch.

As outside things pop into your mind, simply incorporate these items into prayer. If it's some business item you must not forget, jot it down. Have you noticed how many things come to mind while you are sitting in church? It will be natural for things to occur to you during your prayer day that you should have done, so put them down, pray about them and plan how you can take care of them and when. Don't just push them aside or they will plague you the rest of the day.

At the end of the day summarize in your notebook some things God has spoken to you about. This will be profitable to refer to later.

## Two Questions

The result of your day of prayer should be answers to the two questions Paul asked the Lord on the Damascus road (Acts 22:6-10). Paul's first question was, "Who are you, Lord?" The Lord replied, "I am Jesus." You will be seeking to know Him, to find out who He is. The second question Paul asked was, "What shall I do, Lord?" The Lord answered him specifically. This should be answered or reconfirmed for you in that part of the day when you unhurriedly seek His will for you.

Don't think you must end the day with some new discovery or extraordinary experience. Wait on God and expose yourself to His Word. Looking for a new experience or insight you can share with someone will get you off the track. True, you may gain some new insight, but often this can just take your attention from the real business. The test of such a day is not how exhilarated we are when the day is over but how it works into life tomorrow. If we have really exposed ourselves to the Word and come into contact with God, it will affect our daily life. That is what we want.

Days of prayer don't just happen. Besides the attempts of Satan to keep us from praying, the world around us has plenty to offer to fill our time. We have to make time. Plan ahead—the first of every other month, or once a quarter.

God bless you as you do this—and do it soon! You too will probably ask yourself, "Why not pray more often?"

The purpose of a fish trap is to catch fish  
and when the fish are caught, the trap is forgotten.

The purpose of a rabbit snare is to catch rabbits.  
When the rabbits are caught, the snare is forgotten.

The purpose of the word is to convey ideas.  
When the ideas are grasped, the words are forgotten.

Where can I find a man who has forgotten words?

He is the one I would like to talk to.

—Chuang Tzu

Our society is not a community radiant with the love of Christ,  
but a dangerous network of domination and manipulation  
in which we can easily get entangled and lose our soul.

The basic question is whether we ministers of Jesus Christ  
have not already been so deeply molded by the seductive powers  
of our dark world that we have become blind to our own  
and other people's fatal state and have lost our power  
and motivation to swim for our lives.

—Henri J.M. Nouwen

# Making Your Prayer Life Effective

**1. Make time for prayer!** Unless it is a habit, your prayer life will always suffer. The solution is a consistent prayer habit. David says, "Morning by morning O Lord, you hear my voice; morning by morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation" (Psalm 5:3). David had learned the value of a systematic daily prayer habit. Don't try to find time—make the time for prayer daily.

**2. Find a quiet place for prayer!** To really enhance your prayer life we recommend that you find a special place for prayer. Jesus said, "When you pray, go into your room..." (Matthew 6:6). Our Lord was not speaking of just an attitude in prayer, but a specific place for prayer. Further, Jesus not only talked about this, He practiced it. Every Christian ought to have a special place for prayer.

**3. Recognize God for what He is!** All prayer should begin with a recognition of the nature of God because it is precisely God's nature that gives us confidence that our prayer will be answered. To recognize God's nature is called praise. The model prayer—the Lord's Prayer—begins and ends with praise. Praise is the gate pass to heaven (Psalm 100:4). Begin prayer with **ADORATION - "A."**

**4. Confess your failures!** Early in each prayer time we need to consider the matter of confession. The psalmist reminds us, "If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened" (Psalm 66:18). Scripture makes it clear that unconfessed sin blocks the channel between God and the pray-er. A daily prayer habit gives us special time to evaluate our spiritual condition. Confession is a prerequisite to powerful praying. Willful sin and prayer are totally incompatible. A vital part of our prayer should be this time of self-examination. **CONFESSION is the "C."**

**5. Thank God for what He has done!** Not only should prayer begin and end with praise, but it should be seasoned throughout with thanksgiving. Praise is defined as adoring God for what He is; thanksgiving is thanking God for what He has done. This involves "specifics." The next time you pray, make a mental list of all God has done for you. Review past gifts from God. Gratitude is a great atmosphere in which to petition the Father. **THANKSGIVING is the "T."**

**6. Bring God your needs and petitions.** Pray with God's Word. George Mueller, the great orphanage leader of the last century, was known for his tremendous faith in God as well as his powerful prayer life. Without a doubt the secret lay in the fact that George Mueller never prayed without an open Bible. He had learned the power of God's words to Jeremiah, "Is not my word like fire...and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces" (Jeremiah 23:29). Your **SUPPLICATIONS are the "S."**

**ACTS**, an acronym—for adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication—provides a structure for prayer.

**7. Don't give up!** Jacob provides us with a unique example of one who persisted until he received a desired blessing from the Lord. He said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me" (Genesis 32:26). Many believers begin their journey of prayer with great intentions, only to give up as the going gets rough. Persistence is a prerequisite to spiritual power. When it comes to prayer, we must declare as the psalmist, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is steadfast" (Psalm 57:7). Do everything you can to strengthen your prayer life. It is true that more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams.

**8. Meditate in God's presence.** Think about what you are reading in Scripture and how it applies to your life personally. Meditation is not only meaningful, but vital to balanced praying. Psalms begin with this statement, "Blessed is the man that...delights in the law of the Lord; and on His law he meditates day and night" (Psalm 1:1, 2). The only verse that mentions "success" is a command to mediate day and night on God's Word (Joshua 1:8). Ask yourself what you have learned of God from the passages of Scripture and how He is speaking to you.

**9. Sing a new song!** Many Christians are rediscovering the joy of singing aloud during prayer. In the Bible singing is vital in worship. Paul and Silas were arrested and jailed for preaching the Gospel (Acts 16:25), but were found singing praises. Since they did not have hymnbooks, their songs must have come from the heart. The psalmist spoke of this as "singing a new song." Because you are alone with God you won't have any embarrassment. Make up simple choruses, or sing some of your favorite hymns or choruses, and think of the words. It will be a new joy—just between you and God.

**10. Pray much for others!** Every prayer should have a significant portion devoted exclusively to praying for others. Christ's model prayer does not begin with **My** Father, but with **Our** Father. Not once does the prayer emphasize the personal pronouns I, me, or my. Christ's prayer says, give us, lead us, and forgive us. The emphasis is clearly on others—stressing the importance of devoting much of each prayer time to intercession.

**11. Pray for ministry—and for evangelism!** When praying for others, nothing is more important than their spiritual well being. Millions of people around the world are waiting to hear of Jesus. Pray for each of the pastors in your conference. Pray for the church officers and leaders of your local church and for the conference leadership. In 1 Thessalonians 5:12,13, Paul tells us to hold in high regard those who are over us in the Lord, our ministers, our pastors, teachers, and church leadership. Pray for the clergy, and for the lay members, that all will be used of God in reaching those without hope.

**12. Focus your prayers!** Intercessory prayer should be focused on specific needs, on our nation, and every nation of the world. David prayed, "Thou therefore, O Lord, God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen" (Psalm 59:5). Pray for specific pastors and church leaders by name. Pray for the members of your church. You may want to divide the directory into sections so that each day some part will be covered in prayer. If you are praying for the world, you could divide the countries into groups of thirty, praying for one of these groups each day of the week. Each week you will be able to visit the entire world, country by country, in prayer.

**13. Plan your prayer time!** Develop a plan before you go into your prayer closet. If you write your prayers, take your notebook, pen, highlighter, and Bible. If you use a structure of some kind, such as the Lord's Prayer, ACTS, or a prayer list, this may help you in your organization. Plan your time carefully and prayerfully, asking God to show you who to pray for and how to pray. Ask for His protection and guidance as you pray.

**14. Learn to fast and pray!** Fasting is the practice of deliberately abstaining from usual nourishment for the purpose of adding power to our prayer. Jesus made it clear that some spiritual victories can only come through fasting and prayer (Mark 9:28, 29). Set aside at least one meal per week, or even an entire day, for prayer and fasting. Focus this intense prayer on nations, individuals, or cities that seem closed to evangelism.

**15. Find a prayer partner!** Jesus, the Master pray-er, taught that praying with others increases prayer power. He said, "...if two of you agree on earth concerning any thing that they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven" (Matthew 18:19, NKJV). Our Lord made it clear that special power is released when two people agree on a given matter. Find a prayer partner who can join you at the same time you pray, even if they live hundreds of miles away, or find a person who lives close by, so you can get together regularly—in person, or by phone.

**16. THE REAL SECRET** Some have said that they believe that the real key to prayer—to knowing God and getting His answers—is learned from Christ. In Mark 11:24 He said, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." The first word to note here is desire, and this is the key. If you don't "desire," you probably will never get an answer to that prayer. Earnest prayers of faith for yourself or for others are meaningful.

Because praying is the most important thing we do, and because praying is strenuous, some often rest for just a few minutes before they pray so they can be at their best for their most meaningful work. God gives fantastic answers. Praying is exciting and meaningful when you do it the way Christ taught.

—by Dick Eastman

Adapted by Ruthie Jacobsen, with permission from *Every Home for Christ*

# Group Bible Study

## Discovery - Learning the Secret

Young people and adults are discovering steps to follow and are finding that the Word of God opens up in a new and more personal way. They are "discoverers," and are finding meaningful and personal truths in the joy of discovery. They're finding that Bible study can be fun! It is possible to find the process in Bible study engaging, challenging, and a joy.

There is value in team learning. This develops self-responsibility and helps exercise shared responsibility on the part of teammates. It requires some individual study, thought, sharing, and receiving.

Team learning increases satisfaction—each one is discovering different things. The satisfaction comes from your own discoveries and secondly through those received from others. No person can ever discover all of the riches in God's Word by themselves.

Team learning develops your creative potential. By practicing some of the skills outlined in this method, you'll discover some of the truths in Scripture and that others are enriched with your discoveries. Effective team learning is dependent on the willingness of all members to study, share, listen, challenge, and question each other. Through this process you will learn to clarify your own thinking, refine your insights, and broaden your concepts. You will discover that you have much more potential as a student than you realized.

A receptive attitude is valuable. God asks of me only an open heart and an open mind so He can reveal Himself and His truths to me.

William Barclay says, "It is only when truth is discovered that it is appropriated." When someone is told a truth, it can remain external to them, and can be easily forgotten. When led to discover the truth, it becomes an integral and unforgettable part of that person.

The pattern in many Bible study groups is for the leader to be the discoverer and share with others. The others in the group can quickly forget what is taught.

Practice, patience, and perseverance are needed for learning any skill. However, you will experience many joys:

- The joy of discovering truths in the Bible yourself.
- The joy of realizing that the Bible has something special to say to you personally.
- The joy of discovering your own potential as a student.
- The joy of sharing with others the truths that have special meaning to you.
- The joy of knowing that the Holy Spirit is the Revealer of truth as you seek to discover it in His Word.
- The joy of discovering Jesus Christ as the incarnate Word.

## Discovering with Others

You can become a discoverer in Bible study by yourself. However, you can multiply the effectiveness of your study by working together with others in a small group. While you may still have a leader to be your guide, your most significant learning will be from persons in your small group—from your team members.

With a methodical approach you will gain more insight and receive much greater satisfaction in your study. Often one process overlaps another. You will find that while one process leads to another, the procedure will be like a spiral in which you come back to previous processes.

The steps are Observation – Interpretation – Summarization – Application.

There is real value in doing one process at a time. Most of us have a one-track mind. We accomplish the most when we concentrate on one thing at a time. This is especially true when we first try to understand something, whether it is a piece of literature or a scientific problem.

## Observation

One of the most difficult problems in helping people develop their powers of observation is to get them to believe that it has value. Some feel that application is the most important aspect of Bible study. Others want to focus on interpretation, trying to find out what the commentaries have to say about a passage.

There are some specific things to observe—key words, advice, promises, reasons, results, contrasts, illustrations, repetition, questions, important connectives, atmosphere, and general structure.

## Interpretation

Begin by asking yourself questions. “I wonder why Jesus said the things He did? I wonder what He meant by what He said?” Asking yourself questions is a very important step in Bible study. It is the bridge between observation and interpretation. Ask questions for understanding.

The asking of questions has several purposes: to stimulate your thinking and to help you begin to identify those words, phrases, and statements that need interpretation. Maybe you thought you already understood these words and didn’t need interpretation, but when you begin to ask yourself questions about them, you realize that you need to interpret them in order to understand.

In seeking to interpret the message of Scripture, it is very important that you wrestle with meanings. Using a dictionary to find the meaning of words, then analyzing the context of the passage brings the Bible to life.

## Summarization

It will be helpful to pause and realize what you have gained and the meaning it has for you personally. Too often we approach a Bible narrative superficially. We may have heard the story so many times that it is commonplace to us, or we think of the story only in terms of its message and forget that these Bible characters were real flesh-and-blood people who lived in a certain period of history. Because of the superficial way we may approach the stories, we can be superficial in the way we interpret and apply them.

Be realistic. Try to view it in the context of the historical setting of that day. Beware of viewing it through twentieth century glasses.

Be imaginative. Most Bible stories tell only the bare facts. As you read a story, give it “flesh and blood” in your imagination. Picture yourself as part of the scene. Visualize what you would be seeing and hearing. Try to see and hear not only the words and actions of Bible persons, but also the tone of their voices, facial expressions, and bodily responses.

Be empathetic. Identify with a person, their problems, and their feelings.

## Application

Personalize Scripture. Pause and ask the Holy Spirit speak to you personally about what you have learned from Scripture and how He would like to apply it in your life.

Think about the truths you have been discovering together. What would you actually do if you allowed the Lord to change your thinking and your life in some specific area? What might be the outcomes?



## Discovery – Bible Study

1. Check the historical setting or background of the verses.
2. Re-interpret it and look up parallel passages.
3. Use the prophet's idea of applying this to other stories in the Bible.
4. Look at the context and who is speaking.
5. Choose one idea and study it out thoroughly.
6. If there is a prediction, look to see if it is accurate.
7. Complete the following grid for each passage studied:

Use the questions - WHO - WHAT - WHERE - WHEN - WHY - and HOW.

Under applications, apply the passage to your spiritual life.

Questions	Answers	Applications
Who?		
What?		
Where?		
When?		
Why?		
How?		

## Guidelines for the Group

1. **Have an open mind.** This is to be a positive learning experience. Someone's idea is not wrong just because it is different from your own.
2. **Keep confidential information confidential!** When someone makes a statement in a particular situation, this information is not to leave the group.

## Guidelines for the Leader

1. **We have two ears and one mouth.** It is NOT the role of the leader to preach. Ideally the leader should speak the least. Silence is okay.
2. **Use good eye contact.** When someone is sharing, make eye contact. Really focus on listening; concentrate on what is being shared.
3. **Affirm one another and be upbeat.** Suggestions:  
That's a good point.  
That's cool.

I hadn't thought of that.  
Right on!

Vary affirmation and be sincere.

4. **Use touch if appropriate.** Keep your group close when you're studying. Hold hands or put your arms around each other when you pray. Encourage hugs.
5. **Keep in touch with God!** Pray continually for the study and for each member of the group. Pray for the Holy Spirit to lead and to share the bigger picture.
6. **Use resources.** Use a Bible dictionary and other resources. There are people who are willing and able to help with any questions or difficulties.
7. **Use paper.** It may be helpful to write down questions, answers, and applications.
8. **Be unselfish.** Make sure it's the group that comes up with the neat ideas, cool thoughts, and awesome applications—not you! If they come up with something different from your original idea, GREAT! Don't make it fit you.
9. **Use their names.** It helps you get better acquainted, and they'll appreciate it.

## Group Facilitation Suggestions

1. Remember these three needs for the group—prayer, sharing, and Bible study.
2. Have everyone introduce themselves.
3. Try an icebreaker, such as "What did you eat for breakfast?" or "What did you like most at breakfast?"
4. Use eye contact and actively listen. Pray that Jesus will be seen.
5. Encourage all members to participate and don't allow one person to dominate.
6. Everything said is confidential. Nothing leaves the group.
7. It will be helpful to encourage each group member to commit to at least 30 minutes of Bible study and prayer daily.
8. Always be positive and encouraging, developing relationships in a safe environment.
9. No idea or thought expressed is bad or dumb.
10. Pre-place the chairs in a full circle—no back row.
11. Always energetically affirm their answers.
12. Good silence is when the group is thinking or looking up answers.
13. Bad silence is when the group is restless or talking on the side.
14. No application should be made by the leader; take it from the group.
15. Let the group get the credit for the answers.
16. Facilitate, get others to participate; don't teach or preach.
17. When specific needs are mentioned or discussed, stop and pray right then.
18. Be very energetic with a nonresponsive group.
19. Never appear to take sides in an issue. Be neutral and don't get upset.

20. Deal with problems outside of group time.
21. Groups of more than 14 don't work well. The best group size is 4-12.
22. Call your members during the week.
23. With large groups, meet with your group leaders before the groups meet, to instruct, pray, and study. Meet afterward to support and affirm each other. (If Jesus could do one thing for you tonight, what would it be?) You may want to have the groups or group leaders pray for the needs of the person to their right.

## **Suggestions for Members of a Group Study**

Joining a Bible study group can be a great avenue to spiritual growth. Here are a few guidelines that will help as you participate in studies:

1. These studies focus on a particular passage of Scripture. Only rarely should you refer to other portions of the Bible, and then only at the request of the leader. Of course, the Bible is internally consistent. Other good forms of study draw on that consistency, but inductive Bible study sticks with a single passage and works on it in depth.
2. These are discussion studies. Questions in these exercises aim at helping a group discuss a passage of Scripture in order to understand its content, meaning, and applications. Most people are either natural talkers or natural listeners. This type of study works best if people participate more or less evenly. Try to curb any natural tendency to either excessive talking or excessive quiet.
3. Most questions allow for a variety of answers. If you disagree with someone else's comment, gently say so. Then explain your own point of view from the passage before you.
4. Be willing to lead a discussion, if asked. Much of the preparation for leading has already been accomplished in the writing of the exercises.
5. Respect the privacy of people in your group. Many people speak of things within the context of a Bible study/prayer group that they do not want to be public knowledge. Assume that personal information spoken within the group setting is private, unless you are specifically told otherwise. Don't talk about it elsewhere.
6. We recommend that all groups follow a few basic guidelines and that these be read at the first session. You may wish to adapt them to your situation:
  - a. Anything said in this group is considered confidential and will not be discussed outside the group unless specific permission is given to do so.
  - b. We will provide time for each person present to talk if he or she feels comfortable doing so.
  - c. We will talk about ourselves and our own situations, avoiding conversation about other people.
  - d. We will listen attentively to each other.
  - e. We will pray for each other—in the group and afterward.
7. Enjoy your study. Prepare to grow.

9. Sing a new song! Many Christians are re-discovering the joy of singing in the Bible singing is vital in worship. Paul and Silas were arrested and jailed for preaching the Gospel (Acts 16:25), but were found singing praises, and their hearts were lifted up to the Lord. The prison took of this as "singing a new song." Because you are alone with God you won't have any embarrassment. Make up simple choruses, or sing your favorite hymns.

10. Pray for one another. Praying for one another is a beautiful part of the Christian life. Not only does the prayer emphasize the personal problem, but it also emphasizes the need for prayer time to intercession.

11. Pray for ministry. Praying for one another is a beautiful part of the Christian life. Not only does the prayer emphasize the personal problem, but it also emphasizes the need for prayer time to intercession. Praying for ministry is a beautiful part of the Christian life. Not only does the prayer emphasize the personal problem, but it also emphasizes the need for prayer time to intercession.

12. Plan your prayer time! Develop a plan before you go into your prayer closet. If you write your prayer list, you can pray for it more effectively. Praying for ministry is a beautiful part of the Christian life. Not only does the prayer emphasize the personal problem, but it also emphasizes the need for prayer time to intercession.

13. Plan your prayer time! Develop a plan before you go into your prayer closet. If you write your prayer list, you can pray for it more effectively. Praying for ministry is a beautiful part of the Christian life. Not only does the prayer emphasize the personal problem, but it also emphasizes the need for prayer time to intercession.

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15. Pray for ministry. Praying for ministry is a beautiful part of the Christian life. Not only does the prayer emphasize the personal problem, but it also emphasizes the need for prayer time to intercession.

16. THE REAL SECRET Some have said that they believe in prayer, but they don't pray. The secret is to believe that you receive them, and you shall have them. The real secret is to believe that you receive them, and you shall have them. The real secret is to believe that you receive them, and you shall have them.

Because praying is the most important thing we do, and because praying is meaningful, we should pray for just a few minutes before they pray so they can be at their best for their most important work. God gives fantastic answers. Praying is exciting and meaningful when you do it. Praying is exciting and meaningful when you do it.

—by Dick Farnham

Adapted by Ruthie Jacobson, with permission from Living Faith, Inc.

# Prayer Evangelism

## Ministry through Prayer

### I. Prayer is a vital part of a Christian's ministry (1 Timothy 2:1-4)

"Prayer is a necessity in our labor for the salvation of souls. God alone can give the increase of the seed we sow" (4T 528).

"Only the work accomplished with much prayer, and sanctified by the merit of Christ, will in the end prove to have been efficient for good" (DA 362).

NOTE: For the full impact of the preceding statement, study it in its context in the *Desire of Ages* chapter entitled "Come Rest Awhile."

### II. Bible examples of prayer as a type of ministry

Jesus for Peter	Luke 22:31, 32
The church for Peter	Acts 12
Paul for his converts	Colossians 1:9-14
Paul's converts for him	2 Thessalonians 3:1, 2
Timothy for all men	1 Timothy 2:1-4
Jesus for all His followers	John 17:20, 21

Notice in particular the specific blessings Paul requested for the Colossian converts as indicated in Colossians 1:9-14. Compare KJV with one or more of the modern versions. On John 17:20-21, see 4T 529-530 for a comment that shows that in His garden prayer Jesus included all His children to the end of time.

### III. Spirit of Prophecy examples or statements about prayer as a type of ministry

#### 1. Church members for their ministers and leaders

"Happy is the minister who has a faithful Aaron and Hur to strengthen his hands when they become weary and to hold them up by faith and prayer. Such a support is a powerful aid to the servant of Christ in his work and will often make the cause of truth to triumph gloriously" (4T 531).

#### 2. Pastors for their flock

"Following the example of Christ, he should intercede with God for the people of his care till he sees that his prayers are answered" (4T 267).

### 10 Things the Holy Spirit Does to Evangelize the Community through Prayer

1. Imparts compassion for the lost.
2. Brings repentance to the church and community.
3. Teaches us how to effectively reach our community.
4. Empowers Christians to witness.
5. Grants laborers for the harvest.
6. Guides our outreach.
7. Give means and resources.
8. Gives vitality and life to the church.
9. Brings unity.
10. Fills us with the love of God.