



THE PRAYER CLOSET

Equipping & Encouraging Believers
In Prayer

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PRAYING WITH OTHER BELIEVERS

Every believer has the incredible opportunity to spend time with God through prayer. You have the blessed opportunity to talk with the living God of time and eternity. You can have intimate fellowship with the mighty God of heaven and earth. You can pour your heart out to the God who loves you and is concerned with your life. No words can truly describe the richness and power of this privilege.

At the same time, you have another incredible opportunity that is just as rich and powerful. It is the privilege of praying with other believers. It is the opportunity to speak with God with another believer or believers. It is to cry out to God with your brothers and sisters in Christ. One of the richest blessings this side of heaven is praying with other believers.

Every believer has equal access to God (**Ephesians 2:18**). Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, every believer can pray. We have an open door to the throne room of God. We can now speak to God at any time, in any place, and for any reason. Not only can we approach God individually, we can also approach Him with our other brothers and sisters in Christ. All our brothers and sisters have access to God through Jesus Christ. We can join together and speak to Him in united prayer. We can come before our God with united hearts and purposes.

Because of this awesome privilege, believers need to make time to pray together. An essential part of developing a powerful prayer life is praying

with other believers. Spending time alone with God is crucial to your maturity and power in prayer. Yet, praying with other believers will provide you with insight, power, and encouragement that you cannot receive through your own individual quiet times.

This issue of *The Prayer Closet* will focus on developing prayer partners. It will offer guidance and insight on how you can pray with other believers. It is my hope and prayer that this newsletter will encourage you to develop or deepen prayer partnerships with other believers. God desires that we pray individually and corporately. He longs for us to approach Him alone and with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Why Should I Pray With Other Believers?

The believer should seek to pray with other believers. You can do this by having prayer partners and by taking part in your church's prayer meetings. You may be wondering, "Why should I do this? I have my own quiet time. Isn't that enough?" There are several reasons why you should practice praying with other believers.

First, the Bible teaches the practice of both individual and corporate prayer. The Bible reveals that every believer has access to God through prayer. Each individual believer should take advantage of this glorious privilege. In the Bible,

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the believer is taught to seek God and to persevere in prayer. Yet, the Bible also reveals that believers prayed together.

“These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers” (Acts 1:14).

“Now when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place” (Acts 2:1).

“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread and in prayers” (Acts 2:42).

“Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour” (Acts 3:1).

“So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: ‘Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them’ (Acts 4:24).

“And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness” (Acts 4:31).

“Whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them” (Acts 6:6).

“Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church . . . So, when he had considered this, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying” (Acts 12:5, 12).

“As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them’” (Acts 12:2).

Believers should seek opportunities to pray alone and with other believers. The believer’s prayer life should consist of individual and corporate times of prayer.

Second, Jesus promises power and results to those who pray in agreement. The Word of God

declares, “Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven” (Matthew 18:19). Jesus promises that God responds when two or more agree in prayer. This requires believers to pray together in agreement. This means that believers will have to join with other believers and pray with the same agenda. This promise is given to those believers who will join with other believers in prayer.

God does hear and answer the prayers of individual believers. Yet, praying in agreement with other believers moves the heart of God like nothing else. God loves to hear the united pleas and cries of His children. When believers pray together, it releases God’s power and blessings in an unprecedented way.

Praying with other believers will help you learn how to pray. When you pray with other believers, the Holy Spirit can use this to guide you in a deeper, more vibrant prayer life. Individual prayer is crucial to growing in your ability to pray. Yet, praying with other believers provides you with insight and encouragement that you can’t receive by praying alone. It will increase your burden to pray and will help you stay fervent in your praying. In order to develop your communication with God, you need times of individual and corporate prayer. A powerful and effective prayer life is built on both individual and corporate times of prayer.

Praying with other believers will protect you from discouragement. When you pray with others, you have brothers and sisters who can pray for you and not just with you. Your prayer partner(s) can help you when you feel discouraged or want to give up. They can help you shoulder the burdens in your praying. Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, 12 reveal the value of praying with other believers, “Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls. For he has no one to help him up . . . Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.”

Developing Prayer Partnerships

There are a variety of ways that you can develop prayer partnerships. You can seek out

another believer that you join with in prayer. You could commit to pray with two other believers. You might even consider developing a small group that will pray together. A church could develop teams of prayer partners.

However you develop the prayer partnership, there are five basic qualities that are needed in prayer partners. These five basic qualities will help you form and develop powerful prayer partnerships. They are essential to maintaining a prayer group.

(1) Commitment

There has to be commitment first to seek God and then to seek God with the other believer(s). A prayer partnership means that you will seek the Lord individually and with the others also. The believers must be committed to getting together and seeking the Lord in agreement. You cannot develop powerful prayer partnerships if there is lack of commitment to prayer and to praying with others.

(2) Focus

Your prayer partnerships need to have a focus. I realize that you are meeting in order to pray. Yet, why are you praying? What is the focus of your praying? Your prayer team might be praying for particular needs like healing or salvation. You may be praying in agreement concerning certain people. You might be interceding for your church. You could be joining together to pray for your pastor. Having a focus is crucial to developing powerful and effective prayer partnerships. If you do not have a focus, you will spend more time talking (gossiping) than you will praying. Without focus, you will have a tendency to wander from the main purpose of having a prayer partner or partners – to spend time praying together.

(3) Transparency

In order to pray powerfully with another, there has to be openness – openness to share one's heart and the leadings of the Spirit. When you partner to pray with others, you need an openness to listen to the hearts and insights of others. Pride can destroy the effectiveness of a prayer partnership. Each believer must be willing to listen to the others. Even when there is disagreement, the believers must be willing to receive what needs to be said and pray concerning the issue. The feelings and insights of others must be heard, examined, and prayed over.

(4) Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an absolute must for prayer partnerships. What is shared must stay between the prayer partners and the Lord. There can be no discussion of matters outside of the times of seeking the Lord, except for sharing insights from the Holy Spirit concerning the situation or the person. The credibility and effectiveness of prayer partnerships can be destroyed when needs or concerns are shared with others outside of the prayer partners.

(5) Accountability

Prayer partnerships provide an opportunity for accountability. Your prayer partner(s) can help you stay fervent and faithful in your prayer life. The Word of God teaches that believers are to encourage and stir other believers to faithfulness and good works (**Hebrews 10:24; 1 Thessalonians 5:11**). How can you hold one another accountable? The following are accountability questions that you can ask your prayer partner(s) in order to encourage one another and to pray for one another:

- Have you spent time daily in prayer with your Father?
- Have been reading and meditating on His Word daily?
- Have you been going through the motions of prayer?
- Are you praising God with your lips and life?
- Are you justifying or hiding sin in your life?
- Are you thanking God specifically?
- Is anything hindering your relationship with the Lord?

You might want to go over these questions on a periodic basis. You can use these or develop your own from them. The purpose of these times is to encourage one another to stay faithful and fervent in seeking the Lord. It is also a way of asking others to pray for areas where you are struggling.

Pointers For Prayer Partnerships

The following are some basic points to remember in your prayer partnerships. These points can apply to any type of group prayer meeting.

- *Be specific in your prayer requests.* Make specific requests of the Lord. Generalized praying is powerless and empty. Jesus told a parable about a man who woke his neighbor up