



THE PRAYER CLOSET

Encouraging & Equipping Believers in Prayer

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Prayerwalking

The Lord Jesus Christ tells us, “But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly” (**Matthew 6:6**). Jesus teaches us that we are to get alone and get with our Father. We have the opportunity to spend time alone with our heavenly Father. He desires that we pull away from the world and spend time in prayer with Him.

At the same time, the Word of God says, “Pray without ceasing” (**1 Thessalonians 5:17**). The Word teaches us that we are to have an ongoing conversation with God. This text does not demand that we have a quiet time twenty-four hours a day seven days a week. That would be impossible and impractical. Yet, this verse is calling us to move our quiet time out into the world. Our time alone with God does not end with our quiet time. We are to continue our fellowship and prayer with God as we move out into our lives and days. This is prayerwalking. Whether it is the informal daily practice of a believer or an organized ministry in the church, God calls believers to pray wherever they are, wherever they go.

Prayerwalking is moving your prayer closet or prayer meeting outside the four walls of a building. Many times our prayers wobble between trivial matters of our own selfishness

and topics of remote interest. However, prayerwalking focuses believers on the real needs, the real hurts, and the real concerns of their community. As believers prayerwalk, God gives them a heart for people and their needs. It enables believers to intercede with power for people in their cities and communities.

This issue of The Prayer Closet will focus on prayerwalking. We will look at what it is, the biblical basis for it, and how to practice it.

What Is Prayerwalking?

There has been an explosion of prayerwalking in the last thirty years. Prayerwalking does not have a father; no one person can be identified as the founder of the movement. One cannot find an original prayerwalker who devised the idea years ago. There has been a mutual sharing of ideas, but God has apparently authored the idea in the hearts of many of the pioneers who have quietly gone on with the job and have passed the idea on to countless others.

Prayerwalking is just what it sounds like it would be: *praying while walking*. Since there are different kinds of walks and different kinds of prayer, we need to have a sharpened, narrow definition of prayerwalking. As defined earlier, it is praying on-site with insight. This definition

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reveals that there are three distinct parts to prayerwalking. These three elements are necessary to carrying out a successful and powerful prayerwalk.

The first part of prayerwalking is *prayer*. It is intercession for people and their needs. While you walk, you call on God to work in and bless the people of a street, a road, a community, or a city. It is the deliberate activity of interceding for others as one walks by their homes or businesses.

In prayerwalking, a believer focuses on people and their cities or communities with a specific plan of intercession. The believer calls on God to bless, to save, to change, and to use the people who live in the houses or work in the businesses.

Prayerwalking is not occasionally beaming bundles of religious sentimentality toward people. It is directed and focused intercession. This is the strength of prayerwalking. It is quality intercession for people. The best praying is always done on purpose and not as casual happenstance. **Quality intercession is not incidental; it is intentional!**

Prayerwalking is *on-site* prayer. It is simply praying in the very places where you expect your prayers to be answered. One can pray as he or she walks by a building or house. There can be exceptions to this. One can routinely break from walking to take a deliberate stance at special spots or station oneself at elevated viewpoints. This is for the purpose of intentionally praying for a place and the people who are there. Whether walking or stationed at a place, you are praying at the place where you desire and long for God to work and to pour out His abundant blessings. It is going to the place and praying where you hunger for God to send His power and His blessings.

Finally, prayerwalking is praying on-site *with insight*. When people prayerwalk, they do it with their eyes wide open. By seeing the people, their homes, and their businesses, it floods their prayers with significance. The ordinary powers of observation yield tremendous insights about the best focus in prayer. These insights will refine their prayers and will give a more powerful and sharper focus to their prayers. By having this more powerful and

sharper focus in prayer, it will lead to more fervent intercession.

The insight of the prayerwalkers may be researched insight. Before going on a prayerwalk, believers can do research about their community or city. They can therefore understand the problems of the area and the hindrances to the gospel in this area. By doing this, they can develop a prayer strategy that will address these problems and these hindrances. This will allow them the opportunity to pray for solutions and for the removal of any obstacle to the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Insight on how to pray can be given to the prayerwalker as he or she prays through the Scripture. It is crucial that the prayerwalker pray the Scripture as he or she walks. This is due to the person and the work of the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who reveals the truth of Scripture and who enables the believer to pray. As a believer prays the Scripture, the Holy Spirit will grant specific guidance in how to pray for individuals and cities or communities. As a believer saturates his life and prayers with the Word of God, the Holy Spirit can and does grant specific promptings to pray for a city or community and its individuals. Praying the Word of God opens your ears to listen to the prayer guidance of the Holy Spirit. This will enable the prayerwalker to pray more specifically and more intensely.

The insights gained through prayerwalking can lead to powerful intercession for a city or a community and its people. These insights will enable the believer to seek God to deal with the problems and the barriers to the gospel so that God can be glorified by the advancement of His kingdom and the transformation of lives in cities and communities. These insights blend to fortify prayer with a starkly relevant authenticity. It is no longer prayer as usual. This up-close and personal prayer becomes an adventure.

The Biblical Basis For Prayerwalking

People often ask me where prayerwalking is found in the Bible. You will not find any commands to prayerwalk in the Bible. Yet, the

foundation for this practice is built on numerous Scriptural principles.

- ✓ *God's desire for an ongoing conversation (1 Thessalonians 5:17)*. This text of Scripture calls for an ongoing conversation with God throughout your days and nights. This is a startling command! God desires to have fellowship with you on a regular basis. God longs for you to talk with Him continually. This text calls for you to pray to God wherever you go at all times. This is prayerwalking! It is carrying your prayer time into the streets. Prayerwalking is a mobile prayer meeting. You will have to prayerwalk in order to fulfill this command!
- ✓ *God's omnipresence (Psalm 139:7-12)*. The Word of God teaches us that God is present everywhere. You can never escape His presence. Wherever you go, God is there! Since God is everywhere, why not talk to Him everywhere? Talk to Him at work, at the gas station, at the grocery store, at the ballpark, or as you drive. This is prayerwalking! God's omnipresence ought to stir us to pray throughout our days and nights in all the places we find ourselves.
- ✓ *God's Providence (Acts 8:26-40)*. Your life is not governed by chance or fate. Your life is governed by the hand and wisdom of God. God's providence means that God directs your life according to His wisdom and purpose. This means that it is not a coincidence that you go where you go and encounter the people that you encounter daily. Even when you think it is a mundane day, God is crossing your life with people that He wants you to pray for. God is daily leading us to encounter people that we need to bless and pray for. I realize the example that I give you in Acts 8 is extraordinary. However, the principle is that God is guiding your life to encounter people that you can intercede for and witness to. God daily has divine appointments for you – people that you can pray for as you go through the day. You will go places, encounter people, and hear of situations that you can make a difference in as you pray.
- ✓ *God's Continual Work (John 5:17)*. In this text, Jesus tells us that He and the Father

are always at work. God is at work around you! He is dealing with people. He is convicting people. He is drawing people. He is speaking to people. He is working through people's circumstances. Each day, you encounter people in whom God is at work. You can join God in His work by praying. As you pray for people throughout your day, you are an instrument for carrying out God's work in the lives of people. Eternity will reveal the great power of the short prayers that we pray on a daily basis. The sharp, short prayers that we pray on a daily basis can make an eternal difference in the lives of the people we encounter – whether we know them or not and whether they know we are praying for them or not.

What Prayerwalking Is Not

Prayerwalking is a dynamic and powerful spiritual experience. God will honor it and use it to touch and transform the lives of people. Believers can have an enormous impact on their cities and communities through prayerwalking.

We have already defined what prayerwalking is. It is praying on-site with insight. It is moving your prayer closet outside and into the city and community around you. And we have examined reasons why believers should practice prayerwalking. It will affect both those who practice it and those for whom they pray.

Prayerwalking is an essential tool for believers and churches. Yet, it is important to remember what prayerwalking is not. You must maintain a balance in this issue. Keep the following in mind:

- **Prayerwalking is not a substitute for personal prayer.** Prayerwalking can invigorate your prayer life. It can breathe new life into your prayer life. It can strengthen and intensify your prayer life. But, it should never be seen as a substitute for a personal, daily time when you get alone and get with your Father. Jesus taught the necessity of spending time alone with the Father, "But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut the door,

pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly” (**Matthew 6:6**). It is not a matter of choosing between your time alone with God and your prayerwalking. It is a matter of striving to maintain a balance between your time alone with God and your prayerwalking.

- **Prayerwalking is not a replacement for the church’s prayer meetings.** Again, you should work for a balance between these things. Prayerwalking can have a positive and transforming affect on your church’s prayer meetings. It can rejuvenate the prayer meetings in your church. It can bring refreshing to the same old, tired, boring times that we call prayer meeting. Yet, it does not replace believers getting together in churches or homes to pray. The Bible declares the need for believers to join together for prayer, “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and prayers” (**Acts 2:42**). Prayerwalking can be a healthy and vital extension of the church’s praying. In turn, it can breathe new life into the church’s prayer meeting.
- **Prayerwalking is not an alternative to evangelism.** Prayerwalking leads to evangelism. Prayerwalking opens the door for witnessing. It removes the barriers to the gospel in cities and communities. Prayerwalking and evangelism go hand in hand. They complement each other. Prayerwalking enables the church to fulfill its Great Commission, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen” (**Matthew 28:19-20**). Prayerwalking is not an alternative to evangelism; it is a crucial key to winning people to Jesus Christ and discipling them.
- **Prayerwalking is not a substitute for ministering to the needs of people.** Prayerwalking enables you to see and discover the needs of people. In addition, it

will produce compassion in your heart for people. It is one thing to hear about a need.

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It is quite another to see it in living color. Ministering to people requires a heart of compassion and an understanding of their needs. Prayerwalking equips the believer with both these things. Prayerwalking is not a substitute for ministry; it is a prerequisite for ministering to the people. Jesus declares that His people will minister to the needs of others, “Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You? And the King will answer and say to them, Assuredly, I say to You, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to Me” (**Matthew 25:37-40**). Prayerwalking can empower you to minister to the needs of others. It puts you in the position to do this.

Prayerwalking is a powerful tool for believers. It can release God’s power and blessing into the lives of people. Yet, it must be remembered that it goes hand in hand with personal and corporate prayer, evangelism, and ministering to the needs of people.

What Do You Do When Your Prayerwalk

When I teach and preach on the subject of prayerwalking, most believers have a common question, “What do I pray when I prayerwalk?” Others have asked, “What do I do when I prayerwalk?” In this chapter, I want to introduce you to the assortment of things that you can do and pray as you prayerwalk. When you prayerwalk, you can listen, discover, minister, and pray.

Listen

When you prayerwalk, you can listen to the Holy Spirit. He longs to speak to you and guide you. He can and will grant you valuable insights as you prayerwalk. You may be

wondering, “How can you walk and listen to the Spirit?” It is possible to listen to the Spirit as you

prayerwalk. The first step is to develop your ability to listen to Him during your quiet times. Each believer needs to have a time of listening when he or she prays. When you pray, develop the discipline of listening for His voice. This is the anchor for your listening to God during prayerwalks. Before you prayerwalk, confess and repent of sin. Then, seek the filling of the Holy Spirit. Ask Him to control you during the prayerwalk, making you sensitive to His voice. As you prayerwalk, walk in a hushed silence. Be quiet and walk in silence listening for His voice. Or you can stand somewhere in a hushed silence listening for Him to speak to you. You might consider taking a small notebook or notepad with you. By doing this, you can record any insights or guidance that He may grant you.

Discover

When you prayerwalk, you can discover the needs of the people and the community. Prayerwalking makes you sensitive to what is going on around you. Most of the time we go through our cities and communities, oblivious to what is going on and to the needs that exist. When you prayerwalk, it sensitizes you to people and their needs. It slows you down. It provides the Spirit with an opportunity to open your eyes and convict you about the needs in your area. You might also see places where ministry can be carried out. You might discover an area where a particular type of ministry might be carried out. God will open your eyes and heart to the possibilities for ministry in your city or community. You will discover a variety of opportunities for your church and you to reach out to and minister to the area that God has placed you. When you prayerwalk, keep your eyes and heart open to the needs and possibilities for ministry that exist throughout your city or community.

Minister

When you prayerwalk, you will have times that you are able to talk with people. This will provide you with an opportunity to minister to them. You can pray directly for them in their

presence. Jesus prayed directly for people. He prayed for people who approached Him (**Luke**

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5:12-15, 7:2-10; 17:12-19). On some occasions he initiated conversations which turned into an opportunity to pray for someone (**Luke 7:11-15, 13:12-13**). When you encounter someone that you would like to pray for, keep the following in mind:

- *Start with a simple introduction.* Tell the person who you are and that you are praying for the community.
- *Inquire about their needs.* Share with the person your willingness to pray about any need that he or she might have.
- *Get permission to pray.* Ask the person, “Can I pray about this for you?” or “Will you give me the privilege of praying about this right now?”
- *Pray to the point.* Pray specifically about the needs that have been shared. Don’t try to preach a sermon through your prayer. Don’t pray about a variety of other things. Junk the clichés and trite sayings. Pray sincerely and earnestly for the person and his/her need.
- *Share your willingness to continue to pray.* Convey to the person that you will continue to pray for him and her and the need that has been shared. Write down the prayer request in his or her presence as a sign of your commitment to pray.
- *Witness to the person if the opportunity arises.* Many witnessing encounters flow out of this type of situation. If you have the opportunity, share the good news about Jesus with him or her.

Pray

When you prayerwalk, you talk to God about what you see. You pray about those things you encounter. Our definition of prayerwalking is, “Praying on-site with insight.” You are to pray according to the insights that you receive. You receive these insights to pray in three ways.

Revealed Insight

Revealed insight refers to the insight that the Holy Spirit grants you as you prayerwalk. The Word of God is His primary tool for showing you how to pray. He provides you with insight

on how to pray through the Word. The Holy Spirit is the Author of the Word of God. Not only has He inspired the Word of God, He also empowers you to pray. Because of this, it is through the Word that He provides you with the insight to pray. The Holy Spirit who inspired the Word will use that same Word to show you how to pray. He can and will grant you insight as you pray the Word of God. As you pray the Word, the Holy Spirit guides you on how to pray during your prayerwalking. Using the Word as you prayerwalk prepares you to receive His leadings. It opens your heart and mind to receive insight from Him—insight that you can use to pray with power and effectiveness.

For this reason, you should pray the Scriptures as you prayerwalk. You can take a small Bible along with you or 3x5 cards with Scripture written on them. You might even consider photocopying parts of the Scripture for one-day use in your prayerwalking. Use the verses of Scripture as prayers for the people and the situations that you encounter on a prayerwalk. You can read the Scripture aloud, claim the promises of His Word, or adapt the verses to prayers for the people of the area.

Responsive Insight

Responsive insight refers to the insight that you receive through observation. As you prayerwalk, you will see many sights. You will see people, homes, businesses, objects, and events. Observing these things yield significant insights on how to pray. Responsive insight is allowing what you see to trigger pointed and specific intercession. You use what you see to shape how you pray. It is forming petitions according to the things that you see. *Revealed insight comes as you allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you through the Scriptures. Responsive insight comes as you allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you through what you see.*

Examples of responsive insight are:

■ **A stop sign**-Asking God to stop the work of Satan in the area Jesus Christ and the good news about Him; pleading with God to stop the opposition to the gospel in an area so that many would turn to Jesus in faith and repentance.

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■ **A bank**-Pray that people would not lay up treasures on earth but that they would lay up treasures in heaven; ask God that people would not be blinded to eternal realities by their possessions.

■ **A jail**-Plead that the captives to Satan would be set free by the power and grace of Jesus Christ; pray that the demons assigned to the area would be bound and rendered ineffective.

■ **“Children At Play” sign**-Pray that the area would be filled with children in prayer to God, lifting up holy hands to Him.

■ **“Wrong Way” sign**-Ask the Holy Spirit to show people in the area that they are headed in the wrong direction and that they must turn to and follow Jesus.

■ **A hospital**-Pray that people will experience God’s healing power; plead that people will see their need of the Great Physician, Jesus Christ and that they will know that He is the only cure for sin and damnation.

■ **A peaceful day**-Pray that God would bring peace to the area through His Son Jesus Christ.

■ **A police car**-Plead for the salvation and protection of the police officers; pray that justice would be carried out in the area.

■ **A fence**-Pray that God would place a wall of protection around believers; ask God to remove the barriers that hinder reconciliation in the area.

■ **Power lines**-Pray that the power of the Holy Spirit would be channeled into the area; ask for the removal of anything that would hinder the believers in the area from receiving the power of God.

■ **Phone lines**-Ask that the people would have a desire to talk with God and listen to Him.

■ **A transformer**-Plead that the churches in the area would be places where peoples' lives are transformed through the Word and the Spirit.

■ **A gas station**-Pray that people will see that their lives are empty and that they need God to fill their life with His love and grace.

■ **A "Slow Down" sign**-Ask that people will slow down and consider where they will spend eternity.

■ **A grocery store**-Plead that the people will hunger for the Bread of God, Jesus Christ.

■ **A school**-Pray that the people in the area would turn to Jesus Christ and that they would become disciples or learners of Jesus.

■ **A drugstore**-Plead that God would destroy drug trafficking and use throughout the area.

These examples reveal that you use what you see to pray. Allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you as you observe. Be prepared to see people and objects as you have never seen them before. Be prepared to respond with pointed intercession as the Holy Spirit speaks to you concerning what you see.

Researched Insight

Researched insight refers to the insight you receive from research about the area where you will prayerwalk. Some believers have found it helpful to do research about their city or community. From this research, they develop petitions for the city or community. When they prayerwalk, they use this research to offer pointed and powerful intercession.

Revealed insight is allowing the Holy Spirit to speak to you through the Scriptures. Responsive insight is allowing the Holy Spirit to speak to you through what you see and hear. Researched insight is allowing the Holy Spirit to speak to you through your research of an area.

A Healing Prayerwalk

The Word of God reveals that God is the healing God. It is His nature to heal, "I am the LORD that healeth thee" (**Exodus 15:26**). An essential part of His character is His power and willingness to heal. He desires to restore the brokenness that sin and disobedience brings into peoples' lives. He has the power and the mercy to unleash healing into peoples' lives. This should stir us to pray for this healing.

I would challenge you to do a "Healing Prayerwalk." A Healing Prayerwalk focuses praying for God's healing power to be unleashed in an area. The purpose is to call on God to be true to His healing nature for an area. It is going

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into an area and praying specifically for God's healing power to flow into the lives of the people.

The following are Scripture prayers that you can pray during a healing prayerwalk. You can use these, adjust them, or develop your own from them. The key issue is to focus on God's character – His power and mercy to heal – and seek Him for His transformation in broken lives. If we believe that God is the Healer, we need to plead with Him and pour our hearts out to Him.

Father, I ask You to save the lost in this area. Heal the broken relationship between You and the lost. Draw them to true faith in Jesus and repentance of their sins (**John 3:16; 6:44**).

Father, You are the God who heals. I ask in Jesus' name that You will heal the broken and diseased bodies of the people in this area. Unleash Your healing power in their lives (**Exodus 15:26**).

Father, there is no disease, injury, or condition that is beyond Your power to heal. I ask in Jesus' name that You will powerfully touch the people here, granting healing and glorifying Your name (**Matthew 4:23-25**).

Father, Your Word says that You heal the brokenhearted. I ask in Jesus' name that You will touch those who are hurting and grieving. Grant them peace and comfort (**Psalms 147:1**).

Father, set the people here from their anger, wrath, bitterness, and malice. I ask You to draw people in this area to forgiveness with You and forgiveness with others (**Ephesians 4:31-32**).

Father, I ask that You will deliver the broken marriages in this area. Grant your healing in these relationships. Break down the barriers that are separating husbands and wives from each other (**Ephesians 5:22, 25**).

Father, heal the broken relationships in families in this area. I ask in Jesus' name that You would deliver families from ruin and destruction. O God, intervene, save and restore the families of this area. I plead that families will turn to You surrendering to Christ as Lord (**Psalms 125**).

Father, I ask You to heal the churches in this area. Whatever problems these churches have, I pray in Jesus' name that You will intervene. O God, revive these churches; remove anything from that will hinder them from doing Your will (**Habakkuk 3:1-2**).

Father, I ask You to heal this area of the cancer of drug trafficking and drug abuse. Let Your holy power fall on this place, sweeping out all the drugs and those who would supply them. I pray that Your healing power will set people free from drugs and that You will rid this area of this abominable activity (**Jeremiah 33:3**).

O God, I pray that You will heal this area of crime. I ask that You will bring down those who practice evil. Strengthen and give discernment to law officers. Holy Father, do a powerful work here, destroying the corruption and the crime that wounds and destroys lives (**Psalms 7:9**).

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Father, I ask You in the name of Jesus to set free all those who are oppressed by the evil one. Heal them of his wicked influence and the damage that He has done in their lives (**Acts 10:38**).

Righteous Father, have mercy on the people of this area. Grant the healing that they stand in need of; touch their hearts, their bodies, their marriages, their families. Do a work here that can only be attributed to You. Glorify Your name here! (**Exodus 15:26**)

Future editions of The Prayer Closet will deal with various aspects of prayerwalking. If you have questions about prayerwalking, please let us know. Our goal is to best serve you and equip you to pray with power and faithfulness.



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