



PRAYER PROMPTS FOR PRAYER GROUPS

Biblical Prayer Patterns for
Pastors & Prayer Leaders

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**THIS BOOKLET IS BIRTHED
OUT OF A DESIRE TO SERVE
PASTORS AND PRAYER
LEADERS AS THEY LEAD
GROUP PRAYER SESSIONS.**



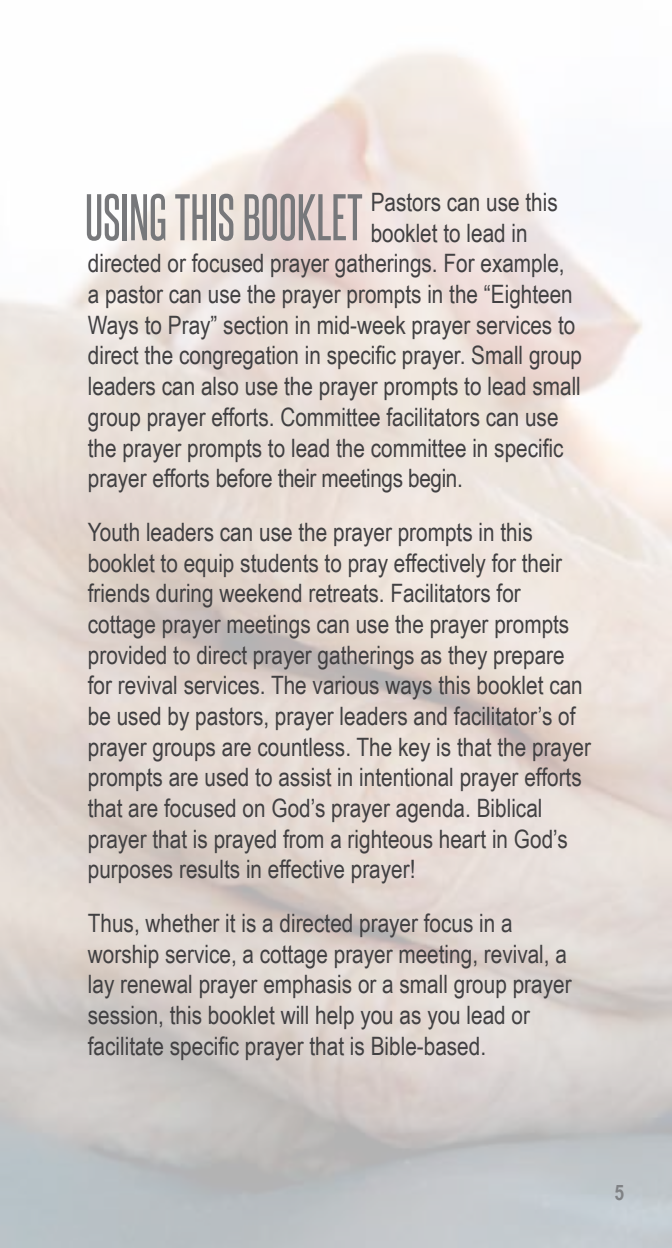
I BEGAN the Wednesday evening prayer service by asking for specific prayer requests from the group as a whole. Thirty minutes later, we began to pray for the multitudes of requests given. Maybe this was an isolated experience, but after years of traveling across North America, in and out of mid-week prayer services, I believe it is more the norm than not.

Many prayer services, meetings or small group prayer sessions end up being consumed by the recording of prayer requests, devotional thoughts that turn into sermons, or discussion sessions where various prayer needs are “discussed” for 30-40 minutes before prayer begins. If we are honest, most of the prayer requests that are given in the average prayer meeting are focused on felt or physical needs and have little to do with spiritual or Kingdom concerns. Therefore, what happens in many prayer gatherings is that little time is spent in true prayer that leads to the fulfillment of God’s purposes. This is a reality in the church in North America.

This booklet is birthed out of a desire to serve pastors and prayer leaders as they lead group prayer sessions. In Matthew 7:7-11, Jesus instructs His followers to ask, seek and knock while praying. Andrew Murray, the great South African pastor and theologian, once said, “God must give, we must ask.” In other words, God’s role in prayer is to give according to His desires, purposes and ways. Our role as His people and priests in His Kingdom is to be about our relationship with Him through asking, seeking and knocking in prayer. That is why it is imperative that pastors and prayer leaders alike become intentional and strategic as they lead others to pray. Hopefully, this booklet will provide valuable assistance for leaders who want to help praying Christians become more biblical and intentional.



**BIBLICAL PRAYER THAT IS
PRAYED FROM A RIGHTEOUS
HEART IN GOD'S PURPOSES
RESULTS IN EFFECTIVE PRAYER!**



USING THIS BOOKLET Pastors can use this booklet to lead in directed or focused prayer gatherings. For example, a pastor can use the prayer prompts in the “Eighteen Ways to Pray” section in mid-week prayer services to direct the congregation in specific prayer. Small group leaders can also use the prayer prompts to lead small group prayer efforts. Committee facilitators can use the prayer prompts to lead the committee in specific prayer efforts before their meetings begin.

Youth leaders can use the prayer prompts in this booklet to equip students to pray effectively for their friends during weekend retreats. Facilitators for cottage prayer meetings can use the prayer prompts provided to direct prayer gatherings as they prepare for revival services. The various ways this booklet can be used by pastors, prayer leaders and facilitator’s of prayer groups are countless. The key is that the prayer prompts are used to assist in intentional prayer efforts that are focused on God’s prayer agenda. Biblical prayer that is prayed from a righteous heart in God’s purposes results in effective prayer!

Thus, whether it is a directed prayer focus in a worship service, a cottage prayer meeting, revival, a lay renewal prayer emphasis or a small group prayer session, this booklet will help you as you lead or facilitate specific prayer that is Bible-based.

UNITED

PRAYER WORKS The Bible clearly demonstrates the power of united prayer. This is especially true with the early church. As the followers of Christ waited on the Holy Spirit they did so in united prayer (see Acts 1:14). When the disciples faced persecution in Acts 4 their response was united prayer (see Acts 4:23-33).

Also, when the church at Antioch was ready to send missionaries out to share the gospel and plant churches they sent them out in united prayer (see Acts 13:1-4). In all three of the above references, God advanced His evangelistic mission through united prayer.

Today, there is no doubt that God is calling His people back to Himself in a relationship-centered life of prayer (see Jer 33:3). Congregations and small groups alike are experiencing extraordinary moves of the Holy Spirit as they spend focused time in united prayer. Believers and whole congregations are being renewed and revived and lost people are being converted as God's people return to Him in personal holiness, deep cleansing and united prayer toward the Great Commission (see 2 Chron. 7:14).

One congregation in Conover, N.C., spent 30 days in cottage prayer meetings before having revival services. The scheduled 12 day revival turned into 35 nights of revival meetings as believers were revived, broken relationships were restored, wayward children returned to Christ and their parents, the lost were converted and a church planting vision was birthed.

LEADING UNITED PRAYER EFFORTS

As God calls His people to prayer, it is important for pastors and prayer leaders to prepare to lead congregational

or small group prayer times in an effective and focused way. Once while leading a Wednesday night prayer meeting I encouraged people to break into small groups and pray. I offered little direction to the groups only that they were to pray together for 30 minutes. I noticed that they either spent much of the time discussing what to pray for and then had little time to pray or some groups went quickly into their prayer time but finished praying early and were talking and laughing after about 10 minutes. The 30 minute prayer meeting lasted about 10 minutes. From that experience I recognized the need to have some kind of a plan or pattern to use to direct group prayer times.

Another challenge a prayer leader faces while leading united prayer times is helping the group focus on specific prayer requests and topics. Our minds tend to wonder when we pray if there is no definite structure or guide for our prayer times together. That is not to say that we should keep every prayer time so structured that there is no allowance for spontaneity in our praying. Remember that the necessary spice of any regular prayer meeting is variety.



THE NECESSARY SPICE OF ANY PRAYER MEETING IS VARIETY.

STRATEGIC

PRAYER Having a pattern, plan or structure in mind before leading united prayer gatherings also helps participants to pray strategic prayers. Strategic prayer is essential if congregations are going to be involved in the activity of God in their world. Jesus prayed in John 17:24 for His followers to be where He is working in the world so that they may experience the powerful presence of God in their midst. Strategic prayer efforts allow for informed and effective prayer efforts that focus on God's agenda.

In Acts 4:23-33, the first century church was faced with their first intense time of persecution. How did they respond? They united their hearts together in prayer. Not just any kind of prayer—but strategic prayer that was in tune with God's mission and His purposes. The key to leading effective prayer gatherings is to help others to pray God's prayer lists. There are numerous things to pray about. A pattern or plan of action that is sensitive to the context as well as Bible-based will help the prayer leader keep God's prayer agenda at the forefront of the praying. God-centered praying is strategic prayer at its best.



**GOD-CENTERED PRAYING
IS STRATEGIC PRAYER**

COMPREHENSIVE PRAYER

When leading group prayer sessions it is not only essential to focus on strategic prayer that is specific but also on comprehensive prayer. There are multiple directions in which a prayer meeting may be led. There is certainly no shortage of things to pray for or about. However, as a prayer leader you may ask, "How do I organize a group prayer session where we cover specific prayer needs and at the same time are faithful to the biblical mandate to pray comprehensively toward the Great Commission as taught in Acts 1:8? In other words, what areas of prayer should be covered in a group prayer session?"

One way to ensure a comprehensive biblical approach to group prayer sessions is to organize each prayer gathering around the following areas of prayer:

- Personal prayer concerns
- Congregational (corporate) prayer concerns
- Kingdom prayer concerns

These three areas of prayer represent the three major prayer patterns that are taught and modeled throughout the New Testament. The model prayer in Matthew 6:9-13 and Jesus' high priestly prayer in John 17, as well as Paul's prayers in his Epistles, fall into one of these three areas. Also, when you examine the prayer patterns of the early church in Acts you can easily identify personal, congregational and kingdom prayer patterns (see *Acts 1:14; 2:42; 4:23-33; 10-11; 13:1-3; etc.*)

BIBLICAL

HELPS FOR EFFECTIVE PRAYER

Effective prayer begins with Bible-based prayer. As you lead prayer gatherings be sure to remind believers of the following foundational prayer principles.

Listed below are seven foundational prayer essentials from God's Word that are helpful to keep in mind as we pray.

- Pray from a cleansed life and heart (*James 5:16*)
- Pray with perseverance and persistence (*Matthew 7:7-11*)
- Pray specific prayers (*Matthew 9:35-38*)
- Pray with a sensitivity to God's Spirit (*Psalms 46:10*)
- Pray Spirit-filled prayers (*Ephesians 6:18-20*)
- Pray in accordance with God's will (*Luke 22:39-46*)
- Pray with a view toward obedience and service (*Psalms 126:4-6*)



PRAY WITH A SENSITIVITY TO GOD'S SPIRIT

THREE APPROACHES There are many ways to lead a group in directed prayer. I suggest that you use one of three biblical approaches to direct others in united prayer.

1. The Scripture Text/Passage approach is simple and easy to use. It allows the leader to choose a passage of Scripture going verse by verse through the passage. The leader can break the passage down by phrases or sections if needed. With this approach the Scripture text is used to direct the subjects that are being prayed for. Also with this approach, participants can be led to pray the actual phrases of the Scripture passage that is being used. An example of this is Colossians 1:9-12, when Paul prays for the believers to be filled with a knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom, walk in a manner worthy of Jesus, please Jesus in every way, bear fruit in every work, strengthened with God's power and might, attaining steadfastness and patience, giving thanks to the Father for their inheritance in Christ. What a powerful prayer to pray for fellow believers!

2. The Scripture Theme/Topic approach is also a simple, but effective way to lead group prayer meetings. With this method, the leader chooses a theme/topic or themes/topics that are taken directly from Scripture passages. The passage itself is shared with the group and the major theme/topic represented in the passage is used to direct all or part of the prayer meeting. Topics can represent special occasions or emphases.

Some common topics that are used in mid-week or small group prayer meetings are: personal holiness, revival and awakening, missions, special events, evangelism efforts, the lost, believers, sickness, political leaders, military personnel, etc. An example of this would be the use of Acts 1:8. The theme/topic represented by this text is the Great Commission or Missions. Believers are then directed to pray for missionaries to be sent, the lost to be saved, doors to be opened for the gospel in their community, state, nation, world and for Christian witnesses to be empowered with the Spirit as they go.

3. The Acrostic approach is also a helpful and popular way to guide believers through strategic prayer gatherings. With this approach, participants are given a word where each letter represents a theme or topic for directed prayer. For instance, the word PRAY can be used to lead believers to Praise the Lord, Repent of sin, Ask God for specific prayer requests, and to Yield to God's will through specific prayer. Again, it is helpful to read Scripture verses that relate to the various topics represented by each letter of the acrostic.

EIGHTEEN

WAYS TO LEAD GROUP PRAYER

The following examples are included as suggested ways to lead groups in directed prayer times. Be sure to read the Scripture passages before you lead the group in prayer. Then use the prayer prompts (bullets) listed to direct the group in prayer.

As the leader, you will need to move the group along to each prompt. Give clear directions to the group so they can follow your lead through the prayer time.

It is also helpful to have soft music playing while the group/groups pray. In addition, it may help to intersperse praise choruses, additional Scripture readings or brief testimonies of answered pray into the guided prayer times. The below examples can be copied, altered and reproduced as needed. Try not to forget personal, congregational and Kingdom requests while praying through these passages.



1 MATTHEW 6:9-13

- Pray for believers to exercise the privilege of prayer (vs. 9a)
- Praise and adore the Father in prayer (vs. 9b)
- Pray for God's rule in lost people's lives through salvation in Christ (vs. 10a)
- Pray for believers to be about God's will in the world (*i.e.*, evangelization, vs. 10b)
- Pray for God's daily provision (vs. 11)
- Pray toward personal repentance, confession and healing of broken relationships (vs. 12)
- Pray for spiritual protection from Satan's temptations and ways (vs. 13a)
- Pray for the Father to be exalted and glorified as He answers these prayers in His power and might (vs. 13b)

2 JOHN 17:11-24

- Pray for believers to exemplify a Christ-like character before the world (*vs. 11*)
- Pray for divine protection from Satan (*vs. 15*)
- Pray that believers will live set apart and holy lives in Christ (*vs. 17*)
- Pray for Christians to be one in mission and purpose (*vs. 20-21*)
- Pray that believers will join Christ in His redemptive work and behold His glory (*vs. 24*)



3 ACTS 4:23-33

- Unite together and praise God as Creator and sustainer of all things (vs. 23-26)
- Thank God for His providential and sovereign work of salvation in your life and in your world (vs. 27-28)
- Pray for Christian witnesses to have a holy boldness as they share their faith with the lost (vs. 29)
- Pray for Christ to validate His work of salvation with changed hearts and lives (vs. 30)
- Pray for Christians to be filled with the Holy Spirit (vs. 31)
- Pray for a unified congregation where the focus is on powerful proclamation of the resurrected Christ (vs. 32-33)
- Pray for God to pour out His abundant grace upon your church today (vs. 33)

4 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-8

- Pray for specific needs in your community, state, nation and world (*entreaties, vs. 1a*)
- Pray for general prayer requests in your church and community field (*prayers, vs. 1b*)
- Pray for the salvation of specific lost people (*petitions, vs. 1c*)
- Praise and thank the Lord for specific answers to prayer (*thanksgivings, vs. 1d*)
- Pray for the salvation and spiritual growth of political leaders in your community, state, nation and world (*vs. 2*)
- Pray for the Great Commission to be fulfilled as God's people answer His call to take the gospel to their world (*vs. 3-7*)
- Pray for God's people to answer His call to unite in focused prayer for revival and spiritual awakening (*vs. 8*)



5 2 CHRONICLES 7:13-14

- Pray for God to show His mercy toward His people during times of judgment when the church needs revival (*vs. 13*)
- Pray for believers to return to the Lord in a prayer-centered relationship (*vs. 14a*)
- Pray for a spirit of sincere and genuine repentance and confession among God's people (*vs. 14b*)
- Pray for revival and renewal to take place among God's people as they return and repent of their sin (*vs. 14c*)
- Pray for God's redemptive purposes among the lost multitudes to be accomplished as revival comes to His people and they are sent into the world (*vs. 14d*)

6 EPHESIANS 1:17-19

- Pray for the Lord to give believers a “Spirit of Wisdom” as they live each day (*vs. 17a*)
- Pray for continued revelation from God’s Word through a vibrant intimate walk with Jesus (*vs. 17b*)
- Ask the Father to open your spiritual eyes to see more clearly the hope of His calling to salvation and service (*vs. 18a*)
- Pray that you and your church body will see and appreciate the riches of His inheritance that is found in each believer (*vs. 18b*)
- Pray that believers everywhere will understand and experience the surpassing greatness of His power that works in and through them (*vs. 19a*)



7

PSALM 2:8

PRAYING FOR MISSIONS

- Pray for a lost people group or a specific nation to hear the gospel (*visit IMB.org*)
- Pray that God would raise up and send Christian witnesses to the nations
- Pray for specific missionaries around the world to be protected spiritually, physically, emotionally and mentally as they share their faith in their ministry region
- Pray that God would open doors that man cannot shut for the missionaries to share their faith with lost people around them
- Pray for a liberty and boldness for specific missionaries as they bear witness to the resurrected Christ
- Pray that God would raise up prayer-laborers to intercede on behalf of the lost around the world

8

PSALM 51:1-19

PRAYER FOR PERSONAL REVIVAL,
CLEANSING & HOLINESS

- Pray for a spirit of humility and brokenness over the apathy shown toward God by believers
- Pray for God's gracious mercy and loving-kindness to be applied as God's people repent and confess their sin
- Pray for a spirit of honesty and integrity as believers confess sins and seek God's forgiveness
- Pray for God's Spirit to convict and convince believers of specific sins they have committed
- Pray that the Holy Spirit would deliver believers from the guilt of sin
- Pray for believers to be renewed and restored in the joy of the salvation they have in their relationship with Christ
- Pray that as believers experience cleansing and holiness they will be passionate about sharing their faith with a lost world



9 ROMANS 10:1-2

PASSIONATE PRAYER FOR THE LOST

- Pray for believers to have a passionate desire to pray for lost people
- Pray for Christians to have a heartfelt desire to share their faith with the lost
- Pray for the Lord to provide divine encounters between the lost and Christian witnesses
- Pray for specific lost people to understand their need for Jesus
- Pray for specific worship services and special evangelism efforts that God will open the hearts of lost people to the truth of Christ
- Pray that specific lost people will come under deep conviction of sin and seek forgiveness through Christ
- Pray for Christian witnesses to have boldness in their speech as they witness

10 PSALM 127:1-5

PRAYER FOR FAMILIES

- Pray for God to raise up godly families in your church
- Pray for the Lord to protect families spiritually, physically, emotionally and mentally from the temptations and deceptive ways of the evil one
- Pray that husbands and fathers will be godly spiritual leaders in their homes, loving their wives as Christ loves the church, and raising their children to love and serve the Lord
- Pray that wives and mothers will love and respect their husbands and seek to raise their children in ways that are pleasing to God
- Pray for Christian homes that are experiencing separation, hardship and divorce to be restored and renewed in the love of Christ
- Pray for single parent homes, that the parent will be strengthened and encouraged as they raise their children alone
- Pray for Christian children and youth to stand firm with Christ and reach out to their friends who are lost
- Pray for Christian families to live a life before others that will cause lost families to want to know Christ
- Pray that God would work through circumstances and events to draw lost families to Christ



11

PSALM 85:1-13

PRAYER FOR NATIONAL REVIVAL & AWAKENING

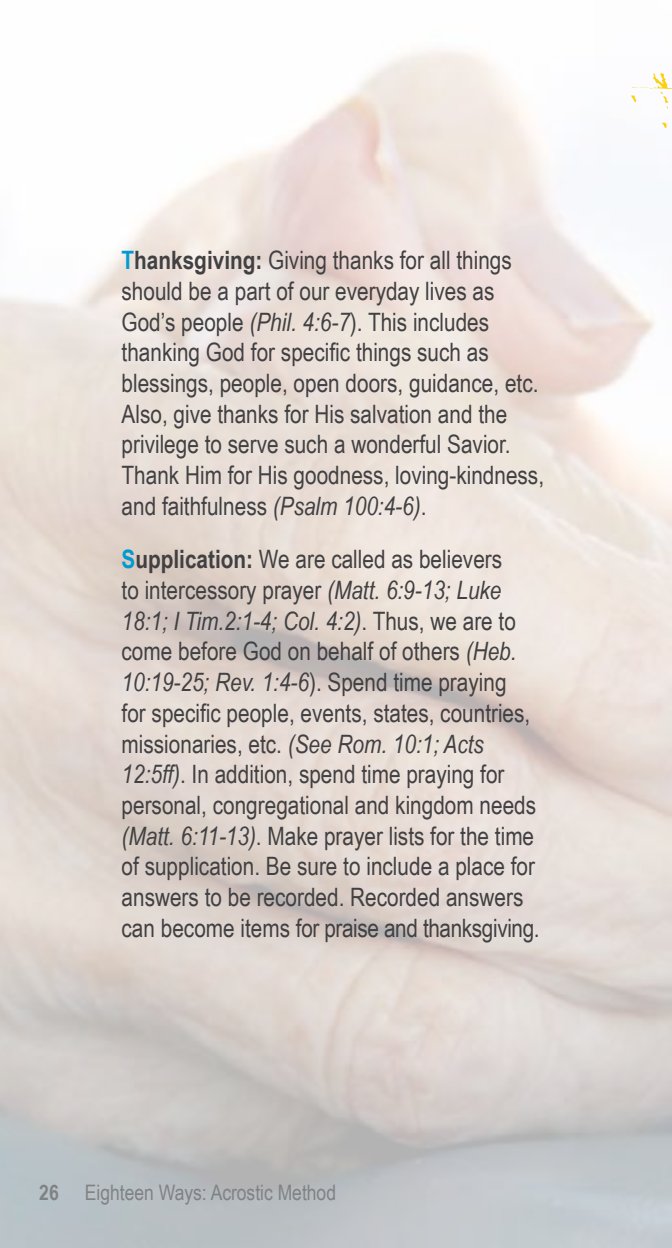
- Pray for God's people to be broken over their apathy and complacency
- Pray that God's people would assume responsibility for the moral and spiritual erosion that is taking place in the nation
- Pray for God to pour out His mercy on His people in the land
- Pray that times of national crisis would be subtle reminders to God's people that God is sovereign and righteous, a just God who desires that His people walk with and glorify Him in their time of need
- Pray that believers will not trust in military might or political agendas for change in culture
- Pray that believers will return to a true and genuine dependence in the God of glory to turn the nation around and change lives
- Pray for a spirit of prayer to spread like wildfire across the land where believers are returning to God and seeking His deliverance from the moral and spiritual famine in the land
- Praise God for His loyal love and mercy. Thank Him for His work and the blessings He has bestowed on His people in the nation
- Pray that God would revive His people and awaken the lost to their need for Christ across the nation

12 ACTS

Use the ACTS acrostic to guide your prayer time. These categories are broad enough to allow for adaptation to different contexts. This acrostic contains the major elements given by Christ in the model prayer (see *Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 11:1-4*).

Adoration: Spend time praising the Lord and adoring Him for who He is (*Matt. 6:9*). Use Scripture to praise Him (e.g., *Psalms 103, 145, 150; Rev. 4:8; 5:12-14*). Love and cherish His presence as He works in and through your life (*Matt. 22:32-34*). Be still before Him and enjoy His presence (*Psalms 46:10*). Also, use this time to allow God to speak to you through His Word and Spirit (*Psalms 40:1-3; 90:12-17*). Praise the Lord by praying Scripture or hymns back to Him (e.g., *Psalms 84, Rev. 4:8; 5:9-10, 12-13* and *Great is Thy Faithfulness*).

Confession: Confession should be a part of your continual walk with Christ (*Matt. 6:9-13*). Spend time asking Christ to search your heart for areas that displease Him (*Psalms 139:23-24*). Allow God to cleanse your heart of any unconfessed sin (*Psalms 51:10-13*). Be sure to spend time confessing and repenting (*turning away from*) of specific sins (*1 John 1:9*). Accept His forgiveness and cleansing (*Jer. 31:34*).



Thanksgiving: Giving thanks for all things should be a part of our everyday lives as God's people (*Phil. 4:6-7*). This includes thanking God for specific things such as blessings, people, open doors, guidance, etc. Also, give thanks for His salvation and the privilege to serve such a wonderful Savior. Thank Him for His goodness, loving-kindness, and faithfulness (*Psalms 100:4-6*).

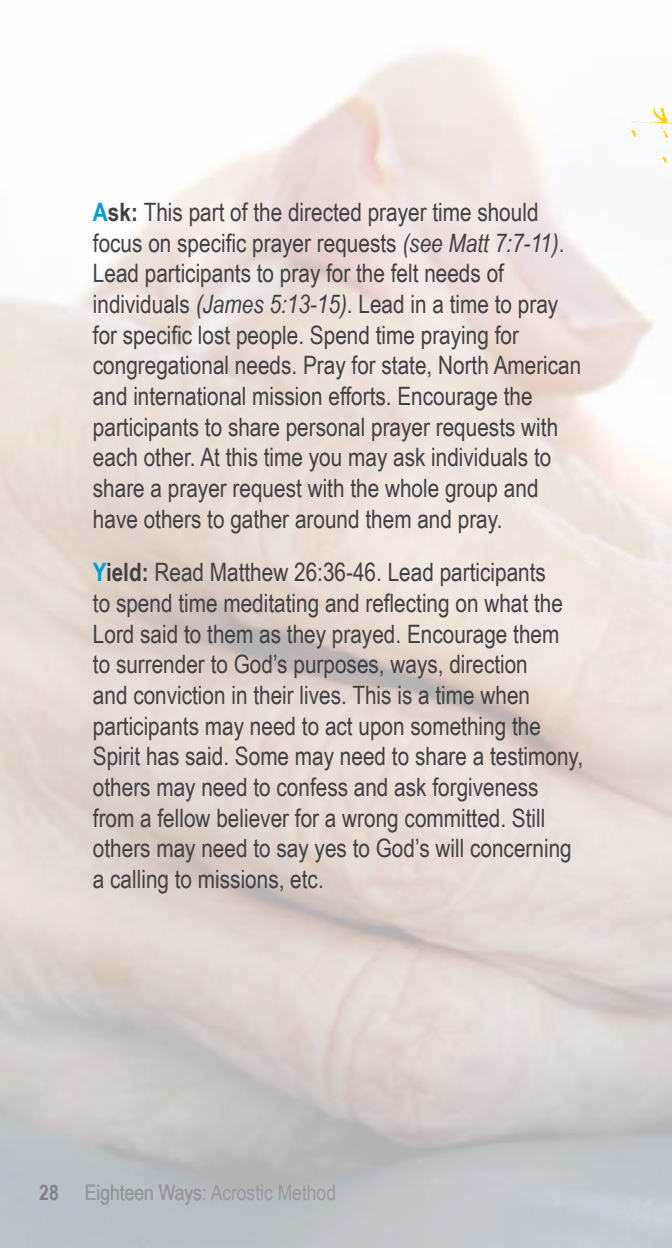
Supplication: We are called as believers to intercessory prayer (*Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 18:1; I Tim. 2:1-4; Col. 4:2*). Thus, we are to come before God on behalf of others (*Heb. 10:19-25; Rev. 1:4-6*). Spend time praying for specific people, events, states, countries, missionaries, etc. (See *Rom. 10:1; Acts 12:5ff*). In addition, spend time praying for personal, congregational and kingdom needs (*Matt. 6:11-13*). Make prayer lists for the time of supplication. Be sure to include a place for answers to be recorded. Recorded answers can become items for praise and thanksgiving.

13 PRAY

Use the PRAY acrostic to guide the prayer time. The pattern is similar to the ACTS acrostic. Be creative with the various ways you lead the people through each time of prayer.

Praise: Spend time praising the Lord using Psalm 100 as the basis for your prayers. Praise Him for His character, His goodness, grace, gifts and His work in people's lives. Praise Him that He is always working in the world and exalt Him for His beautiful creation. Encourage the participants to praise God with short sentence prayers that name His attributes (*Holy, Just, I AM, Pure, All-Powerful, Mercy, etc.*). Go through the alphabet and praise him letter by letter.

Repentance: Lead in a time of confession, cleansing and repentance. Remind the group that unconfessed sin can hinder the effectiveness of our prayers (*Psalm 66:18*). Read through Psalm 15 and ask participants to respond to the Lord personally. Encourage participants to spend time in silence, asking God to search their hearts for sin (*Psalm 39:23-24*). Ask participants to spend time thanking God for His forgiveness (*1 John 1:9*).



Ask: This part of the directed prayer time should focus on specific prayer requests (see *Matt 7:7-11*). Lead participants to pray for the felt needs of individuals (*James 5:13-15*). Lead in a time to pray for specific lost people. Spend time praying for congregational needs. Pray for state, North American and international mission efforts. Encourage the participants to share personal prayer requests with each other. At this time you may ask individuals to share a prayer request with the whole group and have others to gather around them and pray.

Yield: Read Matthew 26:36-46. Lead participants to spend time meditating and reflecting on what the Lord said to them as they prayed. Encourage them to surrender to God's purposes, ways, direction and conviction in their lives. This is a time when participants may need to act upon something the Spirit has said. Some may need to share a testimony, others may need to confess and ask forgiveness from a fellow believer for a wrong committed. Still others may need to say yes to God's will concerning a calling to missions, etc.

14

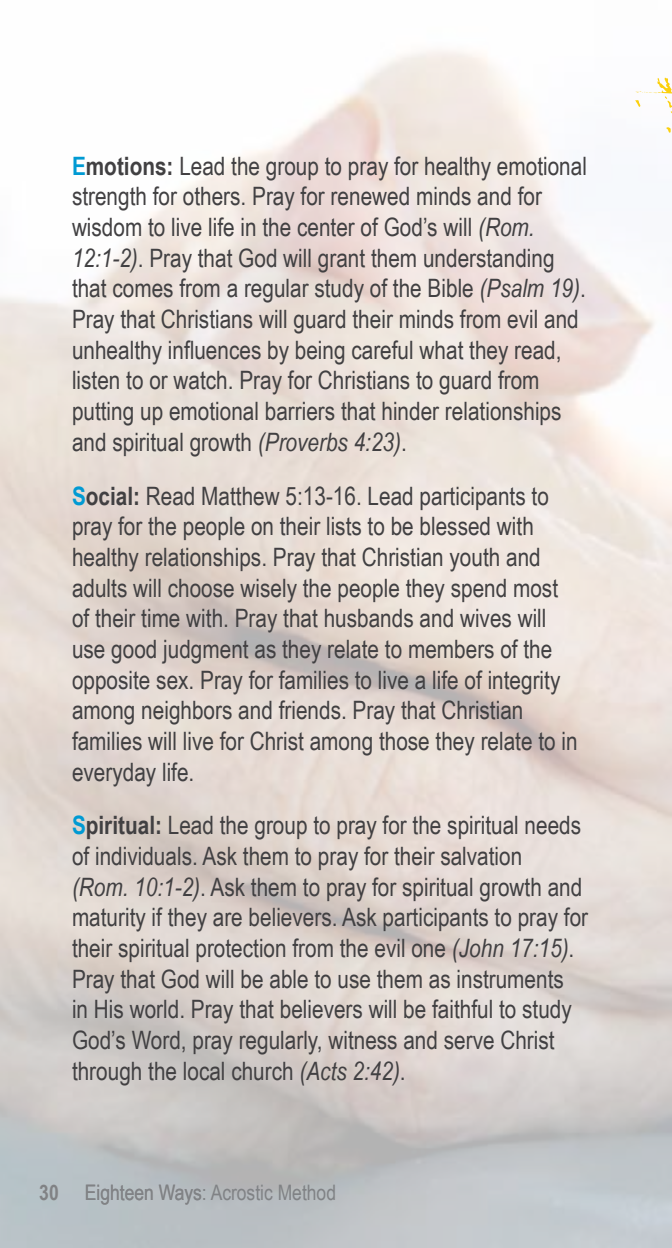
BLESS

Use the BLESS method to pray for God's blessings to be poured out upon people in churches, neighborhoods, communities, etc. This acrostic is an effective way to pray for specific lists of people including those in the church membership book, telephone book, neighborhood phone directories, military personnel listings, local community officials, etc.

Body: Spend time praying for the individuals and their physical needs. Pray for strength, health and physical healing where it applies (*James 5:13-15*). Pray that believers will desire to eat well and seek to keep their bodies fit. Pray that individuals will be strengthened with God's might and power (*Col 1:11*).

Labor: Lead participants to pray for God's favor to be upon the individuals. Ask God to grant them favor with Him and with man (*Luke 2:52*). Lead them to pray for believers to grow in wisdom and natural abilities so that they might advance in their work and have opportunity for greater influence for Christ. Pray that Christians will be careful to always walk their talk before fellow employees (*Eph 5:1-2*).

¹ *This acrostic was introduced by HOPE ministries. Suggested specific prayer portions have been somewhat adapted and/or expanded here. For the Hope ministries version see Alvin J. Vandergriend, Make Your Home A Light-House (Grand Rapids: HOPE Ministries, 1999), 31.*



Emotions: Lead the group to pray for healthy emotional strength for others. Pray for renewed minds and for wisdom to live life in the center of God's will (*Rom. 12:1-2*). Pray that God will grant them understanding that comes from a regular study of the Bible (*Psalms 19*). Pray that Christians will guard their minds from evil and unhealthy influences by being careful what they read, listen to or watch. Pray for Christians to guard from putting up emotional barriers that hinder relationships and spiritual growth (*Proverbs 4:23*).

Social: Read Matthew 5:13-16. Lead participants to pray for the people on their lists to be blessed with healthy relationships. Pray that Christian youth and adults will choose wisely the people they spend most of their time with. Pray that husbands and wives will use good judgment as they relate to members of the opposite sex. Pray for families to live a life of integrity among neighbors and friends. Pray that Christian families will live for Christ among those they relate to in everyday life.

Spiritual: Lead the group to pray for the spiritual needs of individuals. Ask them to pray for their salvation (*Rom. 10:1-2*). Ask them to pray for spiritual growth and maturity if they are believers. Ask participants to pray for their spiritual protection from the evil one (*John 17:15*). Pray that God will be able to use them as instruments in His world. Pray that believers will be faithful to study God's Word, pray regularly, witness and serve Christ through the local church (*Acts 2:42*).

15 AWAKEN

Awaken: Pray that Christ will stir your heart to your need to “awaken from sleep” and recognize God’s “kairos” time in your life and world (*Romans 13:11; Luke 19:41-44*).

Watchfulness: Pray for the Lord to give you a spirit of watchfulness and forgive any insensitivity and apathy toward the declining spiritual condition of the church in America (*Revelation 3:2; Mark 13:32-37*).

Acknowledge: Acknowledge specific sins before the Lord. Confess and repent of these sins. Ask Jesus to restore the joy of your salvation through cleansing and renewal (*Psalms 66:18; Psalm 51:10-13*).

Kingdom: Ask the Lord to kindle within your heart a passion to see His Kingdom come and His will done as you live a consistent life of godliness and holiness in your world (*Matthew 6:9-10; 1 Peter 1:13-16*).

Empower: Pray toward a Holy Spirit empowered life of witness and fruit as you surrender daily to Christ, His work and purposes (*John 15:16; Ephesians 1:19*).

Night: Pray that the night will linger, allowing time for the Lord to exercise patience, pour out His mercy and hold back His hand of judgment upon your life, His church and the lostness of America (*Romans 13:11-12; 2 Peter 3:9*).

16 HEARTS

Use the HEARTS acrostic to lead groups to pray biblically and specifically for the lost (1 Tim 2:1-4). It is best to break the participants into triplets or quads. Ask the participants to share two-three names of lost people with their group. Then lead them to pray through the acrostic. It is helpful to read the Scripture verses for each letter before the groups pray.

- Pray for Receptive **H**earts (Luke 8:5-15)
- Pray for their Spiritual **E**yes and **E**ars to be opened (Matt. 13:15; 2 Cor. 4:3-4)
- Pray for unbelievers to have and understand God's **A**ttitude toward sin (John 16:8)
- Pray for the lost to be **R**eleased from barriers and strongholds that hinder faith (2 Tim. 2:25-26)
- Pray for unbelievers to experience a **T**ransforming life in Christ (Rom. 12:1-2)
- Pray for Christian witnesses to be **S**ent to share Christ with the lost (Matt. 9:35-38)²

² This acrostic is adapted and taken from *Praying Your Friends to Christ* (Alpharetta, GA: North American Mission Board, SBC, 1997), 16-18.

17 GRACE

As you pray for specific needs in people's lives, pray God's grace into others' lives. This acrostic allows for strategic prayer to be directed toward the actual needs that are being expressed. It is also flexible enough to fit any prayer gathering or situation. One way to apply this model is to have those giving specific requests stand and encourage others to lay hands on those requesting prayer as they are directed to pray through the acrostic.

God's Nature: Ask, Who is God in light of this prayer request? Pray according to God's character and His purposes for the specific prayer requests that are given (e.g., *God is Sovereign God and sustainer in this prayer need, see Isaiah 40*).

Redemptive Purposes : Encourage participants to pray toward God's redemptive work in the specific prayer needs. Pray for God to work through repentance, renewal, to bring salvation, healing or to restore relationships as He answers prayer in each prayer need (see *Heb. 7:25; Matt. 6:10-11*).

Asking for Specific Results: Read Matthew 7:7-11 and encourage intercessors to begin this time of asking with a time to seek the Lord's favor as they pray. Encourage them to take each specific request to the Lord. Ask intercessors to pray for individuals and needs by name. Utilize and pray through, read or reference various Scripture texts that match the specific prayer need.

Confidence: Exhort believers to pray in belief with boldness and faith that God hears and answers according to His love, mercy and grace (*Heb. 10:19; 4:16*). Acknowledge confidence in His divine purposes and ways and ask the Father to grant those being prayed for the strength and ability to turn the need over to the Lord (see *Psalms 37:3-6*). Pray with confidence that God is the author of prayer and desires to work in and through the prayers of His people (see *John 15:16; John 17*).

Exaltation of Jesus: Challenge believers to lift high the name of Jesus who is eternally interceding for His followers (*Heb. 7:25*). Pray that Jesus will be seen and the Kingdom advanced as He answers these prayers in His time and ways (*Matt. 5:16*). Give thanks to Jesus that He hears our prayers and is sensitive to our every need (*Heb. 4:14-16*).

³*For more on this acrostic please see Terry Teykl, Praying Grace, Prayer Point Press, © 2002. The specific prayer prompts relating to this acrostic have been changed and adapted to fit the needs of this booklet.*

18 REVIVAL

There is no doubt that the church in North America needs revival. Revival only comes as God's people return to Him through repentance with clean hands and pure hearts (*see 2 Chronicles 7:14; Psalm 24:4*) Use the following acrostic to pray for personal and congregational revival among God's people.

Return: Pray for God's people to return to Him in repentance and personal holiness (*Acts 3:19*)

Eyes: Pray for the eyes of people's hearts to be enlightened to God's revelation and calling in their lives (*Eph. 3:18*)

Vision: Pray for God's people to envision what He wants to do through revival in North America (*Hab. 3:2*)

Involvement: Pray for God's people to pray and obey God's call to the harvest fields (*Matt. 9:37-38*)

Victory: Pray for Christians to be protected from the evil one through victory over his temptations and wiles (*John 17:15*)

Acknowledge: Pray for believers to acknowledge our desperate situation and dependence on God for revival and awakening (*2 Chron. 7:14*)

Lost: Pray for one lost person and a lost people group or world religious group (*1 Tim. 2:1-4*)

TIPS FOR LEADING GROUP PRAYER SESSIONS

The following ideas may prove helpful as you lead others in directed prayer times:

- Remember that flexibility and intentionality is the name of the game as you seek to offer an environment that encourages specific and spontaneous prayer.
- Try to keep your prayer time as strategic as possible. Keep the groups focused on biblical prayer that is centered on personal, congregational and Kingdom needs.
- Try to break up the way or order in which you lead the prayer time each week to offer some variety.
- Try to have prayer lists, cards, etc. prepared for the group(s) to help focus their prayer efforts.
- Keep the prayer time focused on the Great Commission while praying for people and their spiritual needs.
- Try different methods of prayer. Encourage “popcorn” prayers when participants use short sentence prayers. Try going through the alphabet praying scriptural promises for various requests.

**FLEXIBILITY & INTENTIONALITY
IS THE NAME OF THE GAME**

- When children are present be sensitive to their attention limitations and the length of the prayer time.
- Encourage Bible-based praying using suggested Scriptures and other Bible passages.
- As you direct the group(s) in prayer, be sensitive to the direction God is leading in prayer. Feel free to interject different or spontaneous prayer prompts as the Lord directs.
- Make sure everyone has the opportunity to pray but be sensitive to those who do not feel comfortable praying out loud.
- Make sure you begin and end on time while being sensitive to the Spirit's work in the group(s) during the prayer time.
- Be intentional as you direct the prayer time. You are leading the prayer time—be prepared and direct the time as God leads.
- Remind participants on occasion that the purpose of prayer is to meet and relate with the Father. It is all about a relationship, not just the activity of prayer. As Oswald Chambers once said, “The purpose of prayer is to get a hold of God, not of the answer.”
- Spend little time gathering requests and much time praying.

DIFFERENT

AVENUES FOR GROUP PRAYER

Prayer triplet list praying

Make a list of persons to pray for. Specific prayer on behalf of others results in specific answers to prayer (see *1 Thess. 3:10-11; 2 Thess. 1:3*). Encourage participants to get together with two other believers and pray for the people on their lists. The prayer triplet can become a prayer team that meets on a regular basis.

Prayerwalking

Lead groups to journey through their world and pray for others as they walk, run, bicycle, or drive. As participants prayerwalk they will be able to pray according to what they observe, know and are inspired to pray for (see *1 Tim. 2:1-4*). Break participants into teams of two or three and send them out into the community to prayer walk. Provide evangelistic tracts for the teams for divine encounters. Encourage teams to look for opportunities to share the gospel with people they meet. Be sure to contextualize the prayer walking experience. Some teams may need to prayer drive the community.



THERE IS POWER IN
UNITED PRAYER

Prayer visitation

Divide into visitation teams of two and not more than three to a team. Visit homes, hospitals, prisons, etc. and ask for prayer requests. Provide evangelistic tracts and information concerning the church for each team. This approach allows for open doors for believers to care and share Christ with others. As we pray for people and their needs, God builds relationships and opens hearts to the Good News of Jesus (see *James 5:13-18*). One way to begin the conversation is “Hi, we are from _____ Baptist Church and we are walking and praying for the community. Are there prayer concerns we can pray for?”

Cottage Prayer Groups

Unite with other believers in focused prayer in homes, businesses, restaurants, etc. There is power in united prayer toward the Great Commission (see *Acts 4:31*). Prayer groups can be as small as three and as large as wanted or needed. Each group needs a facilitator who will direct the prayer times and keep the group focused on strategic and specific prayer needs. Utilize prayer lists to keep the prayer times focused.

CONCLUSION

The need of the hour is for God's people to return to Him in personal holiness with a passionate desire to relate to him through fervent unceasing prayer toward the Great Commission. Believers, small groups and whole congregations can join Christ in His work through strategic, Bible-based prayer that is comprehensive and geared toward God's purposes, mission and glory.

As pastors and prayer leaders intentionally lead others toward united and God-centered prayer patterns, there is no limit to what God can do to advance His Kingdom in this world. Jeremiah 33:3 reminds us of God's promise to us as we return to Him in united prayer:

"Call to me and I will answer you and will tell you great and mighty things of which you do not know".
(NASB)

Hopefully, this booklet can be used to lead others to unite in comprehensive prayer efforts that are Bible-based and sensitive to the immediate needs of the times. Additional prayer resources are listed in the Bibliography.



THERE IS NO LIMIT TO
WHAT GOD CAN DO

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Dr. Schofield also enjoys a preaching and teaching ministry, which includes prayer revivals, conferences, retreats and evangelism training. He has pastored two churches full-time and often serves as an adjunct professor at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary near Wake Forest, N.C.

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