



# THE PRAYER CLOSET

Encouraging & Equipping Believers in Prayer

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## EVERY NEIGHBOR FOR CHRIST

Do you have difficulty sharing your faith in Jesus with others? Do you feel as if you will never be an effective witness for Jesus? The Bible is clear – believers are to share their faith in Jesus, “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem; and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8). The Holy Spirit has entered our lives in order to empower us to tell others about Jesus. This is God’s desire and He has equipped us to do this.

Yet, many believers do not approach others about their faith in Jesus Christ. They hear sermons about it, feel convicted that they do not, and believe it is hopeless for them to be a witness to Jesus. Other believers want to but are discouraged by fear, frustration, a lack of knowledge, or other issues.

It is time that we come to realize that sharing our faith is not a program. Sharing our faith in Jesus Christ is not about memorizing a plan and then repeating it to a lost person. It is a lifestyle of prayer, ministry, witness, and taking advantage of opportunities. We must expand our understanding of sharing the faith to these things. Without these things, our witness will be powerless and fruitless.

If you struggle to share your faith, there is hope. If you want to lead others to Jesus Christ, God is ready and willing to help you. But, you will have to be committed to a lifestyle of praying for and influencing others for Christ’s sake. Leading others Christ requires a lifestyle that is permeated with prayer, ministry, and witness.

In this issue of *The Prayer Closet*, I want us to look at a prayer evangelism strategy that I call “Every Neighbor For Christ.” This strategy is based on **Colossians 4:2-6**. It is not a program. It is not a plan of slick techniques. It is about building a lifestyle in which you influence others to Christ through prayer, ministry, and witness.

This strategy is called “*Every Neighbor For Christ*.” Evangelism begins at home. Jesus told the disciples that they were to begin at Jerusalem. Jesus desired that they minister to and share the gospel with those around them – their street, their neighborhood, their community, and their city.

This strategy is designed at reaching your neighbors. And who are your neighbors? They are the people around you – the people you come into contact with on a daily basis. It is the people that cross the path of your daily

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life. Your neighbors are those who need Jesus – those who need the transforming power of God. This strategy will help you to take action in reaching every neighbor for Christ.

## Every Neighbor For Christ: Strategic Prayer

A crucial step in reaching every neighbor for Christ is prayer. The apostle Paul makes this clear in **Colossians 4:2**, "Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving." Paul states that the believer is to continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it. This means that prayer is more than just having a quiet time. Of course, we must be diligent to get alone and get with God on a daily basis.

But, Paul's view of prayer in this verse is more than a quiet time. He is speaking of a lifestyle of prayer. Prayer wears denim; prayer wears khaki. What I mean by this is that prayer is a ministry that we carry out each day. It is an opportunity to influence others for Christ on a daily basis.

It is important to notice that Paul adds, "being vigilant in it." This word "vigilant" means watchful. We are to watch for opportunities to pray for others. As we go through our day, we must look for opportunities to pray specifically for those that we encounter. We must be alert for ways to pray for the people that live on our streets, work in our workplace, and go to the mall and grocery stores that we do. This is why it is called "strategic prayer" – it is praying for real people with real needs in daily life. We must be watchful – alert – for these times.

There are three practical ways that you can practice strategic prayer to reach every neighbor for Christ:

### Prayerwalking

Prayerwalking is moving your prayer time out into the streets. It is praying for the people you encounter on a daily basis. God desires that we live a life of prayer. We are to pray throughout our day and in all the activities

of life, "Pray without ceasing" (1 **Thessalonians 5:17**).

Prayerwalking has two major aspects. It is a lifestyle of prayer – praying daily for people and needs as you encounter them. Yet, it is also an intentional ministry. It is a plan of saturating a city, a block, a neighborhood, a community, or a city in prayer. As a ministry, prayerwalking can enable a church to offer sustained and concentrated prayer for a particular area. Because of this, I am convicted that churches need to develop an intentional prayerwalking ministry.

The key issue is to saturate an area and people with sustained prayer. By regularly prayerwalking an area, you are releasing God's power into that area and into the lives of those who live there. If we are going to reach our neighbors for Christ, we must saturate them with prayer. We must continually call on God to touch them and to change them. Prayerwalking can help a church or association do this.

How can you put this into practice in your life?

- ✓ *Before you start, spend some time alone with your Father.* Ask Him to reveal to you what He wants to do for your street, neighborhood, city, or community.
- ✓ *Prayerwalk your home and commit it to the Lord.* Before you win your neighbors and your area, you have to commit your home to Christ. Ask Him to show you anything that needs to be removed from your home. Pray that you will have a home where He will be comfortable and where He can work from to reach your neighbors.
- ✓ *Ask God to open your eyes.* Pray that God will help you see what He sees in your neighborhood. Plead that you will see the people as God does.
- ✓ *Regularly prayerwalk your street or neighborhood.* Plan to regularly walk through your neighborhood and pray for the people and their needs. In some places, you may have to "prayerdrive" instead of prayerwalk. The key issue is

to get out where you live and pray and listen to the Spirit.

- ✓ *Partner with other believers in prayerwalking.* You might consider asking other believers to prayerwalk in your neighborhood while you do the same in theirs. Share the insights, prayers, and feelings that you can enhance your prayerwalking.
- ✓ *Develop a "Spiritual Neighborhood Watch."* Many neighborhoods have what is called a "neighborhood watch." They watch for any suspicious and criminal activity. If they see anything like this, they report it to the authorities. If you have other believers living in your area, you might consider starting a "Spiritual Neighborhood Watch." This is staying alert to what is going on in your neighborhood. When you see anything that needs prayer, you report it to the other believers. Then you can pray in agreement concerning this issue (**Matthew 18:19**).

## Spiritual Mapping

Spiritual mapping is finding out who lives in your area and praying according to this information. A spiritual map includes the people who live in your area and their spiritual condition. You can also highlight problem areas that are in need of particular intercession. Believers and churches should have spiritual maps of their areas.

What are the benefits of a spiritual map?

- (1) *It helps you to know who lives in your area.* You can't pray for or minister to people if you do not know them or their needs.
- (2) *It enables you to pray with greater power.* God can bless the prayer, "Lord, bless my neighborhood." Yet, you will have greater power when you pray specifically for people and their needs.
- (3) *You can gain insight for ministry through a spiritual map.* A spiritual map can help you to know how to reach out to your neighbors and your community. It

can help you identify needs and ministries that can meet those needs.

- (4) *A spiritual map reminds of people and their needs.* In conferences and seminars, I've often had people say to me, "I don't need a map to know who lives on my street or road. I already know this." That may be true, but I'm not sure that it is always the case. We live at such a fast pace that most people and their needs are nothing but a blur to us. A spiritual map is a healthy reminder that our streets, roads, communities, and cities are filled with people who need Jesus and the Word of God.

How do you compose a spiritual map? The following are some things that you might consider.

- ✓ *Who are the people who live in your area?* If possible, find out who lives around you. It would be helpful to know the names of your neighbors.
- ✓ *What is their spiritual condition?* Do they profess faith in Jesus Christ? Do they go to a church? What church do they go to?
- ✓ *Identify strongholds of Satan.* In your area, identify those places where Satan has a stronghold. The following are some suggestions.
  - Pornographic businesses
  - Bars and nightclubs
  - Gambling facilities
  - Houses of lost people
  - Psychic or spiritualist establishments
  - Known witches' covens
  - New Age facilities
  - Places of worship for cults
  - Churches that do not preach the Word of God
- ✓ *Identify strongholds of the Lord.*
  - Churches that preach the Word of God
  - Homes of believers
  - Christian ministries
  - Christian businesses
  - Neighborhood houses of prayer
  - Evangelistic billboards and signs

- ✓ *Include insights from your prayerwalking.* As you prayerwalk, God will give you insight into your area. Include this information with your spiritual maps.
- ✓ *Do research on your area.* What is the history of your area? Who founded your area? What has been the dominant religious group in your area? Ask the Lord to show you information that is helpful to you, such as anything that has had an impact on how people believe and how they behave in your area.

Once you begin developing your spiritual map, you can pray specifically and with power for your neighbors and your area.

## Praying For Open Doors

Prayerwalking helps us to saturate our neighbors with prayer. Spiritual mapping gives us insight on how to pray for our neighbors and their needs. Yet, Paul adds one more aspect of **strategic prayer for reaching our neighbors** for Christ. It is praying for open doors. He writes, "Meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains" (**Colossians 4:3**).

An open door is an opportunity to share the good news of Jesus with another person. Praying for an open door is asking God to grant an opportunity to share the good news with others. Praying for an open door involves the following:

- *Praying that God would prepare the hearts of your neighbors for the gospel.*
- *Asking that He would remove anything that might hinder that person from hearing and believing the gospel.*
- *Pleading that God would help you to share the gospel with that person.* If you pray for God to open the door, be prepared to walk through the door.
- *Praying that God would help you to make the gospel clear through your words and your life.* This is what Paul means in **Colossians 4:4**, "That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak."

- *Calling on God to raise up others to witness to your neighbors.* Sometimes when you pray for open doors, God may have other believers that He will use to share the good news with them. Pray that He will have others who will speak to your neighbors about Jesus Christ.

## Every Neighbor For Christ: Intentional Ministry

In **Colossians 4:5**, Paul says, "Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time." This verse refers to intentional ministry to your neighbors. It is living the Christian life in front of them while seeking to minister to them in unique and powerful ways.

In **Colossians 4:2-4**, Paul emphasizes the need to pray for your neighbors. This is the foundation of reaching our neighbors for Christ. Yet, we must also provide intentional ministry to our neighbors. We must show them the love and compassion of Jesus. These things – prayer and ministry – must be combined if you are going to have significant spiritual impact on those around you.

In **Colossians 4:5**, we are told to "redeem the time." This means we are to make the most of opportunities to do good for those around us. We must seize every possibility of blessing and ministering to our neighbors. We are to be wise and discerning about the circumstances when we can offer significant ministry to our neighbors.

How can you provide intentional ministry to you neighbors? The following are some suggestions that you might consider:

- *Ask God how you can minister to your neighbors.* Call on Him to give you a plan of action.
- *Pray that God will give you the discernment to see opportunities to minister to your neighbors.*
- *Ask your neighbors how you can pray for them.*
- *Send your neighbors a letter or card, telling them about your prayers for them.*

- *Pray for people as you encounter them.*  
This is called contact prayer.
- *Use holidays as times of ministry.*
- *Open your home up to your neighbors.*  
Invite them into your home for a meal or for some type of event.

## Every Neighbor For Christ: Salty Speech

In **Colossians 4:2-6**, Paul teaches us that we need to pray for our neighbors and offer intentional ministry for them and their needs. Yet, there is one more factor in reaching every neighbor for Christ. It is salty speech – godly speech that is directed by the Holy Spirit. Paul writes, “Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how to answer each one” (**Colossians 4:7**).

Ministry helps you to gain credibility with others. It enables you to gain a hearing. Prayer prepares your neighbors to listen and opens the door to their hearts for the gospel. It also prepares you to speak to them. When you pray to God about others, it gets you ready to speak to others about God. Salty speech then helps you convey the truth that they need to hear. It is saying those things that others need to hear at the time that they need to hear them.

How can you develop this salty speech that will have significant impact on others? The following are some suggestions that you might consider:

- ⇒ Pray that God will help you to speak timely words to others (**Proverbs 12:18**).
- ⇒ Pray that you will speak refreshing words to those that you come into contact with (**Proverbs 10:11, 18:4**).
- ⇒ Ask God to give you discernment to know what to say to others on a daily basis (**Matthew 10:19-20**).
- ⇒ Know what you believe and why you believe it (**1 Peter 3:15**). This will help you answer questions and explain the truth to others.
- ⇒ Immerse yourself in the truth of the gospel (**2 Corinthians 5:18-19**).

Memorize the Word concerning the plan of salvation. Write out your testimony. Prepare yourself thoroughly to be able to tell others about Jesus and how to come to Him in true faith.

- ⇒ Plead that your words and your life will be united (**Matthew 5:13-14**). Pray for God to help you destroy any hypocrisy from your life. Ask that your life and words will be united for a powerful witness for Jesus.

### The Praying Pastor

This prayer manual contains insights and Scripture prayers to help you pray powerfully for your life, ministry, and church. Order yours today for only \$8.00!

## When There's Trouble In The Church

It is unfortunate. It is difficult. But we must realize that there will come times when there is trouble in the church. We will encounter times of conflict in the church. This is inevitable. It can range from the mild to severe. The following Scripture prayers can help you intercede during these times.

Father, I pray that Satan's schemes in this situation will be thwarted and completely defeated (**1 Peter 5:8**).

Father, I plead that You would bind Satan and his forces and prevent them from gaining any more ground in this situation (**Mark 1:25-26**).

Father, I ask that You would clear up the confusion that is involved in this situation; I pray that You would end the disorder and grant peace (**1 Corinthians 14:33**).

Father, I plead that You would convict and burden those who are causing difficulty; show them the evil and the disorder that they are causing through their words and actions (**John 16:7-8**).

Father, I pray that You would tear down the self-righteousness and hardness of heart in those who are causing problems. Deliver them from being wise in their own eyes (**Proverbs 26:12**).

Father, I ask You to grant brokenness and repentance to those who are causing problems in the body (**James 4:6**).

Father, I ask that You would provide the spiritual leaders of this body the wisdom and the courage to do what is necessary to deal with this problem; give them the knowledge and understanding to confront the problem (**Proverbs 2:6-7**).

Father, I pray that the members of this body will forsake gossiping and taking sides. I plead that they will pray fervently concerning this matter (**Colossians 4:2**).

Father, I ask that the members of this church will not jump to conclusions but will be wise and discerning about the problem (**Proverbs 18:13**).

Father, I plead in Jesus' name that the members of this church will seek to be peacemakers in all things – especially in this problem (**Matthew 5:9**).

Father, I ask that every member of this church will seek God's glory in all things. I plead that each member will be delivered from the desire for self-exaltation and importance (**1 Corinthians 10:31**).

I pray that this church will seek to be likeminded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose (**Philippians 2:2**).

I plead that the members of this body will do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but humility consider others better than us (**Philippians 2:3**).

I ask that the members of this body would not look to our own interests, but also to the interests of others (**Philippians 2:4**).

Father, I ask that this church will have the mind of Christ – willing to humble themselves and serve others (**Philippians 2:5-11**).

Father, I plead that the members of this body will speak the truth to one another in love. Help us to lovingly but firmly confront this problem (**Ephesians 4:15**).

Father, I ask that each member of this body will put off falsehood and speak truthfully to each other for we are members of one body, the body of Christ (**Ephesians 4:25**).

Father, I pray that You would enable this church to get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, brawling, and slander, along with every form of malice. I ask You to cultivate in this church kindness, compassion, and a spirit of forgiveness – the same kind of forgiveness that You gave us through Jesus (**Ephesians 4:31-32**).

Father, I plead that You would humble those who are at odds with one another. I pray that You would break their hardness and opposition. Bring them back into a right relationship with You and with each other (**Philippians 4:2**).

Father, it is good and pleasant when brothers and sisters in Christ live in unity with each other. I ask You to move powerfully in this body to create the unity that pleases You and that will enable this church to reach the lost for Christ (**Psalms 133:1**).

Father, I ask that every member of this body will seek to be completely humble and gentle. Empower us to be patient, bearing with one another in love. I plead that we would make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (**Ephesians 4:2-3**).

Father, I pray that You would stir this body to confess sin and make things right with one another. I ask that we would be willing to do whatever we must in order to be reconciled with our brothers and sisters in Christ (**Matthew 5:23-26**).

## Praying For The Election

In November, our nation will hold an election to decide on who will lead this nation. This is a crucial time in the history of our nation. Because of this, believers must saturate this election in prayer. We must cry out to God concerning this election. As believers and citizens of this nation, it is our privilege and responsibility to pray for this election. The following prayer guide is offered to assist you in praying for the upcoming election:

- *Pray that God will be glorified in the election (1 Corinthians 10:31).*
- *Ask that people will follow God's leadership and wisdom and not just political parties (Proverbs 2:6).*
- *Plead that people will intensely seek God about how they will vote (Philippians 4:6-7). Pray that people will cry out to God concerning His will about the election.*
- *Ask that massive numbers of believers will get out and vote (Psalm 115:3; Luke 1:37). Call on God to stir and motivate believers to take an active role in praying and voting for our leaders.*
- *Plead that God will give us godly leaders with integrity – leaders who will guide the nation in righteousness and wisdom (1 Timothy 2:1-2).*
- *Pray that God will continue to have mercy on our nation and will withhold judgment from us (Lamentations 3:21-23).*
- *Pray that Satan would be bound and not allowed to cause chaos in the election (1 Peter 5:8). Satan would love to destroy this nation. He will use any means necessary. Pray that he will not be able to use the election to divide and to cause chaos and misunderstanding.*
- *Ask that people will remember the godly and biblical foundations of this nation. Pray that their voting will be based on convictions and not the whims of politics or economics.*

- *Call on God to create a spirit of prayer in the churches of America for our leaders (1 Timothy 2:1-2).*
- *Pray that the Holy Spirit will fill the voting booths of our nation; ask that He would move on the hearts of the people as they vote (John 16:7).*

**Do You Need Help In Planning  
For Pastor Appreciation Month?  
Would You Like To Establish A  
Pastor Prayer Team?  
Do You Need Resources To  
Encourage And Equip Your  
People To Pray For You Spiritual  
Leaders?**

*Contact us at The Prayer Closet for any need you have in this area. We have developed materials and a seminar to assist you and your church concerning this vital issue. Call us or write us today!*

## Praying For The Congregation

October is Pastor Appreciation Month. One of the best ways that you can show love and appreciation to your pastor is through prayer. An effective way to do this is by praying for the congregation's response to your pastor. The following prayer pointers can help you pray for a growing and healthy relationship between your pastor and the congregation. Pray that the congregation will:

1. Have open, teachable hearts (1 Thessalonians 2:13)
2. Be supportive and responsive to the pastor (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13).
3. Be generous and faithful in meeting the pastor's needs (Philippians 4:15-17).
4. Be hungry and thirsty for God and His Word (Psalm 42:1-2).
5. Faithfully pray for the pastor and family (1 Thessalonians 5:25).
6. Be free from dead traditions and ungodly ways of thinking that hinder the

7. truth and growth of the church (Hebrews 6:1).
8. Be willing and eager to follow the pastor's preaching and leadership (Hebrews 13:17).

## Will You Join Us In Ministry?

The growth of The Prayer Closet Ministries has been amazing. God has blessed this ministry and opened the doors for opportunities that we could have never dreamed of or planned. He is allowing us to touch the lives of people throughout the United States and across the world. This newsletter and our materials are distributed in every continent on earth.

Our ministry is expanding each day. The newsletter's circulation grows daily. We are developing more products to encourage and equip believers and churches to pray. We are preparing to build a ministry facility on 70 acres of land that has been donated to The

Prayer Closet. We are in process of developing a radio and television ministry.

Yet, we need your help. This ministry operates on the basis of donations. We certainly appreciate the gracious and sacrificial giving that you have already done. This ministry is where it is today because of your faithful giving and praying. As God expands this ministry, we continue to need your prayers and financial support.

Would you commit to making a monthly donation to The Prayer Closet? No gift is too small or insignificant. Your gifts will be greatly appreciated and will be used to minister to people across the world. You can join us in ministering to people and churches across the world.

If you are not able to make a monthly commitment, would you consider giving a donation at this time? We have enclosed an envelop for your convenience. Your gifts are needed and will be used to make an eternal difference in the lives of people!



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