



THE PRAYER CLOSET

*Transforming Lives Through Intercessory
Prayer And Fasting*

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ISSUE 6

PRAYING FOR YOUR CHURCH'S FINANCIAL CONDITION

The use of money is a good indicator of how mature a person is in the faith. A person will spend most of his or her life working in exchange for money. Because of this, there is a very real sense in which his or her money represents the person. The way that a person uses money speaks volumes about who he or she is. It reveals what his or her priorities are. It is a testimony to what is in his or her heart.

The Word of God contains a surprisingly large amount of counsel concerning the use of wealth and possessions. It declares that believers are to be a good "stewards" of their money. This

means that believers are to manage money wisely. God's people are to use money to provide for their basic needs. This also includes the needs of their family. The Word of God denounces those professing believers that fail to take care of the needs of their family, "But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever" (1 Timothy 5:8). God wants believers to use money to provide for the basic necessities of life.

At the same time, God also desires that believers use their money to carry out ministry. This ministry is done in order to glorify God, meet needs, and advance His kingdom among men. God has chosen to finance this work through the giving of the believers. The bottom line is that ministry costs money. If the church is going to impact lives, God's people must give. The church carries out Christ's ministry through the financial support of believers.

This issue of *The Prayer Closet* will focus on praying for the financial condition of your church. In order to carry out ministry, God's people must give. It is therefore a necessity to pray for God's blessing on the finances of the church. Because of this, you will be given prayer suggestions concerning how God's people should use money. There will also be suggestions on how to intercede concerning the giving of the believers of the church.

ISSUE 6 - HIGHLIGHTS

PRAYING FOR YOUR CHURCH'S FINANCIAL CONDITION

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Yet, before we get to these things, we need a foundation on which to build our prayer requests. That foundation is the principles of giving from the Word of God. These are basic principles that God's Word presents concerning giving. They will give you a better understanding of God's view of giving. They will also provide you with insight on how to pray concerning this crucial matter.

The Principles Of Giving

The first principle of giving is that God owns everything that you own. The Word of God plainly teaches this:

- ◆ "The earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein" (**Psalm 24:1**).
- ◆ "Who has preceded Me, that I should pay him? Everything under heaven is Mine" (**Job 41:11**).
- ◆ "Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep my covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine" (**Exodus 19:5**).

The Word of God is teaching us that we really don't own anything. God owns everything; we are simply the managers, the stewards, of what He allows us to have. We are the temporary managers of what belongs to God. God also owns the money that you have in the bank even down to the change in your pocket or purse, "The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, says the LORD of hosts" (**Haggai 2:8**).

Giving is not a matter of asking, "How much of my money should I give to God?" Rather, it is a matter of asking, "How much of God's money should I keep for myself?"

The next principle that you need to understand is that giving is an act of worship. The Word of God declares in **Philippians 4:18**, "Indeed I have all and abound. I am full having received from Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God." In this verse, Paul is thanking the Christians at Philippi for the

financial support that they gave in support of his ministry. He calls the money that they gave "a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God." Paul compares their gift to an Old Testament sacrifice that people gave in worship to God. Paul is saying that their act of giving to the work of God was an act of worshiping God. When you give, it is an act of worship. Giving is a tangible way of adoring and worshiping God. You should not see giving as merely a duty or obligation. It is an act of adoring and worshiping the God who has blessed you. Your giving can be "a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God."

The Word of God teaches that our giving should be sacrificial and generous. Giving is not just for those who can "afford" it. In **Mark 12:41-44**, Jesus tells of a poor and common lady who gave out of her poverty. Jesus says, "Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood" (**Mark 12:43-44**).

In **2 Corinthians 8:1-5**, Paul tells of how the poor Christians in Macedonia sacrificed to support him and his ministry. He declares, "For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing" (**2 Corinthians 8:3**). These poor Christians struggled with poverty. Yet, they gave according to their ability and even beyond in order to support God's work.

Our giving must be sacrificial and generous. If your giving is not a sacrifice, then it is not sacrificial. You can give to God. However, you may not be giving sacrificially. Many believers give token amounts to the work of the kingdom. Yet, your giving is to extend beyond token amounts. It is to be characterized by genuine sacrifice and generosity.

Your giving is a reflection of your personal faith in God's provision. How much you give is a good indicator of how much you trust God to provide for you. The amount that you give back to God is a vivid indication of how much you trust Him to meet your needs. The poor widow in **Mark 12:41-44** is a fitting example of this principle. This woman was willing to give all that she had to live

on. She did this because she believed that God would provide for her.

A person's giving is going to be determined by one's trust in God to provide. The more that we believe that God will provide for our needs, the more we are willing to risk giving to Him. At the same time, the reverse is true. The less you trust God to provide the less that you will give to Him.

The Bible teaches that your giving should be motivated by love and not because of obligation. In **2 Corinthians 8**, Paul states that the Macedonian Christians were good and faithful givers (vv.1-4). He then tells these believers at Corinth, "But as you abound in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us—see that you abound in this grace also" (**2 Corinthians 8:7**). He desired that they too would excel in the grace of giving.

In verse 8, Paul makes a significant statement. He says, "I speak not by commandment, but I am testing the sincerity of your love by the diligence of others." He does not command the Corinthians to give. He does not use his authority as an apostle of Jesus. Instead of commanding them to give, he says that giving should be a way of proving their love to God.

This principle is made even clearer in the next chapter. **2 Corinthians 9:7** says, "So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver." Paul says that one is to give "as he purposes in his heart." He is saying that giving is to be measured in the heart. The standard for giving is your love for God.

God does not send you a bill. Your giving needs to be motivated by your love for Him. How much you give of what you have should be a reflection of how much you love God. Your love for God should be the standard for how much you give.

The Word of God teaches that you should give cheerfully and willingly. In **2 Corinthians 9:7**, Paul writes that the believer is to give "not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver." God does not want you to give because you feel that you have to. He does not want you to give with a grudge; that is, you give in spite of the fact that you don't want to. God wants you to give because you want to give. Robert Rodenmeyer wrote, "There are three kinds of giving: grudge

giving, duty giving, and thanksgiving. Grudge giving says, 'I have to'; duty giving says, 'I ought to'; thanksgiving says, 'I want to'".

When you give, you should remember that you are giving to God. Think about what God has done for you. He has created you. He has sustained you. He has blessed you. He has given you the greatest possible gift of all, His Son, Jesus Christ. He has provided for you. When you consider that you are giving to Him, it should cause you to give cheerfully and willingly.

The Bible teaches that giving reflects one's spiritual trustworthiness. In **Luke 16:10-13**, Jesus Christ says, "Therefore, if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" A believer is untrustworthy to handle spiritual riches if he or she is not faithful with the money that God grants. This would certainly include the believer's giving to the work of the kingdom.

If a believer is not faithful in using and giving money, he or she will not be faithful in spiritual matters. The reason is that your use of money indicates your priorities. When a person gives sacrificially and faithfully, it reveals that his or her heart is right with God. When a believer surrenders to Jesus the rights over every dollar that he or she makes and ever will make, that believer is ready to handle greater spiritual responsibilities. That is why it is said that your checkbook tells more about you than almost anything else. It will reveal your spiritual trustworthiness. It will show how much Kingdom responsibility God can entrust to you.

Another biblical principle concerning giving is that your giving should be planned and systematic. In **1 Corinthians 16:1-2**, the apostle Paul directs the Corinthian Christians on how to give. He says, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also. On the first day of the week let each of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come." Paul states that the believers needed to give "on the first day of the week". People are paid in varying ways: every week, every two weeks, or once a month. This will determine when you give your main gift. Yet, you should not appear empty-handed before the Lord when you come to worship Him. Yet, you should plan to give each Lord's day

even if you are only giving a small amount of pocket cash or change when you aren't giving your main gift.

Second, Paul says "let each of you" give. He is teaching that every believer should give. All believers are to give. No one can excuse himself or herself from this. Every believer should plan to give regardless of age or circumstance.

Paul's final instruction about planned and systematic giving is that it should be "as he may prosper." In other words, the more you prosper, the higher should be the proportion of your giving. There should be no percentage goal in your giving. It should be as God blesses. Giving 10 percent is not a ceiling of giving to stop at, but a floor to move from.

The Bible teaches that generous and sacrificial giving will result in abundant blessing. God will bless the generous giving of His people. The Lord Jesus Christ says, "Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you" (Luke 6:38). The apostle Paul declares, "But I say this: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully . . . And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having sufficiency in all things, have an abundance for every good work" (2 Corinthians 9:6, 8).

These verses are teaching that God will bless the believer if he or she gives generously. If you give to God, He will give to you. If you give bountifully to Him, He will pour out abundant blessings on you. These blessings may not be money. There may be other blessings that God grants to you because of your generosity. Yet, you can trust that God will bless your generosity. He will not let this go unnoticed.

It is important to remember that many of God's blessings for your giving will not come in this life. This is why Jesus says, "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal" (Matthew 6:20). There will come a definite time in a real place when God will reward the believer for what he or she has given generously and cheerfully. You can count on blessings in this life and in the next if you bountifully and generously give to God.

A final biblical principle concerning giving is that it is an appropriate response to human need. Believers should give spontaneously and freely when there is the real need in peoples' lives. There are at least three occasions in the book of Acts when early Christians gave in response to specific needs. The first occasion is Acts 2:44-45, "Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need." Many of the believers who had been saved and added to the church at Pentecost were visitors to Jerusalem. These visitors unexpectedly stayed in Jerusalem because of their new faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. These people had no home, no job, and no way to provide for their needs. In order to meet this unique problem, the early church gave generously and sacrificially.

In Acts 4:32-35, these Christians gave generously to meet the specific needs of fellow brothers and sister in Christ. Luke writes in Acts 4:34-35, "Nor was there any among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need." These early believers responded by generously giving to those who had real needs.

There is another example of the early church giving generously to meet needs. In this example, the church's giving is not directed to believers in the local church. This time they could not see the people who needed help. This example is found in Acts 11:27-30. A devastating famine had hit in Judea. The Christian community in Jerusalem was suffering through this. The Christians at Antioch gave generously to help meet their needs. Three hundred miles separated these believers. Yet, they gave sacrificially to help feed and meet the needs of their fellow believers in Jerusalem.

There is a place for spontaneous and generous giving. God honors and blesses this type of sacrifice. Most of a believer's giving should be planned and systematic. Yet, a believer should always be open to times of spontaneous giving.

In this section, we have established biblical principles for giving. By doing this, we have laid a foundation for our praying. Our praying must have the Word of God as its foundation. When we understand what the Word of God teaches, we can then pray with power and authority. Now that we

see the biblical principles of giving, we can pray with greater authority and faith.

In order to intercede for your church's financial condition, you need to intercede concerning two areas. The first area is a lifestyle of stewardship. The believers of your church need to have a lifestyle that acknowledges God as the Source of blessing. They need to develop a heart for giving. The second area is praying the principles of giving. You can pray that God would instill these principles into the heart of the people. You can also plead for Him to move them to put these principles into practice.

Praying For A Lifestyle of Giving

The following are Scripture prayers that you can use to pray for a lifestyle of giving. What I mean by a "lifestyle of giving" is that you will have a godly attitude toward your possessions that will lead you to faithful and sacrificial giving. In order to honor God through your giving, this attitude is a necessity. You can use these Scripture prayers to pray for yourself concerning this issue. You might also consider using these prayers to intercede for the other believers of the church. You can plead with God to create within the believers a godly attitude toward their possessions.

Heavenly Father, I pray that the believers of _____ Church would seek You and depend on You daily for the provision of his/her needs (Matthew 6:11).

I ask that spiritual matters and not earthly concerns will be the top priority of the believers of _____ Church (Matthew 6:21).

I plead that the believers of _____ Church would not be in bondage to material things and to the pursuit of those things (Matthew 6:24).

I plead that the believers of _____ Church would not lay up treasures for themselves on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but that the believers of _____ would lay up treasures in heaven for themselves where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal (Matthew 6:19-20).

I ask that the believers of _____ Church would not worry about material possessions. Teach the believers of _____ Church that worrying will not help them but harm them. Cause the believers of _____ Church to know that they are of infinite value to You (Matthew 6:25-31).

Father, cause the believers of _____ Church to understand and rest in the fact that You know what they need (Matthew 6:32).

Father, I plead that the believers of _____ Church would seek first the kingdom of God and Your righteousness. When they do this, I ask that You would grant them all that they need (Matthew 6:33).

Lord, I ask that the believers of _____ Church would honor You with their possessions so that You can bless and use them (Proverbs 3:9-10).

I pray that the believers of _____ Church will understand and rest in the fact that You will supply all their needs according to Your riches in glory by Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).

Father, I pray that You will convict the believers of _____ Church to know that they will stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Cause them to know that they will give an account of how they spent the money and used the possessions that you blessed them with (2 Corinthians 5:10).

I plead that the believers of _____ Church would be completely free of covetousness and would be content with what You provide (Philippians 4:10-13).

Father, grant the believers of _____ a loose grip on their money. Never let money own us. I pray that You will be our only true God and not love for money and what it can buy. Enable the believers of _____ Church to invest in what counts for eternity (1 Timothy 6:6, 10, 17-19).

Praying The Principles of Giving

Along with praying for a lifestyle of giving, you might consider praying through the principles of giving. This means taking the principles that God's Word offers concerning giving and praying that the Holy Spirit will make these a reality in the lives of believers. This will enable you to pray in power because your requests are based on the Word of God. You can also pray with confidence and expectation when You plead for His will to be done in His people (1 John 5:14).

The following are specific requests that you can make concerning the giving of the believers. You can use these or develop your own. You might want to begin by praying for these things in your own life. Then, you can intercede for the other believers concerning this matter.

The key issue is to plead that the believers will honor God through their giving. The goal is to see believers obey God in this matter. As believers obey God in this matter, they can then expect God's blessing on their lives and church.

- ◆ *Plead that the believers of your church will know that all that they have comes from God.* Pray that believers will be convicted that it is God who blesses and sustains them. Believers do acknowledge this. However, you should pray that the Holy Spirit would burn this conviction into their hearts.
- ◆ *Pray that the believers of the church will realize that they are only stewards or managers of God's blessings.* Ask God to show the believers that they do not own anything, but are managers of what God has granted. Plead that the believers will realize this significant responsibility.
- ◆ *Ask God to enable the believers to worship Him through their giving.* Worship is not simply the singing of hymns and offering praise to God. It is also sacrificing yourself and your money to God. Pray that the believers will grow in this aspect of worship.
- ◆ *Pray that the giving of the believers of your church will be sacrificial and generous.* Call on the Holy Spirit to convict the believers to give sacrificially and generously. Ask Him to strip away any complacency that believers have concerning giving. Plead with Him to stir the believers to give sacrificially and generously. Pray that believers will not give token amounts to God but will give according to and even beyond their ability.
- ◆ *Ask God to give the believers of your church a stronger faith in Him and His provision.* A believer must trust God if he or she is going to give generously and sacrificially. Ask God to give the believers a greater trust in Him. Call on God to strengthen their faith in God's willingness and ability to provide. Plead with God to strip away the unbelief that would hinder the believers from giving generously and sacrificially.
- ◆ *Pray that the believers will be motivated to give out of love and not out of obligation.* Ask God to purify the motives of the people concerning their giving. Plead with God to increase the believers' love of Him.
- ◆ *Plead that the believers will give cheerfully and willingly.* Pray that believers will be delivered from giving grudgingly—giving in spite of the fact that they don't want to. Call on God to remind the believers what He has done for them. Plead with Him to cause the believers to remember how God has blessed, saved, and sustained. Pray that believers will be so in love with Jesus, so wanting to please Him, that they will see giving as a joy and a privilege.
- ◆ *Pray that the believers of your church will be faithful in their giving.* Ask God to create a spirit of faithfulness in the believers concerning giving. Pray that believers will wisely and faithfully use the money that God has blessed them with through His grace and mercy. This is crucial to the spiritual growth of the church. Many churches want to move forward spiritually. They want to see people saved and disciplined. Yet, this will not happen until they

prove themselves trustworthy in the area of giving and managing money.

Pray that the giving of the believers will be planned and systematic. Plead with God that every believer will be convicted to give. Pray that no believer would appear before the Lord empty-handed. Ask that every believer would give according to how God has prospered him or her.

- ◆ Ask that the believers would be sensitive to and give in response to human need. Pray that believers would be willing to give to those in need. Ask God to give the believers a spirit of compassion and a willingness to meet the needs of others.
- ◆ Pray that believers would be delivered from a spirit of selfishness. Ask God to deal with the selfishness that would hinder believers from giving and from meeting the needs of others.
- ◆ Plead with God to abundantly bless the giving of the believers. Ask Him to honor the sacrificial and generous giving of believers by pouring out blessings on them. Plead with God to be true to His promises (Luke 6:38; 2 Corinthians 9:6, 8).

Pleading For Financial Blessing

I would challenge you to plead with God for financial blessings on your church. You can do this so that God would bless the church with an abundance of financial resources. Then, the church can be a blessing to others through ministry and the meeting of needs. In order to plead for financial blessings on your church, you need consider four steps:

(1) Pray that the believers will be committed to using the money wisely and faithfully. It is useless to pray for God to bless financially if you are not going to use the money for ministry and the meeting of material needs. It is a waste of time to pray for financial blessings if the money is going to sit in a bank and gain interest. There must be a commitment to use God's blessings for ministry and

for the needs of others. Pray that this will be the heart conviction and commitment of the believers.

(2) Plead that the believers would develop God's view of giving. Each believer needs to see himself or herself as a steward or manager of God's money. At the same time, each believer needs the conviction that he or she will give an account for how he or she used the money that God has granted. Pray that the Holy Spirit would create this understanding and conviction in each believer. Pray that each believer would develop a lifestyle of giving. Plead with God to make the principles of giving from the Word of God a reality in the lives of the believers of your church.

(3) Ask God to bless the jobs and the businesses of the believers. This is a practical way that you can seek for financial blessings for your church. Pray that God would prosper the believers in their individual jobs. Call on God to bless their work and the wages that they earn. You might want to consider making a list of the believers and their jobs. Then pray through this list, asking God to prosper each believer in his or her job. You might also consider getting business cards from the believers of your church. Then you could pray over the business cards, pleading with God to prosper each business. As God prospers the believers, this will give them the opportunity to give more to God and the work of His kingdom.

(4) Pray that the believers will have a fresh and more intimate love for the Lord Jesus Christ. A believer who loves Jesus Christ is going to give generously and sacrificially. You do not have to have slick promotional campaigns to raise money or encourage giving if believers love Jesus. The one who loves Jesus finds giving a delight and a joy. Pray that the believers would have a more intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. Ask God to deepen their love for the Savior who gave His all for them.

"Do you expect to go to heaven?" asked someone of a devout Scotsman. "Why, man, I live there," was the quaint and unexpected reply. It was a pithy statement of great truth, for all the way to heaven is heaven begun to the Christian who walks near enough to God to hear the secrets He has to impart.

E.M. Bounds

The Foundation Of A Prayer Ministry In The Church

In recent years, there has been an emphasis on developing a prayer ministry in the local church. A prayer ministry is an intentional ministry that labors to get believers involved in prayer. It is a way of organizing and equipping believers to pray.

A prayer ministry is important because it is an *intentional* ministry. It is a deliberate attempt to organize and equip believers to pray. If you do not plan to pray, you will not pray. It is not enough to emphasize prayer from the pulpit. There must be an organized effort to encourage and equip believers to pray. Prayer must be seen as the central focus of the church. It cannot be seen as one of the many aspects of church life. It must be seen as the key to every other part of the church's life and ministry.

There are a variety of ways to organize a prayer ministry in the church. There is also a wide range of materials that you can use to establish and maintain a prayer ministry. In upcoming issues of *The Prayer Closet*, we will be offering ideas and suggestions on how to develop and maintain a prayer ministry in the local church. Yet, the foundation of a prayer ministry is that the people have a heart for prayer.

When I use the phrase "a heart for prayer", I mean that people must have a desire, a longing, to seek God through prayer. It is good to offer opportunities to pray. It is good to provide training for believers in this area. These are essential to building a prayer ministry that impacts people for time and eternity. Yet, the believers must have a genuine desire to pray and to learn to pray. The believers have to have a passion for prayer. No amount of opportunities and training can substitute for this.

The following are suggested prayer requests that you can pray concerning this issue. You can use these or develop your own from them. These prayer requests focus on developing a passion for prayer. You can plead with the Holy Spirit, the author of prayer, to create a passion for prayer in believers.

You can use these requests in a variety of ways. If you would like to start a prayer ministry in your church, you can use these Scripture prayers to prepare the way for this ministry. If you already have a prayer ministry in your church, you can use

these Scripture prayers to plead for more involvement in this ministry. You might also use them to pray for the others involved in the prayer ministry. People who are committed to prayer still struggle to pray. You can pray through these Scripture prayers so that they can be strengthened and encouraged.

Lord Jesus, You have said that Your house will be called a house of prayer. I pray that You would grant the believers of _____ Church a passion for prayer. Holy Spirit, I ask that You would stir the believers of _____ Church to pray as never before in their lives. Transform this church into a house of prayer that touches and transforms lives through prayer (**Matthew 21:13**).

Father, I plead that the believers of _____ Church would continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving (**Colossians 4:2**).

Holy Spirit, I pray that You would teach the believers of _____ Church to pray. Just as Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, I plead that You will instruct and guide the believers of _____ Church in prayer (**Luke 11:1; John 16:15**).

Father, I plead that You would stir the believers of _____ Church to call on You. When they do this, I pray that You would show them great and mighty things which they do not know (**Jeremiah 33:3**).

Father, I pray that You would teach the believers of _____ Church that You have saved them for fellowship with You. Cause the believers of _____ Church to call on You because You have promised to hear and answer them (**Psalms 4:3**).

Holy Spirit, I plead that You would give the believers of _____ Church a spirit of persistence in prayer. Create within the believers of _____ Church the desire to continue praying. Cause the believers of this church to persevere and not give up on prayer (**Luke 18:1**).

O Lord, as the deer pants after the water brooks, so cause the believers of _____ Church to

long for you. I pray that the believers of _____ Church would thirst for You, the living God (**Psalm 42:1-2**).

Father, I plead that You will increase the faith of the believers of _____ Church. Enable them to pray in faith, not doubting, but trusting You for answers. You have said in Your Word that the man who doubts will receive nothing. Grant the believers of _____ Church the faith that they can receive answers from You (**James 1:5-7**).

I ask that You, Lord God, would remove any doubt that the believers of _____ Church might have concerning prayer. Grant the believers of _____ Church a boldness to cry out to You and to expect answers (**Matthew 21:22**).

Holy Spirit, I pray that You would grant the believers of _____ Church a spirit of humble expectation. Cause the believers of this church to wait on You in prayer (**Psalm 5:3**).

Holy Spirit, I plead that You would convict the believers of _____ Church of their sin. Make Your conviction sharp, deep, and abiding. Lead the believers of _____ Church to true confession and repentance. Do this so that our prayers will not be hindered. The Word says that if we cherish sin in our heart, the Father will not hear us. Convict us so that our prayers will be heard and answered (**Psalm 66:18**).

Father, the Lord Jesus says that we are to ask, seek, and knock. I pray that the believers of _____ Church will obey the Lord Jesus in this. Cause the believers of _____ Church to cry out to You. Holy Spirit, stir the believers to ask, seek, and knock (**Matthew 7:7**).

Father, grant the believers of _____ Church a hunger to intercede for others. It is Your will for believers to intercede for others. Cause us to know the power and the blessing of intercession (**1 Timothy 2:1-2; Ezekiel 22:30**).

Father, Your Word declares that we are to pray without ceasing. I ask that the believers of _____ Church would be granted a spirit of prayer. Holy Spirit, move Your people to call on the Father throughout the day and night. Enable the

believers of _____ Church to be diligent in prayer (**1 Thessalonians 5:17**).

Prayer brings a good spirit in our homes. For God hears prayer. Heaven itself would come down to our homes. And even though we who constitute the home all have our imperfections and our failings, our home would, through God's answer to prayer, become a little paradise.

O. Hallesby

The Power Of Praying Together

A husband and wife can take numerous steps to strengthen and protect their marriage. The key ingredient in building a marriage that glorifies God is prayer. Praying together is an essential to a godly, strong marriage. It is true that both the husband and wife individually need time alone with the Lord. Both spouses separately need to develop their own quiet time. Yet, the couple needs times when they pray together. There needs to be times when the couple enters the presence of God together.

Why should a husband and wife pray together? Why should a couple that is engaged or thinking about marriage pray together?

- ◆ *Praying together can increase the love and intimacy of a couple.* Prayer will draw a person into a more intimate relationship with God. When a couple prays together, they will be drawn closer to God. Yet, at the same time, God will deepen their love and intimacy for each other. God will mold their hearts into one heart.
- ◆ *Praying together can enable a couple to work through problems.* As a couple prays together, God will work in their lives. By praying, the couple is opening up their relationship to God. He works through this to bring about change

and healing in the relationship. It is difficult, if not impossible, to pray with and for someone with whom you are having problems. When a couple prays together, it is an opportunity for the power of God to flow into their lives. This power can help them overcome whatever problems they are having inside and outside of the marriage.

- ◆ *Praying together can make a couple sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading.* When a believer prays, it makes him or her more sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit. The same is true for a couple when they seek God together. As they pray together, they become more sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading concerning their marriage and the decisions that they need to make. The Holy Spirit will also mold and shape their desires to conform to God's will. By doing this, the couple can experience greater harmony in their decisions and purposes.
- ◆ *Praying together can enable the couple to follow God's commands in Ephesians 5.* In this chapter, the wife is commanded to submit to the husband. The husband then is commanded to love his wife as Christ loves the church. These are strenuous commands for married believers. These commands go against the grain of modern thinking and worldly feeling. Yet, a crucial step in obeying these commands is by praying together. As the couple prays together, they become more sensitive to the needs of the other. These commands go from being a duty to a delight. The couple also receives God's power and encouragement. This can help them live out the commands that God has given to them.
- ◆ *Praying together can provide spiritual protection for the family.* When a couple prays together, it will provide a spiritual covering over the family. The couple will be more sensitive to the attacks of the enemy. As they pray together, the couple receives greater discernment. This discernment is crucial in detecting and defeating the enemy.

If you are married, I would ask You to consider praying together. If you are engaged or

thinking about getting married, you need to consider praying together. There is incredible power in a couple praying together. You might even consider praying that couples would start praying together.

You need to establish your own time and place for doing this. If you can only do this once a week, that is a good place to start. Yet, strive to increase the times that you pray together. If you feel that you don't have the time to do this, ask God to help you find the time. He is the God of time; He can help you find the time to do this.

When you pray together, you might consider reading the Word together. You can discuss this and then pray. You will have to do what works best for you. *The Power of Praying Together Worksheet* has been designed as a guide for your time together in prayer. This worksheet is intended solely as a guide for you. You can use it or adapt it according to your needs. The worksheet will hopefully give you some idea of how to structure your prayer time together. You might even consider keeping a journal of your prayer times together. This will give you the opportunity to look back and see how God has worked in your family and your marriage.

The first section is **Prayer Concerns or Requests**. In this section, you have the opportunity to list the burdens or the concerns that you have. As you share with each other, determine what concerns or requests that you will pray over.

The second section is **Scriptures and Promises**. This section allows you the opportunity to record Scriptures and promises that correspond to your prayer concerns or requests. From these Scriptures and requests, you can develop your prayer arguments that you will plead as a couple before the Lord.

The final section is **Insights and Guidance From the Holy Spirit**. This section allows you the opportunity to record the insights that the Holy Spirit grants you as you pray and read the Word of God. This will help you determine what steps to take in dealing with the problems or concerns.

All depends on prayer. May God teach us to believe this and to hold fast!
Andrew Murray



The Power of Praying Together Worksheet

**“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”
(Genesis 2:24)**

Prayer Concerns or Requests:

Scriptures and Promises:

Insights and Guidance From The Holy Spirit:

The Prayer Closet Ministries Prayer Requests

- 1. Land & Facility - Seventy-three acres of land has been donated for the Prayer Conference Center. The clearing of the land for the facility will be a prayer concern.**
The facility will be a center to train persons in praying, fasting, spiritual warfare, and healing. There will also be counseling, prayer retreats and prayer conferences. The entire Prayer Closet Ministry will be located at this center.
- 2. The Praying Parent Brochure - This brochure is in the developing stage and will soon be ready for distribution. It contains forty-five prayers to pray for children. Our vision is to be able to put this into the hands of two million parents. The purpose of the brochure is to call for genuine revival in families.**
- 3. Financial Concern - As we are growing there are more financial needs. The areas mentioned above will require much finances. We are trusting God to lead us as we seek to build this facility.**



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THE PRAYER CLOSET MINISTRIES, INC.

Reaches out to people with the transforming power of Jesus Christ.

Equips believers in the areas of prayer, spiritual warfare, fasting, and healing.

Assists local churches in developing and maintaining prayer ministries.

Provides intercession, prayer counseling and spiritual warfare for people.

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