

Establishing a Prayer Ministry

A Manual For The Prayer Coordinator



Compiled and presented by:
Charles Burkeen
Director, Member Ministries and Evangelism
Oregon Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
19800 Oatfield Road
Gladstone, OR 97023
(503)850-3500

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WHY START A PRAYER MINISTRY?

- A separate ministry provides an opportunity for the church to be more intentional about prayer.
- A separate prayer ministry doesn't get lost among the other programs of the church.
- A Prayer Ministry can be the under-girding of other ministries and programs.
- A Prayer Ministry makes it possible to develop and organize other prayer programs within the church.
- Christ said that in the last days—in the days of the harvest—we should be praying. This provides a specific avenue for the obedience of this Scripture.
- When there is a special ministry and a designated person is responsible for the development of prayer programs and activities within a church, more people can become involved, more families reached, more intercessors become actively praying for others.
- More power is promised to the church as we pray, as individuals, families, and church groups.
- More prayer is needed in the church, intentional prayer for pastors, teachers, church leaders, and every member.

HOW TO START A PRAYER MINISTRY

1. *Wait on the Lord. Luke 24:49*

2. *Enlist others to pray with you.*

Matthew 18:16-20

3. *Set aside a place for prayer.*

2 Chronicles 7:12-15, Luke 11:1

4. *Make time to pray. Psalms 32:6*

5. *Intercede for others. Isaiah 59:16,*

Ezekiel 22:30

6. *Make a budget. Romans 14:12, Luke 16:2*

7. *Train others to pray. Matthew 28:20*

8. *Hold each other accountable.*

Matthew 16:27, Romans 2:6

THE PRAYER COORDINATOR

JOB DESCRIPTION:

The Prayer Coordinator is an essential element for a praying church. He or she is a person who will help to integrate prayer into the total life of the church and church calendar - at the conference level, and at the local church.

QUALIFICATIONS:

The person (or persons) appointed to this position should possess the following:

- a strong personal prayer life
- spiritual maturity
- gifts to organize, encourage, and give leadership in prayer emphases
- a good reputation in the church and the confidence of church leaders
- enough time to attend key pray events

THE WORK OF THE PRAYER COORDINATOR/TEAM:

One of the first places to begin will be to identify those people in the church who have indicated an interest in intercessory prayer.

Next, the Coordinator should research and evaluate the church's current prayer ministries - both at the conference and local church levels.

Establish a prayer group who will pray, plan, and communicate prayer initiatives.

The Coordinator will work with the pastors in the identification and selection of a respected person in each church to serve as the local church Prayer Coordinator.

Provide for training, suggestions, materials, and networking.

Help in the implementation of plans for prayer partners and/or individuals who are committed to daily prayer for specific people - by name - pastors, teachers, publishing and medical work, church leaders at the Conference, Union, North American Division and General Conference.

Some suggested avenues for exploration could be: Prayer in the Worship Service, Family Prayer, Prayer Telephone Ministry, Prayer Emphasis Week, Prayer Chains, Prayer Partners, Prayer Meetings, Senior Intercessors, Evangelism Prayer Groups, Prayer Retreats, Day of Prayer Activities, and Prayer for specific needs and events.

GETTING STARTED

When people pray, things happen! "Except for God's grace, prayer is the most abundant—and underused—resource available to the church." Where prayer has been emphasized, the church has grown.

"Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened." Matthew 7:7-8

Prayer is a resource available to the church at all times. A prayer ministry will make use of this resource and provide strength, guidance, and blessings to the church staff and members, and beyond into the community and around the world.

FIRST STEPS:

Churches that want to start a prayer ministry need to begin with prayer. God is eager for us to ask for help. He wants us to ask-and to keep asking.

The more time we spend in prayer at the beginning, the stronger the prayer ministry will be.

God gives confirmation through other people, through a sense of peace about a decision, and through His leading in circumstances.

We need to pray for God's timing. Waiting on God's timing makes the job easier.

SEEK A VISION

A vision provides a sense of purpose, direction, and motivation for prayer ministry. A lasting vision is not just a human idea.

Many people, when they have seen a vision, feel inadequate to carry it out. When we see the need and how great it is, we might very well feel inadequate to meet it. Many people in the Bible who received a vision from God and saw the task placed before them felt just this way. God assured Paul, as He assures us today that His grace is still sufficient for us, and His power is still made perfect in our weakness. (Paraphrased from 2 Cor. 12:9)

Communicate the vision to the group's members. The vision needs to be lifted up for others to grasp and follow. It isn't enough to share the vision once; it needs to be done repeatedly. Ask God to give clear direction. Seeking the heart of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit can take some time. We don't need to be in a hurry. It is God's ministry: He will provide all we need.

EXPLORE RESOURCES

What resources are available in starting a prayer ministry?

At the early stages, you might look especially for these three resources:

- A handbook or manual giving principles, ideas, and methods will be valuable.
- A resource person, with some background and experience in prayer ministry and in prayer ministry organization.
- At least one person who is willing to pray regularly for the planning, development, and implementation of the new prayer ministry.

It might also be helpful to attend a conference or seminar on prayer, especially one that deals with organizing prayer ministry.

PLANNING A PRAYER MINISTRY

Schedule a time for **planning**. But a plan is a flexible tool. Remember that a good ministry plan is dynamic, not static. Things change. A good plan grows out of the vision.

DECIDE ON KEY VALUES. There are a variety of possible values about the way the ministry will be carried out. A church might be most concerned about in-depth study and discipleship programs, versus a focus on reaching new pray-ers. Individual prayer, group Bible-study with prayer, and ministry have become central values in many places.

DEVELOP A STRATEGY. We need to ask God what form the ministry needs to take. Be sure church leaders understand and approve of the prayer ministry. Better yet, make sure the ministry has enthusiastic leaders who will lead by example. Recognize that people have different backgrounds and levels of Christian maturity, as well as varying schedules and commitments. Design ministries that will be suitable for people at several levels of maturity and prayer experience, and that will accommodate a variety of schedules. There are many creative ways that large and small churches can offer a variety of prayer experiences.

A WORKABLE MINISTRY PLAN

A useful, workable ministry plan includes the following elements:

- A compelling mission statement
- Practical goals
- Clear objectives
- Specific action plans
- Adequate job descriptions for key responsibilities
- A basic organizational chart showing who is responsible to whom
- A simple budget, if money will be spent

TRY TO STATE THE MISSION IN ONE CLEAR SENTENCE. For example:

The mission of the prayer ministry is to pray, teach others to pray, to study the Scriptures together, to provide prayer and ministry opportunities, and participate in the fulfillment of our church's vision and mission, as we are inspired by the Holy Spirit.

GOALS PROVIDE SOME DETAILS ABOUT THE MISSION PLAN. For example (and in fulfillment of the above statement):

Some goals might be:

1. To encourage people to pray and/or pray more.
2. Teach church members and others to pray.
3. Develop opportunities for people to become more involved in prayer, Bible study, and ministry.

OBJECTIVES WILL FURTHER DEFINE THE MINISTRY. They might define the steps needed to carry out a goal. Objectives might describe a cluster of activities that contribute to a goal. Too many objectives can be difficult to monitor. They need to be reviewed regularly.

ACTION PLANS - will outline the specific steps needed to fulfill each objective.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS let people know what is expected of them. They may be able to help in the development of their own job description. Identify the key positions, and describe the responsibilities. Try to make the job descriptions brief and simple.

SHARE THE PLAN. Ask for suggestions for improvement and/or confirmation of the plan. Share the plan to seek endorsement. Pray for God's wisdom and timing and for God to prepare the hearts of the presenters and the listeners to receive and embrace the prayer ministry.

- Begin with the people and groups who will give the greatest support. This will build both confidence and momentum.
- Next, share the plan with the leaders. If the leaders do not endorse the plan, do not present it to the church. Return to prayer, revise the plan, and/or try a different approach for winning support.

- Finally, when the leaders have given their support, present the plan to the rest of the church so everyone has a chance to learn about and support it.

PRESENT THE PLAN. The actual presentation could incorporate the following:

- Layout your plan, beginning with the vision.
- Ask for the group's input and listen to what they have to say.
- Assuming no strong objections have surfaced, ask for the group's support of the vision and plan.
- If objections have been raised, try to clarify what needs to happen before the plan can be adopted.
- Ask for the group's involvement in the new ministry.
- Finally, pray that all who are touched by this ministry will be receptive to it and ultimately transformed by it.

AVOIDING PITFALLS

When we begin to think about and implement a prayer ministry, we will most likely face a number of challenges. Challenges are not all bad. They often bring us to our knees in prayer. There are, however, some things we can do to avoid the worst pitfalls when we begin.

SET AN EXAMPLE. The example of a church's leaders is key to starting a prayer ministry. People who are not church leaders can act to bring about a vision for prayer ministry. Pray for the leaders, and enthusiastically support whatever ministry God is doing in the church. Wait patiently for God's timing.

START WITH THE BASICS. The way to begin learning about prayer is to pray. There are a number of simple ways to teach beginners to pray:

- Silent prayer
- Sentence completion prayers
- Short sentence prayers

KEEP IT SHORT. Short prayers are often the most effective. When we pray, we want to use everyday language. Use language that is meaningful.

CHOOSE A FOCUS. As in other groups, a prayer group needs a focus or purpose. A focus helps keep a prayer group motivated and organized. If a church has more than one prayer group, groups can be organized around demographics. Even groups that have a focus can benefit from selecting specific topics for prayer.

REPORT POSITIVE RESULTS. Both those who pray and those who ask for prayers need to hear about how God answers their prayers.

PRAYER MINISTRIES

Prayer is exciting and offers many opportunities for ministry. Choose the ministries that suit your church.

Help people grow. Start with something easy. Adapt ideas to fit your needs. Look for ideas from other places.

START-UP MINISTRIES:

- Staff Prayer
- Prayer Outreach (praying for interests)
- Prayer Cards
- Prayer Apps
- Prayer Calendar
- Prayer List for Special Needs
- General Prayer Chain
- Day of Prayer Activities

INTERMEDIATE MINISTRIES:

- Prayer Coordinator
- Prayer Vigils
- Prayer Partners
- Teaching Children to Pray
- Prayer Retreat or Seminar
- Personal Prayer Retreats
- Prayer Meeting
- Prayer Small Group
- Senior Intercessors
- Prayer Support Groups
- Prayer Groups for World Missions
- Membership Intercession Ministry
- Pastor's Prayer Support Groups
- Prayer-walking
- Prayer Breakfasts
- Prayer Emphasis Week or Month

ADVANCED MINISTRIES:

- Prayer Team Ministry
- Healing Prayer Ministry
- Designated Prayer Ministers at Church
- Prayer Telephone Ministry

EIGHT PRINCIPLES OF COVENANT DYNAMICS FOR PRAYER GROUPS

1. **The Covenant of Affirmation -- Agape Love**
"I will love you and affirm you no matter what you have said or done. I love you as you are and for what Christ wants to make of you."
2. **The Covenant of Availability**
"Anything I have, time, energy, wisdom, myself, finances, are all at your disposal. I give these to you and the covenant group in a unique way."
3. **The Covenant of Regularity**
"I covenant to give a regular part of my time to this group when it decides to meet. I consider that time to be of highest priority on my schedule."
4. **The Covenant of Prayer**
"I promise to pray for you, to uphold you, and to attempt to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit concerning your needs."
5. **The Covenant of Openness**
"I will show myself to you, letting you know who I am as a person in feeling, history, hopes and hurts; in other words, I will need you!"
6. **The Covenant of Honesty**
"I will be honest in my mirroring back to you what I sense and feel coming from you."
7. **The Covenant of Confidentiality**
"What goes on in this group stays here. I will say nothing that may be traced back or that could-be injurious or embarrassing to my covenant partners."
8. **The Covenant of Accountability**
"You have a right to expect growth from me so that I may give you the fullness of the gifts which God has bestowed upon me and fulfill my God-created designs. Therefore I will not languish in the process of growth."
 - "I am dead earnest about being in this group and about growing"

COVENANT DYNAMICS FOR PRAYER GROUPS

1. We will meet together at the time decided by a consensus of the group. Nothing will keep us apart at that appointed time with the exception of:
 - a. illness.
 - b. out of town on business or on vacation.
2. We will meet for the next 8 weeks and then evaluate our program to see if it is valuable to us.
3. Our sharing time will be kept confidential and will not be discussed outside of the group unless the one who shared is present or gives his consent.
4. We will spend a period of time in
 - a. study
 - b. prayer
 - c. possibly sharing
5. We affirm each other as children of God who need friendship and we plan to
 - a. be willing to listen to each other with openness and care.
 - b. be supportive of the needs of one another.
 - c. actively help where it is needed.
6. We will not consider this time together as a social, but as a study and prayer time.
7. We may wish to get together periodically for wholesome social functions.
8. We covenant to check on one another when one is absent without being judgmental or critical, but only to help.
9. Our small group will meet as long as we can positively contribute to the unity of the body of Christ--the church.
10. As Christians we are aware of the need to reach out into the community and will do so as long as we can make a positive contribution.

** This is only a suggested outline of the covenant elements your group may wish to adopt. Please feel free to adapt as your group wishes.*

HOW TO RECRUIT PEOPLE TO PRAY

- 1. Recruit from the pulpit*
- 2. Don't allow prayer emphasis to conflict with other major church events*
- 3. Print the purpose of prayer in your bulletin/newsletters*
- 4. Get groups to sign up for specific prayer times*
- 5. Put up a sign up board in church foyer*
- 6. Orient new members to your prayer commitment*
- 7. Have people commit to a certain term of prayer*
- 8. Emphasize special considerations (i.e. convenient times, praying together or single)*
- 9. Have "Prayer Captains" to be in charge of prayer for a certain day or week.*
 - a. They will pick up the sign-up sheet*
 - b. They will call to encourage people to pray*
 - c. They will thank members for their faithfulness in praying*
 - d. They will keep request and answers up to date*
- 10. Make public the results of prayer*

IDEAS FOR PRAYER MINISTRIES

1. *Develop a prayer hedge around yourself by getting at least one person to pray for you.*
2. *Develop a prayer hedge around your pastor.*
3. *Start a Prayer Request - Answer book for your church.*
4. *Start secret prayer partners.*
5. *Encourage the members of your church to find a prayer partner and pray together on a regular basis.*
6. *Develop a telephone prayer chain for your church.*
7. *Plan a prayer room for your church.*
8. *Plan a prayer retreat/seminar for your church.*
9. *Plan a prayer breakfast for your church or community.*
10. *Plan a prayer potluck.*
11. *Plan prayer concerts/vigils*
12. *Have a prayer walk for your community and as you walk pray for:*
 - a. *Leaders in your community*
 - b. *Famous people or influential people*
 - c. *Underprivileged in your community*
 - d. *Pray for specific groups*
 - i. *Single parents*
 - ii. *Young mothers*
 - iii. *Teens*
 - iv. *School children*
 - v. *Preschool children*

THE PRAYING CHURCH

What can *YOUR* church do to grow strong in prayer?

KEYS TO A PRAYING CHURCH:

1. PRAYING LEADERS ARE ESSENTIAL.

The church's greatest deficiency today is in prayer--not in programs, strategies, materials, or ideas. And the power for ministry can be released *only through prayer*.

2. GIVE PRAYER HIGH PRIORITY IN THE CHURCH'S LIFE AND MINISTRY.

It is impossible to explain the power and effectiveness of the New Testament church without reference to prayer.

Prayer is the most important work in the kingdom of God. It is a labor for which there is no substitute.

3. CORRECT THINKING ABOUT PRAYER IS IMPORTANT.

God rules the world through the prayers of His people. Christ actually meant prayer to be the great power by which His church should do its work.

4. CLEAR COMMUNICATION OF NEEDS AND ANSWERS TO PRAYER IS VITAL.

If we expect our prayers to make a difference, it is important to watch for the answers.

A simple way to increase the amount of effective prayer within a congregation is to effectively communicate prayer needs and answers.

5. PRAYER SHOULD BE LINKED TO MINISTRY.

Ministry without prayer becomes work in the power of the flesh. Prayer without ministry is complacent Christianity.

6. MAKE TIMES, WAYS, AND PLACES FOR PEOPLE TO PRAY TOGETHER.

This encourages consistency in prayer. Praying with others expands our prayer life. As we listen to others pray, we learn from them things that will strengthen our own prayer life.

Praying together not only strengthens our faith, but mutual praying makes the large task of prayer more manageable.

7. ENCOURAGE PERSONAL DEVOTIONS.

Private prayers are an indispensable part of every Christian's life. It is the highest activity in which any soul can engage.

In personal prayer we dare to look into our heart of hearts to discern those most private problems and issues we need to place before the Lord.

8. ENCOURAGE FAMILY DEVOTIONS.

If family worship is neglected, other attempts at prayer are like sprinkling the foliage of a plant with water while leaving the roots dry.

Family devotions should be part of every Christian family's experience.

BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES ON PRAYER

- God's answer is never a forced response. It is purely a gift of grace.
- You seek for God's will in your prayer--and in doing so you marvelously find your path fulfilled, your purposes achieved, and your desires responded to.
- He takes into account every prayer ever offered and is forever involved with us in charting the course of history.
- Here is the hope of our prayer: the kingdom of the enemy will fall and all its false pride will be exposed.
- The more we pray, the more our horizons expand and the more we come to expect from a supernatural, miracle-working God.
- When we short-circuit prayer we give our lives and ministry a secularistic or humanistic framework within which to work.
- Prayer is giving focus to the mission of the church.
- Does God exist to help fulfill *our* plans, or do we exist to fulfill the plans of *God*?

***God has chosen PRAYER as the key by which His church does its work.
Through PRAYER we impact the world for God.***

PRAYER IN EVANGELISM

10 THINGS THE HOLY SPIRIT DOES TO EVANGELIZE THE COMMUNITY THROUGH PRAYER.

1. It imparts compassion for the lost
2. It brings repentance to the church and community
3. It teaches us how to effectively reach our community
4. It empowers Christians to witness
5. It grants laborers for the harvest
6. It guides our outreach
7. It gives means and resources
8. It gives vitality and life to the church
9. It brings UNITY
10. It fills us with the love of God

10 WAYS THE HOLY SPIRIT WORKS IN THE LIVES OF UNBELIEVERS

1. It woos or draws to Jesus
2. It sends witnesses to testify to and unbeliever
3. It convicts of sin and guilt
4. It convinces unbelievers of truth
5. It opens the heart to believe on Christ
6. It regenerates or changes
7. It seals us in Christ
8. It gives new believers assurance
9. It develops the character of Jesus in the New Believer
10. It incorporates people into the body of Christ

WHY DO WE NEED PRAYER CENTERS?

1. It makes it possible to schedule prayer in a systematic way
2. It promotes agreement in prayer
3. It provides a place to register deeds of God in the life of the church
4. It shows ownership of the Churches vision to win the city for Christ
5. It gives advantages to evangelism
6. It provides a place to practice prayer
7. It has an inclusive impact on the church
8. It provides a quiet place to hear the voice of God
9. It provides a place for prolonged periods of prayer
10. It provides a place where people can make a commitment to Jesus Christ

SPEND AN HOUR WITH GOD

Spend an hour with God? It's easier than you think. Break it up into 5 minute blocks and focus on the following during each 5 minute segment:



1. PRAISE

Start your prayer hour by praising the Lord. Praise Him for things that are on your mind right now. Praise Him for one special thing He has done in your life in the past week. Praise Him for His goodness to your family. (Psalm 34:1)

2. WAITING

Spend this time waiting on the Lord. Let Him pull together reflections for you. Think about the hour before you and the things you want the Lord to do in your life. (Psalm 27:14)

3. CONFESSION

Ask the Holy Spirit to show you anything in your life which might be displeasing to Him. Ask Him to point out attitudes that are wrong, as well as specific acts for which you have not yet made a prayer of confession. Now confess that to the Lord and claim 1 John 1:9 so that you might be cleansed for the remainder of the hour before you, and then pick up and read the Word. (Psalm 51:1-19)

4. READ THE WORD

Spend time reading promises of God in the Psalms, in the prophets, and passages on prayer located in the New Testament. Check your concordance. (Psalm 119:97)

5. PETITION

This is general request for others, praying through the prayer list, the prayer cards, or personal prayer interest on behalf of yourself and others. (Hebrews 4:16)

6. INTERSESSION

Specific prayer on the behalf of others. Pray specifically for those requests of which you are aware. (Romans 15:30-33)

7. PRAY THE WORD

Now take the Scriptures and start praying the Scriptures as certain sections of Psalm 119 lend themselves beautifully to prayer expression. (Psalm 119:38-46)

8. THANKSGIVING

Spend these minutes giving thanks to the Lord for things in your life, things on behalf of the church, things on behalf of your family. (Philippians 4:6)

9. SINGING

Take your hymnal and sing a prayer song, sing a praise song, sing a song regarding soul winning or witnessing. Let it be a time of praise. (Psalm 59:17)

10. MEDITATE

Ask the Lord to speak back to you and keep a paper and pen handy, ready to relate the impressions that He makes upon your life. (Psalm 63)

11. LISTEN

Spend time merging the things you have read from the Word, the things you have prayed, the things you have thanked the Lord for, the things that you have been singing, and see how the Lord brings them all together to speak to you. (1 Samuel 3:9-10)

12. END WITH PRAISE

Praise the Lord for the time you have had to spend with Him. Praise Him for the impressions that He has given you. Praise Him for the prayer requests He raised up in your mind. (Psalm 145:1-13)

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 the Scripture of extended time given to prayer alone. Jesus spent whole night praying. Nehemiah prayed "certain days" 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. So lose no time in starting, and start purposefully.

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—"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 thing you confess.

If you realize you've sinned against a brother, 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, chapters four and five, and use them in your praise to him. There is no better way to pray scripturally than to pray Scripture.

If you brought a hymn book 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—then 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:

First, 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.

Second, 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."

Third, 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 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. If you are facing an important decision you may want to put this before prayer for others.

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 Saturdays, when you could use the time to advantage 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. Or 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. And 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 a while, 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; get some variety.

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 when you get back 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. And that is what we want.

Days of prayer don't just happen. Besides the attempts of our enemy Satan to keep us from praying, the world around us has plenty to offer to fill our time. So 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 more often!"

GUIDELINES FOR THOSE DESIRING ANOINTING

Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. And their prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make them well.
James 5:14-15

WHAT IS ANOINTING?

Anointing is a biblical rite established in the Old Testament and carried on into the New Testament. Priests and Kings in the Old Testament were anointed with oil as a symbol of the Holy Spirit coming upon them to lead God's people. The New Testament encouraged those who wanted healing to be anointed as well.

WHEN IS ANOINTING APPROPRIATE?

The Bible invites us to pray with anointing whenever there is a need, not only on one's deathbed. Contrary to what most people believe, anointing is not a last rite.

WHO CAN BE ANOINTED?

Any believer in Christ who has a need for healing and a desire to be prayed for may be anointed.

WHY IS OLIVE OIL USED FOR ANOINTING?

Olive oil was used for anointing in Bible times. The oil represents the Holy Spirit

WHAT CAN I BE ANOINTED FOR?

You may be anointed for any sickness, including physical, emotional, spiritual, mental, and social, as well as uncontrollable or addictive behaviors. People have also been anointed for depression, bad habits, mental problems, handicaps, or anything they feel Satan is bothering them with as well as physical illness. Some choose to be anointed to set themselves aside for service to God.

HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR ANOINTING?

Spend time in prayer with God. Ask Him to prepare your heart for the anointing. Ask Him to reveal any sins that are between you and Him. Confess these. When wrongs have been righted we may present the needs of the sick to the Lord in calm faith, as His spirit may indicate.

WILL I HAVE TO DISCLOSE WHY I'M BEING ANOINTED?

You do not have to mention specifically why you wish to be anointed. But those praying for you will need to know your need in a general way so they can know how to pray for you.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT THE SERVICE?

You will have the opportunity to share with a team of two people who will be doing the anointing what you desire to be anointed for. Remember this is for you – not for someone else. The team will gather in a circle around you, praying and claiming specific promises of healing for you. The elder on the team will touch your forehead with oil as they pray. You may ask a special friend or friends to accompany you and pray for you as well. Sometimes the group chooses to quietly sing a song after the anointing is finished.

HOW CAN I KNOW IF I WILL BE HEALED?

You can trust God to bring you healing, even if it is not the way you want or expect. Remember healing is not only physical but can come with forgiveness, peace of mind, emotional well-being, etc. Also realize God sometimes chooses to heal in stages. Some have lost their pain. Others have found relief through medical help. Know that on every occasion of anointing, God will bless in some way. Trust God will heal you as He sees fit.

Prepared by Peggy Casebier, Adapted by Ginny Allen

A FIVE FINGER PRAYER

- 1.** Your thumb is nearest you, so begin your prayers by praying for those closest to you. They are the easiest to remember. To pray for our loved ones is, as C. S. Lewis once said, a "sweet duty."
- 2.** The next finger is the pointing finger. Pray for those who teach, instruct and heal. This includes teachers, doctors, and ministers. They need support and wisdom in pointing others in the right direction. Keep them in your prayers.
- 3.** The next finger is the tallest finger. It reminds us of our leaders. Pray for the President, leaders in business and industry, and administrators. These people shape our nation and guide public opinion. They need God's guidance.
- 4.** The fourth finger is our ring finger. This is our weakest finger, as any piano teacher will testify. It should remind us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble or in pain. They need your prayers day and night. You cannot pray too much for them.
- 5.** And lastly comes our little finger - the smallest finger of all which is where we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. As the Bible says, "The least shall be the greatest among you."

MAKING YOUR PRAYER LIFE MORE EFFECTIVE

Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him.

SC 93

Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray, when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence?

SC 95-96

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 ..." Matt. 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 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 un-confessed 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 word to Jeremiah "Is not my word like fire ...and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces." Jer. 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" - Gen. 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, "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of."

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. The 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 passage 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 us 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 the expression, Our Father. Not once does the prayer emphasize the personal pronoun "I", or "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 on 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 Thess. 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, 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 210 countries into seven groups of thirty countries, 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, and Bible. You may also want a highlighter, etc. If you use a structure of some kind, such as the Lord's Prayer, or 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. A wise writer once said, "All men who have had spiritual power to prevail with God and man, have been men who learned to sternly deny themselves and keep their bodies under." 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 or 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 shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven" - Matt. 18: 19. 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 that 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 really, really "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 that 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.*

THE PERSONAL PRAYER AND FRIENDSHIP BOOKLET

1. Write name, address, and phone number at the top of each page of each person you want to develop into a Kingdom Friend.
2. Immediately under the address line, on line 1, write a word or phrase describing how you know them.
3. Ask God for ideas of things you and your friend can do designed to enhance your friendship. On each of the following numbered lines write the date of and describe the new activity.
4. Pray, by name, out loud, every day for each person on your list.
5. Invite each person to attend the Networking and Reaping Events as they take place.
6. At the bottom of the page note the activity they attended and the other Team members they met.
7. When all the lines are filled, write in the bottom-right corner of the page the page number where the person's activity list will continue.

Available from www.ShareHim.org, and as an iPhone and Android app

Friend's Name _____

Telephone _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

1	
	Date
2	
	Date
3	
	Date
4	
	Date
5	
	Date
6	
	Date

7	
	Date
8	
	Date
9	
	Date
10	
	Date
11	
	Date
12	
	Date

Events attended and other team members met:

Friend's Name _____

Telephone _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

1	
	Date
2	
	Date
3	
	Date
4	
	Date
5	
	Date
6	
	Date

7	
	Date
8	
	Date
9	
	Date
10	
	Date
11	
	Date
12	
	Date

Events attended and other team members met:

