





PrayerWalking Guidebook

TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS

Acknowledgements

Taking Prayer to the Streets was written by Dr. Thomas Wright for the North American Mission Board (NAMB). This condensed version was produced to assist Southern Baptists implement God's Plan for Sharing (GPS), "Every believer sharing and every person hearing by 2020." The revisions were made by the NAMB Prayer and Spiritual Awakening office with valued input from PrayerLink, the SBC state convention prayer leaders. The NAMB Intentional Community Evangelism (ICE) staff contributed the condensed leader's and listener's guides that are used to train prayerwalkers before ICE outreach events.

2009, North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Alpharetta, Georgia

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TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS

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TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS

INTRODUCTION

An ancient proverb states, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” The study of prayer journeys is one step to spiritual growth and renewal. A prayer journey can be defined as an intentional, coordinated effort to pray for and share Jesus with every person in a geographical or cultural community. It includes prayerwalking, biking, driving, flying, inline skating, and other forms of transportation. Prayer journeys help believers recognize the importance of prayer before witnessing and during outreach events.

This prayerwalking material can help a teacher or prayer coordinator mobilize others to take prayer to the streets. It includes everything needed to help believers pray for and share Jesus with people in their communities. This *Taking Prayer to the Streets* guidebook includes lesson plans, listening guide masters, and a CD that contains a read-me-first instruction file, a Power Point presentation, listening guides, clip art, design for a sample prayer request post card and a follow-up card. There is also a pocket guide with Scripture to use on a prayerwalk.

There are three parts to this guidebook. The first part gives abbreviated group training for prayerwalking. This simplified lesson plan can be taught in about one and a half hours, followed by literally “taking prayer to the streets.” Debriefing after the trial prayerwalk will reinforce what the class has learned and give them hands-on experience quickly.

The next two parts are divided into blocks of sessions. The first three sessions expand on prayerwalking and regional prayer journeys to involve everyone in the congregation. Sessions four through six lay a biblical foundation for faithfulness in prayer.

The Importance of Prayer

The new millennium has brought increased interest in reaching North America and the world for Christ. We keep asking, “What could happen if we prayed for and shared Jesus with every person in our community?” There is a renewed interest in reaching people groups, urban centers, and students with intentional prayer and witness. Christians are choosing to be on mission with Christ in prayer, evangelism, and ministry. They are taking prayer to the streets of their neighborhoods, cities and communities.

This is part of a worldwide prayer revival. Thousands of believers are responding to God’s call to pray for and share Jesus with everyone in North America and the world. One of the responses has been a call to prayerwalking. Prayer journeys expand the concept of prayerwalking and regional prayer journeys to include the entire congregation in covering their community in prayer.

Three Purposes of this Guidebook

First, this guidebook helps any leader or prayer coordinator teach the congregation to cover their community in prayer. *Taking Prayer to the Streets* can help believers keep the lifelong priorities of praying and sharing Christ. They can find resources in the guidebook, on the included CD-ROM, or online at www.namb.net/prayer.

Second, this book helps a leader or prayer coordinator prepare, complete, and follow through on a prayerwalk. A congregation can then continue to prayerwalk in different neighborhoods and with various church groups. The teaching in sessions four through six trains believers to confront the gates of hell with biblical, intentional prayer.

Third, this guide helps a church truly become a house of prayer with a passion for lost people. As prayer is practiced corporately, it becomes foundational to the total church life.

Teaching Options for the Prayer Journeys Guidebook

The condensed version of the study can be taught and practiced within about three hours.

The complete guidebook can be taught in six one-hour sessions. Create whatever schedule works best for your church. Appendix A gives details on these formats and some presentation suggestions. Consider these five formats:

1. A one-hour class meeting for six weeks
2. A two or three-night seminar
3. A one-day seminar
4. A weekend conference or retreat
5. A personal study guide

TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS

TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS Condensed Leader's Guide

Probably one of the greatest sins among Southern Baptists is our prayerlessness. It is our greatest neglect, but at the same time, it is America's and the world's greatest need. The reason we aren't experiencing a sweeping revival in America is because of the lack of urgent prayer. The reason our baptisms have been going down in the Southern Baptist Convention is because we don't pray fervently.

Prayer must be the foundation of any evangelism effort. We have learned that taking prayer to the streets is critical to the success of taking the Gospel to our inner cities. We have taken the Gospel to the streets of major cities throughout America. Where these efforts were preceded by an organized prayer effort, there was an amazing harvest of souls. We could clearly tell which streets had been faithfully prayerwalked and which had been neglected. In those that had been prayerwalked, there was an open response and acceptance of the Gospel. In contrast, people in areas not prayerwalked sometimes openly opposed our attempt to share the Gospel.

In the early 1990s, the Home Mission Board sponsored a school of evangelism in Portland, Oregon. This was known as a pagan society, so we made our school practical and took the Gospel to the streets. The local leadership there was skeptical that such a confrontational approach would work in their city. It was suggested that the local churches begin prayerwalking their streets to prepare their communities for witness encounters. They faithfully did that for six weeks prior to the planned witnessing outreach.

One of the first encounters that day was with a young lady who was involved in witchcraft. She allowed the witness to share the Gospel but didn't pray to receive Christ. She told the witness that she didn't know why but he was the first person she had ever allowed to share the Gospel with her. The witness responded that he knew why -- Christians in Portland had been walking her street and praying that she would be receptive. She was impressed with that and promised to give the tract another reading. She also allowed the witness to pray for her concerning salvation. Prayer mobilizes the Spirit of God in peoples' lives.

John Knox of Scotland was so passionate in prayer that Queen Mary of England feared his prayers more than all the armies of Europe. John was in such spiritual agony over his country that he could not sleep. He was so passionate for revival in Scotland that he often stayed up all night praying and weeping for lost people. God rewarded his prayers by sending revival. This needs to be our heart cry for America.

PREPARING THE WARRIOR

❖ Soldiers must be trained before going into battle.

- They go through boot camp or basic training.
You would never send an untrained soldier into battle, would you? You don't just put a weapon in his hands and tell him to do the best he can.
- We prepare them for whatever they may encounter.
We send them through rigorous training. We train them to use their weapons.
- They are trained to become part of a team.

❖ Christians are engaged in daily battle, too.

- Most are not adequately prepared.
We are sending Christians into battle without adequate preparation or training. The results are devastating.
- The results are anxiety, discouragement, worry, etc...
They fall to Satan's schemes and are filled with hopelessness. Most don't understand what is taking place.
- They tend to blame others for their problems.
They blame others for their circumstances or their failures. The enemy camouflages himself and his attacks so well that most Christians are fooled. They usually blame those closest to them.

TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS

THREE STEPS TO PREPARE THE WARRIOR

❖ First step is to acknowledge the enemy.

- The enemy is not one of flesh and blood.
Read Eph. 6:12 where Paul describes our enemy. Our enemy is not another physical person. Although Satan may use a person to trouble you, realize that person is not the enemy.
- Our battle is against Satan's forces.
Paul identifies them as rulers, powers, and world forces of darkness.
He calls them spiritual forces of darkness in heavenly places.
He is describing Satan and his legions of demons.
To fight these forces, the warrior needs to be prepared.
We can't do battle in our own strength, because our enemy is a supernatural spiritual being.
He is the ultimate source of evil and has many minions as his accomplices.

❖ Second step is to put on the armor of God.

- Each piece of armor is needed in the battle.
Read Eph. 6:11-17 where Paul describes the armor Christians are to put on before going into spiritual battle.
- All items of the armor are defensive except for one.
Only when we put on the full armor of God can we stand firm against our enemy's schemes.

❖ Third step is to engage the Lord in prayer.

- Read Eph. 6:18-19 where Paul asks for prayer.
He asks for prayer that he may clearly and boldly proclaim the Gospel.
It brings results.
Paul encourages us to pray at all times in the Spirit.
Pray for boldness for yourself and others to share the Gospel.

Matthew Henry says, "*Prayer buckles the armor together.*"

Bill Hybels says: "If the request is wrong, God says, 'No.' If the timing is wrong, God says, 'Slow.' If you are wrong, God says, 'Grow.' But if the request is right, the timing is right and you are right, God says, 'Go!'"

PRAYER WARRIORS STAND IN THE GAP

Read Ezekiel 22:23-31 and note the conditions in Israel. Note in verse 30 that God searched for a prayer warrior who would stand in the gap and found none. There are five characteristics of prayer warriors who stand in the gap.

1. They pray with hearts of compassion.

- The Bible says Jesus was moved with a heart of compassion when He saw the plight of the multitudes. Sometimes His compassion was accompanied with tears.

2. They pray for the impossible as readily as the possible.

- Ron Dunn, pastor and author, trained his people for fifteen weeks on intercessory prayer. The first request came in from a young mother with a two-year-old son who had swallowed some engine cleaning solvent. Doctors gave no hope the child would live. If he did, he would likely be blind and internally damaged for life. Ron didn't want to give the request to his prayer warriors. He was sure the child would die and his prayer warriors would become discouraged. God impressed on him to give it to them. The intercessors came to the church and lay at the altar weeping and praying for the little boy. Finally, the mother called saying that a miracle had happened, according to the doctors. Her baby was completely well and showed no residual effects of having swallowed the poison. Ron had wanted to start with the possible and move to the impossible. God wanted to start with the impossible to inspire the prayer warriors.

TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS

3. They pray with intensity.

- They aren't afraid to challenge God like Moses did and say, "Your reputation is at stake here, God. If you don't come through, people are going to talk about you."

4. They pray about anything and everything.

- They understand the admonition in James 4:2, "You have not because you ask not."
- They understand the instruction of Jesus to pray for "whatsoever."
- Their requests are tempered by the Word of God – they pray for His will to be done.

5. They pray with authority.

- They've been through Prayer 101 – they pray in Jesus' name – See John 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:23-24

THREE WAYS TO TAKE PRAYER TO THE STREETS

First Way

❖ Pray for the saved but uncommitted.

- They live in every community.
- They have become apathetic or complacent.
- Ask God to convict them of sin, righteousness, and judgment. (See John 16:8)
- Pray they will become obedient to assemble. (See Hebrews 10:25)
- Pray they will overcome a bad church experience.
- Pray for your next-door neighbors.

Second Way

❖ Pray for the unsaved in your community.

- Ask God to remove the blindness from their minds. (See 2 Corinthians 4:4-5)
- Ask God to bring light into the darkness they are experiencing. (See Ephesians 5:8)
- Ask God to deliver them from the spirit of disobedience. (See Ephesians 2:1-2)
- Ask God to reach through their hardened minds. (See 2 Corinthians 3:14)
- Ask God to set the captives free. (See 2 Timothy 2:26)

❖ Why pray for the unsaved?

- They can refuse to go to church.
- They can refuse to listen to your witness.
- They can throw away your tracts.
- They can refuse to let you in.
- They can hang up on you.
- But they can't prevent Jesus from knocking on the door of their hearts in response to your prayers.

TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS

❖ How to intercede for the lost.

- Present them to the Father in the name of Jesus. Ask God to bring His Holy Spirit to bear on their lives. Ask God to take away any false sense of security. Ask God to exercise mercy and grace.
- Good source for learning how to intercede for the lost:
Praying Your Friends to Christ – 1 866 407-6262 (NAMB) or www.nambstore.com

Third Way

❖ Claim your community for Christ.

- This is the crowning step in putting feet to our prayers.
- Paul describes a very well-organized enemy. (See Ephesians 6:12)
- Satan hinders the work of God.
- We need to reclaim our streets for God
- We need to bind the powers of the evil one over homes – whatever we bind on earth is bound in heaven.

THE PRAYERWALK

❖ We can pray as we walk, drive, roller blade, or bicycle through our community.

- You get insight by being on site.
- Prayer teams are made up of two to four people.
- Walk through the community and be aware of what you see.
- Pray for those in every home watching for prayer indicators.
- Support teams are made up of those who can't walk in the community – they stay at the church and pray.

❖ Things to look for as you go through a community:

- Toys tell you there are children in the home – their greatest need is Christian parents.
- Possessions may indicate worship of the god of materialism.
- Beer and liquor bottles may indicate a drinking problem.
- Drug paraphernalia may indicate an addiction problem.

LOOK FOR DIVINE ENCOUNTERS

❖ Talk to those you encounter on the street.

- Tell them why you are there.
- Ask for prayer requests and pray for them on the spot.
- Announce ahead of time you are coming. Send flyers into the community about the prayerwalk – ask them to meet you with their prayer requests.
- Try to share the Gospel with those who are not saved.

TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS

LET'S OBEY OUR LORD'S COMMAND

- ❖ Jesus said to them, “*The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field.*” (See Luke 10:2, NIV)
- ❖ Note Jesus didn't say, “*Ask the Lord of the harvest to send the harvest to the church where the laborers are.*” He asked us to go into the harvest fields to pray and to witness.

FINAL CHALLENGE

- ❖ Let's get serious about being prayer warriors.
- ❖ Let's follow the example of the disciples.
 1. They gathered in earnest intercession prior to Pentecost.
 2. They prayed for ten days, preached for ten minutes and 3,000 got saved.
 3. Today, we pray for ten minutes, preach for ten days and get excited when one or two get saved.
 4. Want to shorten your pastor's sermons? Then get really serious about praying.
 5. Today we need to get rid of dry eye disease. We need to learn how to weep for the lost again. Psalm 126:5,6 says: “*Those who sow in tears shall reap with joyful shouting. He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying his bag of seed, shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.*”

TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS

TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS

TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS Condensed Listener's Guide

INTRODUCTION

Probably one of the greatest sins among Southern Baptists is our prayerlessness. It is our greatest neglect, but at the same time, it is America's and the world's greatest need. The reason we aren't experiencing a sweeping revival in America is because of the lack of urgent prayer. The reason our baptisms have been going down in the Southern Baptist Convention is because we don't pray fervently.

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We send them through rigorous training. We train them to use their weapons.
- They are trained to become part of a _____.

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- The results are anxiety, discouragement, worry, etc...
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- They tend to blame _____ for their problems.
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He calls them spiritual forces of darkness in heavenly places.
He is describing Satan and his legions of demons.
To fight these forces, the warrior needs to be prepared.
We can't do battle in our own strength, because our enemy is a supernatural spiritual being.
He is the ultimate source of evil and has many minions as his accomplices.
- ❖ **Second step is to put on the _____ of God.**
 - Each piece of armor is needed in the _____.
Read Eph. 6:11-17 where Paul describes the armor Christians are to put on before going into spiritual battle.
 - All items of the armor are _____ except for one.
Only when we put on the full armor of God can we stand firm against our enemy's schemes.
- ❖ **Third step is to engage the Lord in _____.**
 - Read Eph. 6:18-19 where Paul asks for prayer.
He asks for prayer that he may clearly and boldly proclaim the Gospel.
It brings results.
Paul encourages us to pray at all times in the Spirit.
Pray for boldness for yourself and others to share the Gospel.

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3. They pray with _____.
 - They aren't afraid to challenge God like Moses did and say, "Your reputation is at stake here, God. If you don't come through people are going to talk about you."
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 - They understand the admonition in James 4:2 "You have not because you ask not."
 - They understand the instruction of Jesus to pray for "whatsoever."
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5. They pray with _____.
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First Way

- ❖ Pray for the _____ but uncommitted.
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 - Pray they will become obedient to _____. (See Hebrews 10:25)
 - Pray they will overcome a bad _____ experience.
 - Pray for your next-door neighbors.

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- ❖ Pray for the _____ in your community.
 - Ask God to remove the _____ from their minds. (See 2 Corinthians 4:4-5)
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 - Ask God to deliver them from the _____ of disobedience. (See Ephesians 2:1-2)
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- ❖ Why pray for the unsaved?
 - They can refuse to go to church.
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 - They can throw away your tracts.
 - They can refuse to let you in.
 - They can hang up on you.
 - But they can't prevent Jesus from knocking on the door of their hearts in response to your prayers.

TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS

❖ How to _____ for the lost.

- Present them to the Father in the name of Jesus. Ask God to bring His Holy Spirit to bear on their lives. Ask God to take away any false sense of security. _____
- Good source for learning how to intercede for the lost:
Praying Your Friends to Christ – 1 866 407-6262 (NAMB) or www.nambstore.com

Third Way

❖ Claim your _____ for Christ.

- This is the crowning step in putting _____ to our prayers.
- Paul describes a very well-organized enemy. (See Ephesians 6:12)
- Satan _____ the work of God.
- We need to _____ our streets for God.
- We need to _____ the powers of the evil one over homes – whatever we bind on earth is bound in heaven.

THE PRAYER JOURNEY

❖ We can pray as we _____, drive, roller blade, or bicycle through our community.

- You get insight by being on site.
- Prayer teams are made up of two to four people.
- Walk through the community and _____ of what you see.
- Pray for those in every _____ watching for prayer indicators.
- Support teams are made up of those who can't walk in the community – they stay at the church and pray.

❖ Things to look for as you go through a community:

- Toys tell you there are _____ in the home – their greatest need is Christian parents.
- _____ may indicate _____ of the god of materialism.
- Beer and liquor bottles may indicate a _____ problem.
- Drug paraphernalia may indicate an _____ problem.

LOOK FOR DIVINE ENCOUNTERS

❖ Talk to those you _____ on the street.

- Tell them why you are there.
- Ask for _____ requests and pray for them on the spot.
- Announce ahead of time you are coming. Send flyers into the community about the prayerwalk – ask them to meet you with their prayer requests.
- Try to share the _____ with those who are not saved.

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- ❖ Note Jesus didn't say, *"Ask the Lord of the harvest to send the harvest to the church where the laborers are."* He asked us to go into the harvest fields to _____ and to _____.

FINAL CHALLENGE

- ❖ Let's get _____ about being prayer warriors.
- ❖ Let's follow the _____ of the disciples.
 - They gathered in earnest _____ prior to Pentecost.
 - They prayed for _____ days, preached for _____ minutes and _____ got saved.
 - Today, we pray for ten minutes, preach for ten days and get excited when one or two get saved.
 - Want to shorten your pastor's sermons? Then get really serious about praying.
 - Today we need to get rid of dry eye disease. We need to learn how to weep for the lost again.
 - Psalm 126:5,6 says: *"Those who sow in tears shall reap with joyful shouting. He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying his bag of seed, shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with him."*

TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS

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SESSION ONE

LEARNING ABOUT PRAYER JOURNEYS

A minister of education shared, “Prayer journeys changed how I look at my community. I really like the way it helped our church see the need to pray for and share Jesus with everyone around our church. I like that it lets everyone in the church be involved, even if they can’t walk a long way.” These next sessions present how prayer journeys help involve everyone in the congregation. They also show how to combine prayer and witness in a natural, non-intrusive way.

Expanding the use of the term “prayer journeys” helps adapt prayerwalking in several ways. Organizing field and support teams involves everyone in covering the community in prayer. Prayer journeys are local church-based and are intentionally evangelistic. Many groups are already using every form of transportation to cover their communities in prayer, so prayer journeys can include prayer biking, driving or inline skating!

Definition of a Prayer Journey

As stated previously, a prayer journey is an intentional, coordinated effort to pray for and share Jesus with every person in a geographical or cultural community. It includes prayerwalking, biking, driving, flying, inline skating, and other forms of transportation. Prayer journeys help believers recognize the importance of prayer before witnessing and during outreach events. The entire geographic or cultural area must be saturated in prayer. One prayer journey field team in Seattle reported, “It was amazing how much we learned about our community by walking through it and praying for the people.”

1. Adaptable. Prayer journeys should be changed in any way necessary to cover an urban or rural area in prayer. Prayer journeys provide field and support teams so every believer can be involved. Most believers do not have to go far to find groups that need intentional, specific prayer. Military chaplains have developed ways to pray for everyone on their bases. Ethnic leaders pray for new immigrants arriving in their communities. Urban leaders pray for specific communities in the inner city. Postal workers pray for everyone on their route. Going house-to-house at Halloween takes on new meaning too. A teacher in Georgia said, “I would get so frustrated with students in my high school classes. I realized today that I had never prayed for them. I will start tomorrow to pray for every name on my roll.”

2. Focused. Prayer journeys remind believers to focus on the importance and benefit of prayer. Satan loves general, unfocused prayer. Prayer journeys prompt specific, intentional prayer relating to the community. It’s what Steve Hawthorne calls “Praying on-site with insight.”

Look again at the words of the hymn, “**What a Friend We Have in Jesus.**”²

*What a friend we have in Jesus / All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry / Everything to God in prayer:
Oh, what peace we often forfeit / Oh, what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry / Everything to God in prayer!*

*Have we trials and temptations? / Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged / Take it to the Lord in prayer:
Can we find a friend so faithful / Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness / Take it to the Lord in prayer.*

*Are we weak and heavy laden / Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge / Take it to the Lord in prayer:
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee? / Take it to the Lord in prayer;
In his arms he’ll take and shield thee / Thou wilt find a solace there.*

TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS

Why Prayer Journeys Are Needed

The Needs of the Lost

Prayer journeys remind believers of the need for specific biblical prayer. The United States is now the fourth largest unsaved nation on earth. Canada only has 8,000 evangelical churches to reach a population of 2.9 million.

I Timothy 2:1-4 is a wonderful call to evangelistic prayer. Paul urges Timothy and the generations of believers to come, “that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” As believers, we need to pray for and share Jesus with everyone in our spheres of influence.

Entreaties, prayers, and thanksgiving – Paul emphasized different kinds of prayer: persistent, pleading, patient, and thankful.

On behalf of all people – Rivalries and gossip will cease when prayer replaces idle talk. Paul knew that believers sometimes need encouragement to look outward. Every believer ought to have confidence that his brothers and sisters in Christ are praying for him.

Those in authority – Believers need to make prayer lists of local, state and national people in authority. We need to pray for them by name. When was the last time you prayed for the Supreme Court justices by name? When did you pray for your local school board or the president/prime minister? If evangelicals are not praying for them, who is?

Quiet Lives – The result we can expect if we pray this way is a tranquil and quiet life. A church elder began to weep when he heard these verses taught. He told the congregation, “My brothers and sisters, we must pray for our leaders, even when we don’t agree with them, if we are going to have tranquil and quiet lives again.” There are significant consequences when we pray, and when we don’t.

Good and Acceptable to God – Prayer softens hard hearts and brings responsiveness to the work of the Holy Spirit. Notice in I Timothy 2:4 that Paul reminds Timothy of the importance of prayer in evangelism. A strong motivation to pray this way is that it is “good and acceptable in God’s sight.” A music leader said, “It hit me pretty hard that I need to be more like God in desiring that all men be saved. I also need to do more than expect someone else to be leading people to Christ.”

The Knowledge of the Truth – Paul also referred Timothy back to Christ’s words in John 14:6, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.” Jesus did not say, “I am some of the way, part of the truth, and a little bit of the life.” Humans can only know God through His Son. There is confidence when believers present the truth of Christ. We do not have to be ashamed or embarrassed or apologetic. Jesus also said in John 8:32, “You will know the truth and the truth will make you free.”

Charles Finney challenged the believers of his day to specific prayer, “You had better send your Bibles to the heathen, where they will do some good, if you are not going to believe and use them. I have no evidence that there is much of this prayer now in this church, or in this city. And what will become of them? What will become of your children?—your neighbors?—the wicked?”³

The Needs of the Believer

God awaits our prayers to release the spiritual power that enables us to follow through on His plan. Prayer journeys draw believers closer to God and give us a vision for the lost. This intentional prayer releases God’s power and love, as we agree with His plans for an area. Prayer journeys help believers focus on their responsibility to reach their neighborhoods.

Like any physical or spiritual discipline, prayer requires practice for believers to do it well. We need to practice prayer by ourselves and with others, and study the Scriptures on prayer. We can be encouraged by reading biographies of historical prayer warriors, and their classics on prayer. These things will help us develop a passion for praying unceasingly. This passion draws us into protracted, intentional prayer. In light of all God wants us to pray about, an hour of prayer seems like just the beginning.

There is truth in the first verse of the great hymn, “**Sweet Hour of Prayer**”⁴

*Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer / That calls me from a world of care,
And bids me at my Father’s throne / Make all my wants and wishes known!
In seasons of distress and grief / My soul has often found relief
And oft escaped the tempter’s snare / By thy return, sweet hour of prayer.*

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The Need for Specific Prayer

Satan works hard to keep believers from praying. When we do pray, he tries to keep our prayers shallow and general. Therefore, a lot of our praying is aimless. We hear prayers to “bless all the missionaries” and “to touch everyone in our community.” Although sincere prayers, they are usually powerless. It is rare for believers to expect or see answers to these general prayers.

We are often like that group of believers in Acts 12:13-16. They prayed fervently for Peter’s release from prison. When he was miraculously released, “they were amazed.” Satan trembles at specific, biblical prayer. Prayer journeys help believers pray for specific people, homes, and families.

A woman was led by the Lord to sit in the balcony each Sunday, so she could pray for every person in the main part of the sanctuary. Another person, after studying *Taking Prayer to the Streets*, said, “On my way home from class, I began to see houses I had not noticed. I realized for the first time that each house represented people with spiritual needs that our church can meet.” A prayer plan helps believers pray for others by name. Read the following verses for some specific ways to pray:

- Matthew 9:38 - Pray for workers to enter the harvest
- Ephesians 6:18 - Pray in the Holy Spirit for fellow believers
- Ephesians 6:19 - Pray for God to make a way for us to share the Gospel
- Ephesians 6:19 – Pray for your pastor and others who are sharing the Gospel
- I Timothy 2:1 - Pray for everyone with thankfulness
- I Timothy 2:2-4 - Pray for elected officials to be saved, to grow in faith, and stand firm
- I John 1:9 - Pray in repentance and confession of your sins
- II Chronicles 7:14 - Pray for spiritual awakening

Specific prayer for students can be found in the *Campus Prayer Journey Participant’s Guide* available from the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. For more information, visit www.studentz.com/prayer or call 1 800 806-6940, ext. 5177.

In his book, *Effective Evangelistic Churches*, Thom Rainer writes, “Prayer was mentioned as the second most important methodology for reaching people for Christ in these evangelistic churches. But even that statistic may be understated. In every methodology—preaching, Sunday school, ministries, etc.—prayer was the underlying strength to the methodology.”⁵

Response Time

Perhaps sing a praise song. Divide into groups of three or four. Pause for an extended time of prayer for the church and its community. Pray for the Holy Spirit to convict people of sin and draw them into seeking the truth. Encourage every person to begin a prayer journey.

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SESSION TWO

PRAYER JOURNEY FIELD AND SUPPORT TEAMS

One high school student said, “I learned so much about my neighborhood the first time I went on a prayerwalk. Houses became homes. People became neighbors. The lost became my responsibility.”

Prepare to reclaim an area in Christ’s name for concentrated prayer and witness. Prayer journeys use field teams that walk, drive or use other transportation to cover a community in prayer. Support teams usually include those who cannot walk or travel well, but still want to be involved.

Field Teams

Field teams travel into the communities for specific prayer in the areas they are seeking God to redeem. Prayer journeys help believers learn how to cover a community with prayer. Field teams also learn to be sensitive in responding to divine encounters during a prayer journey. These occur when the Spirit of God leads someone into the path of a believer so he can hear the Gospel, be encouraged, or receive ministry. This happens when field teams encounter people.

Everyone who studies *Taking Prayer to the Streets* will be richly blessed by taking part in a field team or support team. Inspiring testimonies from people who practice covering their communities with prayer reaffirm the value of participating in prayer journeys.

Field teams may walk, drive, bicycle, in-line skate, fly, or ride a subway or train. A field team that is walking may have only two to three people in it. Field teams walk with heads up and eyes open. Other modes of transportation may include two to five people. The point is to cover the community in prayer and take advantage of divine encounters. Team members listen for the Spirit to speak to them, based on what they see, hear, and smell. It is not just a devotional walk or drive, but an intentional time of intercession for others. Walking and public transportation have the advantage of divine encounters.

One prayer team had a “check engine” light come on in the van. The driver pulled into a service station and asked the mechanic to investigate. The mechanic gladly heard the Gospel from the driver while he searched for the problem. No mechanical problem was ever found, but spiritual needs were diagnosed and treated!

Teams need to prepare for prayer before leaving. Read James 5:16: “The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.” Take time to privately confess sin and ask the Holy Spirit to guide the team.

The teams usually do not stop in front of a home or business. As the teams walk or ride, they pray silently or softly voice aloud a prayer based on what they see and feel. The prayers are short, specific, and powerful. As E.M. Bounds wrote, “Our short prayers owe their point and efficiency to the long ones that have preceded them.”⁶

Field teams can begin with the neighborhoods closest to the church. Take a map of the area if several teams are praying through it. Duplicated prayer is not a problem, but try to pray through every neighborhood in the community. One team reported, “We got confused on the maps, but we knew that extra prayer would not hurt. Plus, the Spirit led a young woman who was walking her dog to hear the Gospel.”

Take precautions for team safety. Some areas require larger field teams or should be driven through. Encourage teams in problem areas to carry a cell phone. In some areas, it may be a good idea for the coordinator to drive around the target area to check on each team every fifteen minutes. Do not avoid these areas, because they need prayer. But ... “Be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves” (Matt. 10:16).

Provide each person a copy of *Taking Prayer to the Streets: PrayerWalking Pocket Guide*. This provides helpful information for prayerwalk field and support teams to pray effectively. It summarizes many prayer scriptures to help team members use them on the prayerwalk.

Support Teams

Support teams remain at the church to provide prayer support for the field teams, and include those who cannot physically walk with them. One shut-in can’t even travel to the church, but says that she “wouldn’t miss the chance to pray for our church leaders and community.”

1. Support teams of two to five people pray for the field teams and their territories. The support teams will pray over maps of local

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areas and every apartment, house and business on the appropriate streets. Local maps are often available from the associational office or from the Mapping Center for Evangelism, www.map4jesus.org.

2. Support teams intercede on behalf of church prospects and lost people. Senior adults have taken great joy in being active in support teams covering their community and the field teams in prayer.
3. Support teams can pray for the church facilities. It is usually best to create one or more teams of two to five people to pray through the church. Each team can go separately to every room and pray for the teachers. They pray for the maturity and witness of the believers in the class and for unbelievers to accept Christ and to come to church.
4. Support teams pray for the staff, program leaders, and worship leaders. They pray for the Holy Spirit to empower the services and outreach, and for the members to reach the lost and introduce people to Jesus as their Savior. They can even walk through the parking lot and pray for the light of the Gospel to reach into the community. They pray for every visitor's spot to be filled with visitors.

A support team in Salt Lake City, Utah was led to pray for every visitor's parking spot in the parking lot. They reported that the next Sunday every visitor's spot was full for the first time in many years, and they added that it wasn't church members parking there, either!

Length of Time

The field teams and support teams need to decide the length of time they will pray on a prayer journey. The length of time depends on many factors. The field teams should be assigned about one hour. It passes surprisingly quickly. Vary that amount of time, depending on weather, geography, number of houses, and number of field teams walking or using other transportation. Begin at the door of the church and fan out down the streets. Some teams may need to drive to their neighborhood assignment. They should park in a safe place and walk the neighborhood. Decide on a time for everyone to come back together to report what the Lord has taught them. Usually a 30-minute to one hour session is enough.

Practice

Consider some sample prayers to help the field teams understand the concept. Most field teams will want to keep moving as they pray. Probably the teams should not stop for more than 20 seconds, particularly for the field teams that are driving an area. A sample prayer might be "Lord, we pray for the people in this home and for Your Spirit to draw them to seek the truth. I see a boat there and pray that while this family is on the boat, Your Spirit will prompt them to seek You. I see the children's bicycles and pray that the children will grow in the wisdom and stature of the Lord. We pray for the congregation to follow through with these people and that they will be responsive."

The teams may be led to read Scripture and remember the promises of God. There are some appropriate Scriptures in the pocket guide. Enjoy the presence of the Lord as you journey through His creation. Intercede for each person, home, and business. Pray that each person will meet Jesus and be influenced by a local church. Pray for the believers in that area to be encouraged and strengthened. Pray for a bold witness to touch lives with caring and compassionate evangelism.

It is such a blessing to hear what the Spirit leads people to say while praying onsite. One person prayed in tears for a house where the trash can was full of beer bottles and baby formula containers. Another prayed for a man with a fishing boat to become a fisher of men. A young woman prayed for relationships in an apartment complex they drove by. In each instance, they were led to pray for the salvation of the lost and the outreach of the church into those areas.

Campus Prayer Journeys

Campus Prayer Journeys began in Arkansas in 1998. The Baptist State Convention has materials to help parents and other adults pray for students, teachers, and administrators on school campuses the night before "See You at the Pole." Campus Prayer Journeys then encourage prayer throughout the year for the salvation, safety, and spiritual growth of everyone on the campus. For a Church Guide, a Participant's Guide, or for more information, call (501) 367-4791 or visit www.studenz.com/prayer.

Response Time

Pause for a time of prayer. Let each person voice a sentence prayer. Ask for wisdom in praying for the community of the church. Pray for people to join field teams and support teams. Pray that every community will be covered with prayer.

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SESSION THREE

RESPONDING TO DIVINE ENCOUNTERS

The field teams need to be prepared to respond to divine encounters during the prayer journey. In every prayer journey, the Lord brings encounters with believers who need encouragement and unbelievers who want to accept Christ or are willing to listen to the Gospel. God helps the evangelists to pray and the prayer warriors to evangelize!

In San Diego, a prayer journey field team paused briefly at a small apartment complex. A man came running out and asked, “Can I help you find someone?” We answered, “No thank you. We are from (name of) church and are out praying for our community. Is there anything we can pray for you about?” He looked surprised and answered, “Yes, I was just asking God to send someone to show me that He is real.” He gladly accepted Christ and is being disciplined through that congregation. Within 15 minutes, a young Hispanic woman had listened to the Gospel and accepted a Gospel booklet from one of the Spanish-speaking team members.

Listen for the Spirit to instruct you to greet someone you encounter during the prayer journey. If they respond, say, “We are from (name of) church and are out praying for our community. Is there anything we can pray for you about?” Most people will say yes. Take a moment to write it on the follow-up card (Appendix D). If the Spirit leads, ask them, “May we have your name, so we can pray for you specifically?” Many people will cooperate. Then ask if they would mind if someone came by from the church to pray for them or lead a Bible study. You may be able to say, “I see that you believe in prayer. Are you a follower of Jesus or are you still in the process?” By this point, many field teams are able to share a Gospel booklet or testimony. Also, leave the person an information brochure about the church.

Field Team Witnessing Booklets

Bring whatever witnessing booklet you like to use. NAMB’s “Eternal Life” pamphlet is available in 17 languages. Take a few minutes to look through it; the booklet explains how to become a Christian. Become familiar with it until you are comfortable sharing it with someone. You can read through it with the other person. Since it is available in so many languages, you can read a copy in your language, while the other person is reading it in his/her language.

Be sensitive for the divine encounters God puts in your path while on the prayer journey. Take a moment to introduce yourself and the church and explain that you are praying for the community that day. Ask the people if they have a prayer request. If they will let you, pray with them there and follow through with a Gospel presentation.

Follow-up Cards

Appendix D and the CD-ROM have a sample follow-up card that you can adapt for your church. Use this sample card or anything that works best in your congregation. Get enough information for follow-up with those who share prayer requests, accept Christ, or receive information.

A pastor volunteered to join the field team with the seminar teacher, so he “could see how it’s done.” The team began walking and praying on the street leading into the church parking lot. After praying for several houses, they came upon a man washing his car. The teacher said, “Hi, we are from First Baptist and are out praying for our community today. Is there anything we can pray for you about?” The man looked puzzled, but began a long string of prayer requests. As the team was writing furiously on the follow-up card, the pastor said, “Sounds like you believe in the power of prayer. Are you a follower of Jesus or are you still in the process?” The man answered that he was still in the process, but he would like to know for sure that he was saved. 15 minutes later, he was! Be sure to record the decisions on the follow-up cards.

Reporting What God Has Done

Conclude the prayer journey with a brief reporting session.

Lead in Sharing

To encourage each person to share what the Lord did through the prayer journey, ask some questions. Note the new spiritual sensitivity and burden for the area and people. How was God’s power released through the onsite prayer? What impressions did they receive about the neighborhoods? Share some of the contacts’ prayer requests. How many people were led to become Christians? What is the possible impact on the community and the church?

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Important Benefits

This can become a very important time in the life of the church. These reporting sessions are often dynamic in their observations, reports, and sharing. Most of the time, there are specific suggestions and requests for ways to reach into the community and respond to things they have seen. Ministries that have begun after prayer journeys include *Jesus* video distribution, English as a Second Language classes, homeless ministries, job-training, day care programs for senior adults, after school programs and “mother’s morning out.”

Follow-Through on Contacts and Converts

The follow-through for prayer journeys concludes with the second coming of the Lord Jesus. Do not stop with one or two prayer journeys. Every target area for a prayer journey will result in conversions, rededications, and new congregations. Each church needs to ensure that every contact and conversion from the prayer journey is nurtured into a relationship with a Sunday school class, Bible study or prayer group.

Visitation

Plan follow-through visits with every new convert and everyone who gave the field team a prayer request. Follow-through includes sending evangelism teams door-to-door to harvest the ground covered in a season of prayer.

Jesus Video Distribution

An excellent follow-up plan is to give a *Jesus* video to everyone in the community. This video has been used all over the world to help many people meet Jesus. For more information, contact the *Jesus* video project, www.jesusfilm.org

Discipleship Materials

Disciple the new converts with any of the excellent discipleship materials available. An excellent follow-through material for new believers is *Beginning Steps: A Seven-Day Growth Guide for New Believers*. Call 1-866-407-6262, or visit www.nambstore.com for more information.

Plan More Prayer Journeys

Most congregations that study the guidebook will plan many more prayer journeys. These journeys often happen with very little preparation. A singles group in New Orleans had planned an inline skating afternoon. One of the singles came to the *Taking Prayer to the Streets* seminar, and prayer inline skating was born!

A field team in New Orleans spoke to a woman as they began their prayer journey. The team briefly explained what they were doing and received her prayer request. At the end of the prayer journey, they found the woman sitting on her steps. She asked the team if they had prayed for every home on the street. When they answered yes, she said, “That is the sweetest thing I have ever seen.” She talked with the team in-depth as they answered her questions about faith in Christ and made an appointment for a follow-up visit. One of the team members said, “The prayer journey made a wonderful impression on that woman about the love of Jesus at work through our church.” One of the field team members came forward the following Sunday and accepted Christ!

Response Time

Pause briefly to discuss the evangelistic ministry that became evident. Many prayer journeyers are deeply affected by the homelessness, poverty, and violence that they see. Read Ephesians 3:20, “Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think.” Close in prayer for the communities that were covered. Pray for the new converts, the contacts made and the follow-through time.

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SESSION FOUR

BECOMING MORE FAITHFUL IN PRAYER

Many believers struggle with becoming more faithful in prayer. A strong prayer life flows out of walking closely with Christ. There are many reasons believers do not pray enough. Schedule demands as well as feelings steal time needed for prayer. What are some ways believers can break through prayerlessness and reclaim a personal passion for prayer?

Turning from Our Way to God's Way Prompts Prayer

People do not communicate with God through prayer because they are separated from Him by sin. God created humankind to have fellowship with Him. Our decision to disobey God, our sin, separated us from Him. God sent His son, Jesus, to pay the price for our sin and bring us back to Him. In John 14:6 (NKJV), Jesus said, "No one comes to the Father except through Me."

Humans have a lot of problems letting God be God. We sometimes think, "God, if you knew what I know, you would do things differently!" God knows better than we do: He is the Creator of the universe. We can trust Him. Psalm 147:4 (NKJV) says that God "counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name." He can handle us! Becoming a Christian means accepting Jesus Christ as Lord.

This means agreeing with God that our way is the wrong way (repent from sin). If we are going the wrong way, then we are lost. We must turn from our way to God's way. We then must ask God's Holy Spirit to come into our lives and change us from the inside out. We are then saved from the eternal consequences of our sin. Through the Holy Spirit's power, a believer follows Christ's teachings and progressively becomes like Him.

The New Testament challenges each believer to have a close relationship with Jesus. In John 15:4-9, Jesus compares this relationship to the life a branch receives from the vine. We cannot bear fruit without staying attached to the vine. Our fellowship with Christ helps prioritize our lives, and helps make time to communicate with our Creator.

It seems that everyone finds time to do what they really want to do. Believers should discipline themselves to daily Bible study, personal prayer, and worship.

The prayer field team was walking through a middle-class neighborhood in the Bible belt. They greeted an Asian woman and she began to talk to them. They told her they were from the church up the street and were praying for the community. She asked them, "What do you do at church?" As they answered her, she interrupted them, "What did you say? You mean God wrote a book to tell people how to live? How do I get one?" At the follow-up session, one of the prayer team members commented, "She helped me remember what a wonderful gift we have in the Bible and that many people want to learn about Christ."

Balancing Relationship and Service Revitalizes Prayer

A right relationship with God is essential to prayer. Once people become believers, they must learn that their relationship with God is different from their service for God. First Samuel 15:22 (NKJV) reminds the believers "to obey is better than sacrifice." We should not confuse our relationship with Christ with our service for Christ; doing things for Him is not necessarily the same as walking intimately with Him.

Satan particularly likes for believers to place their service for Christ ahead of their families. Be alert to guard the personal discipline of daily time with Christ (I Pet. 5:8). A British friend once said, "You Yanks are so ingenious, you invented the rocking chair so you could keep moving, even when you are sitting still." Be careful not to equate activity with success.

Bible Study Increases a Passion for Prayer

Another way to become more faithful in prayer is through Bible study. Luke 24:32 (NKJV) shares the testimony of Cleopas. "Did not our heart burn within us...while He [Jesus] opened the Scriptures to us?" It has been too long for some of us since our hearts burned within us from opening the Scriptures.

T. W. Hunt, a prayer warrior and authority on prayer, reminds the believer, "Scripture quickens its hearers. It enlivens our desire for the things of God and satisfies that yearning for God that is natural to the Christian....the Holy Spirit is our teacher today, as we read the Word of God, just as Jesus was Cleopas' teacher, and it is a common experience for believers to sense a burning intensity within as the Holy Spirit brings insight into Scripture."⁷

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Studying the Bible also helps us follow God's will and purpose for our lives. Walking closely with Christ means that the fruit of the Spirit is a growing part of how believers act and react. Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV) lists the fruit as "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." How many heroes in our culture teach these characteristics?

In fact, the cultural pressure is for people to approve of and follow the list in Galatians 5:19-21, "Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these... of which I forewarn you,... that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."

It is frightening to realize that social or religious conservatives who speak against this behavior are criticized for being intolerant, puritanical, and mean-spirited. How can we be so intolerant as to say these are wrong? Remember that humankind's ultimate authority is God, not opinion polls. The only way to know what God says about morality is through His Word. This is why so many in history have worked so hard to question the authority of God's Word.

Why is it that one plus one equals two all over the world? Because it is true. You could say that a person is intolerant if he doesn't allow others to believe that one plus one equals three. There is a supra-cultural mathematical standard that applies worldwide. There is also a supra-cultural spiritual standard. Jesus is the only way to God because He is the only god (John 14:6). Believers can make that statement with the same certainty that they say "one plus one equals two." Christians can have confidence to pray to the Creator God through His unique Son, Jesus Christ. We also do not have to be apologetic or embarrassed to share Christ as the only way to God.

Thanksgiving and Praise Create a Desire to Pray

King David wrote in Psalm 100:4 (NIV) to "Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise." Once we begin to fellowship with the holy God, we are convicted of our sins and confession follows. After we have given Him praise, thanksgiving, and confession, our requests can begin.

A dear saint testified, "I often find myself getting frustrated and angry at the injustice in the world. Sometimes, I just get up on the wrong side of the bed. As soon as I realize it, I begin to sing a praise song. Then I start thanking Him for being just and holy. You know, in just a few minutes, my frustration and anger just floats away."

Optional Mid-Session Prayer and Response Time

Pause for a prayer time and perhaps begin with a praise song. Maybe break up into small groups to pray. Watch for any unbelievers who may be ready to accept Christ, and be prepared to share with them. Be aware of others who need to deal with sin and return to God. Plead for personal holiness and for the fruit of the Spirit to characterize us. Pray for those who are struggling—to accept Christ or return to Him.

Fervent, Righteous Prayer Brings Answers

One of the reasons people do not pray is they do not think it does any good. Even believers seem to think that God does not answer prayer if He tells us "no" or "wait." James 4:2-3 and 5:16 show why most prayer is answered no. "You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures." And then, "the effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much." So many of our prayers seek the hand of God instead of His face. We are selfish and greedy. We expect God to bless, even though we are unfaithful and living in the consequences of our disobedience.

Keeping a prayer journal helps believers write down answers to prayer. Reviewing those pages and years of answered prayer is quite a blessing, particularly when Satan tempts us to question God's faithfulness.

Prayer teams from several churches in a city near Phoenix, Arizona began to pray fervently for their community. They were amazed to see how things changed. The entire police force became Christians. A Hispanic congregation fervently prayed and walked through their community every week. In just a few months, they reported that every "crack house" selling drugs was closed. Even the radical changes in New York City can be traced back to groups of faithful Christians praying fervently for their city.

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Biblical Prayer Becomes Contagious

When people are exposed to biblical prayer, they want to take part in it. This is why the disciples asked Christ in Luke 11:1 (NIV) to teach them to pray. The Jews prayed a lot, but their ritual prayers were different from Christ's. The disciples wanted to learn to pray like Jesus

Humans have a "God-shaped hole" in their hearts. Only a relationship with their Creator can fill that vacuum. Adam and Eve enjoyed their fellowship with God until they sinned. When they tried to hide from God, He searched for them. Even though many people run from God by dismissing formal religion, they are glad when the Creator God finds them. This is why people try to meet God on their own terms. These false religions are often based on earning salvation or doing good deeds. They impose on God their ideas of what He should be and do. They each follow a form of ritual prayer. (See Matt. 7:7-9).

Religion, then, can be defined as "Human ways to find God." This is very different from Christianity, as seen in John 3:16-17. Christianity can be defined as "God's way to find humans." He is not just one of the gods found in today's pluralism. The Creator God takes the initiative to seek and save lost people. (See Luke 19:10).

In addition to the genetic memory of walking with God in the garden, man continues to be pursued by God. Paul teaches in Romans 1:20 (NKJV) that God's ... "invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made...so that they are without excuse. It is sad that humans "changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man - ... who exchanged the truth of God for the lie." Romans 1:23-25. False religion with its manmade, ritual prayers is dry and lifeless. Biblical prayer as taught by Christ makes people want to talk with their Creator like Jesus did.

The young Buddhist man confided in his Christian friend, "I don't think Buddha hears me pray. When I hear you pray to Jesus, you sound like you're talking to someone who listens to you. It is very peaceful."

In John 14:27, Jesus talks about the peace that He gives believers. The word "peace" comes from a Greek word meaning "to reunite or reconcile" those who are separated. It refers to outward and inward peace.⁸ Humans can only find peace by being reunited with the Creator God through His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Hearing from God Empowers Prayer

There is a lot of false teaching on prayer and spiritual warfare. It is very important to ... "test the spirits to see whether they are from God..." I John 4:1. In Matthew 6:5-14, Jesus showed His followers how to pray. His model prayer illustrates biblical, effective prayer.

Jesus began His model prayer with a very intimate and personal phrase that refers to God as "daddy." He then praised God and acknowledged His authority. Even the Son of God balanced intimacy with His Father with obedience to Him. We sometimes want to impose our agendas on God, instead of listening for His agenda. Next, Jesus taught us to ask for "daily bread" and forgiveness of sin. He prayed for consistency and protection. He concluded by again acknowledging God as the Creator, who is sovereign over time and space.

It had been a very hot day in Manaus, Brazil, when the prayer teams began their evening prayer journey. The Brazilian pastor led them into a community darkened by the poverty and hopelessness of life without Christ. On an apartment porch, a young mother sat crying with her infant daughter in her arms. The pastor then explained they were a prayer team from the Baptist church. Through her tears, she gave a beautiful smile.

"I have been praying for two days for God to send someone to show me how to have hope." She accepted Christ, and brought two friends with her to church the next Sunday. Her testimony helped every person in the congregation see God's faithfulness to answer prayer. The sovereign God of the universe brought that team to that woman. One of the team members voiced what each had thought, "It was so hot I didn't want to go, but now I'm glad I did."

Response Time

Pause for a prayer time to focus on the biblical lessons learned. Perhaps sing a praise song. Seek God for a renewed faithfulness in prayer. Thank God for telling us "no" when we ask for the wrong things. Pray for righteousness, and to be contagious in prayer.

TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS

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Session Five

BECOMING LIKE JESUS IN PRAYER

Although Stan was an imposing football player, he stood at the front of the church, crying. “It happened so slowly. I used to be strong in the Lord. Tonight, I realized that I have wandered far from God. I don’t even pray anymore. But I want to be more like Jesus, instead of the way some of my friends want me to be.”

Prayer and Fasting

Every Christian struggles with the cultural pressure to turn away from following Christ, but only He can give us personal peace and satisfaction. Even strong believers often feel they do not pray enough, but none of the prayer books tells us how much is enough prayer. Becoming like Jesus in prayer helps us see how much prayer is enough.

In Luke 2:36-38, Anna is blessed to see the Christ child because of her faithfulness in fasting and prayer. In Luke 4:2, Jesus fasted for forty days. Fasting should be part of the spiritual discipline for believers. It means to give up food or any other activity to dedicate that time to prayer. Fasting is not an external ritual but an internal commitment, and reminds us that sometimes prayer is more important than eating.

One senior citizen shared, “Fasting has become a weekly time to catch up on some of my hardest praying. The prayer list gets so long; I have to find more time to intercede. It is such a sweet time for me. It is better than chocolate!” How much is enough? Our faithfulness in prayer and witness grows by studying the life of Jesus. The Gospel of Luke is an excellent guide to this priority in the ministry of Jesus. Becoming like Jesus in prayer helps us see how much prayer is enough. Jesus led His followers in prayer, just as faithful leaders will guide their people in prayer. It is not easy to be a shepherd in a culture that admires cowboys. Shepherds lead, while cowboys drive.

Praying Evangelistically

Luke records that Jesus began His public ministry in a synagogue in Nazareth. In Luke 4:18, Jesus reads from Isaiah 61:1, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed.” The Greek word for “preach the Gospel” is the same word as “evangelism” in English.

Jesus was careful in this passage to show the need for meeting physical and spiritual needs. He began His public ministry by introducing Himself as a caring and compassionate evangelist. The followers of Christ, then, also need to be caring and compassionate evangelists. This is a hard lesson. Believers have let Satan convince us that evangelism is only for the chosen few. If we are going to be like Christ, we will love others and share Christ with them.

In Luke 19:10, Jesus said, “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” To be Christlike, believers need to actively pray for and share Jesus with unbelievers.

The British preacher, C. H. Spurgeon, said, “If any minister can be satisfied without conversions, he shall have no conversions.”⁹ Several helpful resources for training are listed in the bibliography.

Praying Passionately

Sometimes prayer is even more important than sleeping. In Luke 6:12, Jesus spent the entire night in prayer before choosing the twelve. Is it unrealistic for Christ to expect His followers to pray all night? If believers are going to be like Jesus, we should do what He did. Jesus was very busy and very tired, but He had a passion for the most important things.

Jesus knew that prayer is faith passing into action. The needs were so great and temptations so pressing, He needed all-night prayer. When we begin to pray passionately, we will see that periodic all-night prayer is needed just to keep up with all the prayer requests we gather.

John Knox of Scotland was so passionate in prayer that Queen Mary of England feared his prayers more than all the armies of Europe. He would be in such spiritual agony over his country that he could not sleep. He was passionate for revival to change Scotland.¹⁰ He often stayed up all night praying and weeping for lost people. The Lord rewarded this passionate praying with revival.

TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS

Creating prayer lists quickly shows that night-long prayer is not unreasonable, the needs are so great worldwide. Pastors, staff members, international and North American missionaries need a prayer hedge of protection. Praying for every local school teacher, politician, and sports figure takes time.

Praying Intentionally

Luke 10:1-2 provides what could be an early prayerwalk. Jesus sent out 72 people to pray for and share Jesus with people in “every town and place where He was about to go,” (Luke 10:1, NIV). It was in this context that the Lord instructed believers to “Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field,” (Luke 10:2, NIV).

In Luke 10:17-19, the field teams reported back the divine encounters they had with the lost, the possessed, and the irreligious. Intentional prayer seeks what God wants and then listens for His response.

Praying Intimately

Ritual prayer is exchanged for *intimate* prayer, when believers learn to pray like Jesus prayed. In Luke 11:1 (NIV), the disciples responded to Jesus’ praying by asking Him to “teach us to pray.” As Christians seek to become more Christlike, we become more faithful to pray unceasingly. Jesus answered the disciples’ request with the model prayer and a lesson on persistent intercession.

How much time each day do you think evangelicals pray? Christians seem to struggle with self-sufficiency, since we only pray 4-6 minutes a day. Is that enough prayer? Do we not need prayer the other 23 hours and 54 minutes? We are taught from childhood that we can take care of ourselves. When we grow and begin to deal with spiritual things, we think we can take care of it ourselves as well. This is not true with spiritual needs or even with all of our physical wants. We need a humble brokenness, with absolute dependence upon God through His Son, Jesus Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Latisha was hot and tired, and came inside for a cool drink. She stuck a straw into a soft drink and took a big sip. Latisha did not even once think about pulling out the straw and saying, “That is a GREAT straw.” The straw is not as important as what comes through the straw. It’s a tool. Believers should be like the straw. We are a tool in God’s hands, allowing the Holy Spirit to flow unimpeded in refreshment and blessing. All praise and honor given to the tool must be forwarded back to the Lord. Any time we try to keep any of the glory, it burns us.

Praying Persistently

In Luke 11:9, (NIV), Jesus said, “So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.” This persistence in asking, searching and knocking enables believers to pray for what God wants. We always get a “yes” answer when we agree with God.

In Luke 18:1-8, (NASB), Jesus presented “a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart” V.1. Satan works hard to make all believers fail. He wants defeated, powerless believers. He will make us fail by bringing in opposition. He will make us fail by tempting us to do the right things in our power instead of God’s power.

If he cannot get that to work, he will let us succeed by relying on our education, expertise, and experience. Many believers become prideful when they are successful. One prayerwalker said, “I realized I was interested in the credit for what God was doing.”

Jesus knew that much of the failure in prayer comes from a lack of persistence. The widow’s persistent requests in Luke 18 were just and realistic. The judge had to respond in Luke 18:5, “Because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.” Persistent prayer is not so much about changing God’s mind as showing Him we are prepared for the answer.

Praying God-Centered Prayer

In a second parable beginning in Luke 18:9, Jesus describes the difference in God-centered prayer and self-centered prayer. The Pharisee spoke to God out of his pride and self-sufficiency. In Luke 18:12, he relied on his good works to save him.

In contrast, the tax gatherer in Luke 18:13 was repentant and dependent upon God. Salvation comes from being holy, not from being good. The only way to become holy is to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and ask the Holy Spirit to come in and fill us.

Henry Blackaby writes, “We must let [God] reveal His thoughts to us. Only then can we get a proper perspective on life. If you keep your life God-centered, you will immediately put your life alongside His activity.”¹¹

TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS

Praying Thankfully

In Luke 22:14-23 Jesus gives thanks for His food in the Last Supper. Praying before meals is a surprisingly effective testimony in a secular culture. A good bridge to witness is to tell the server that you are about to pray for your food and ask him or her if there is anything you could pray for. This almost always leads to an opportunity to share Christ. Immediately thereafter in Luke 22:39-46, Jesus instructed His followers to “Pray that you may not enter into temptation” (Luke 22:40).

Jesus then turned to prayer in preparation for the traumatic events that were imminent. Many believers are trapped in dissatisfaction that results in griping and whining. Focusing on giving thanks reduces the attitude of complaining about everything from the carpet color to the room temperature. Those who habitually find fault need to discipline themselves to focus on the wonderful blessings of God.

The pastor held up a piece of white paper and drew a black mark on it. “What do you see?” he asked the crowd “A black mark,” they responded. He asked again. “What else do you see?” But no one answered. Finally, a child said, “A piece of white paper.” Humans often focus on the problem instead of the blessings!

Response Time

Pause for a time of prayer. Ask two or three people to voice the prayers of the group. Maybe break up into groups of two to three to pray. Petition God to make us more like Jesus in prayer. Direct them in each of the areas He prayed. Encourage each person to write down a prayer request that represents each of the ways Jesus prayed.

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Session Six

BECOMING LIKE CHRIST IN INTERCESSION

John 17 shows Jesus in the priestly role of intercessor. Jesus taught His followers to become intercessors for personal needs, for unbelievers, and for believers.

Praying For Personal Needs

Luke 22:39-45 shows Jesus praying for Himself. Jesus prayed for personal physical and spiritual needs. In verse 42, he asked His Father if He could physically avoid the coming cup of pain. But He prayed in obedience for spiritual strength through “not my will, but yours be done.” He prayed “in agony” and “very fervently” (v.44). Christ’s obedience allowed Him to ask in John 17:5 (NIV), “And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.”

This is quite a glimpse into all that He gave up for us, isn’t it? Praying for personal spiritual and physical needs is not the selfish and greedy praying that comes from seeking God’s hands instead of His face. It is praying to acknowledge the weakness in our lives and the specific places we want for Christ to take control. This personal praying acknowledges that God is the source to meet all of our physical needs. This is very difficult in a culture that so easily confuses needs with wants.

A church bulletin captured this prayer, “So far today, Lord, I’ve done all right. I haven’t lost my temper, I haven’t gossiped, I haven’t been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or over-indulgent. I’m thankful for that. But in a few moments, Lord, I’m going to get out of bed. And from then on, I’m going to need a lot of help.”

Spurgeon told his students, “How much of a blessing we may have missed through remissiveness in supplication, we can scarcely guess, and none of us can know how poor we are in comparison with what we might have been, if we had lived habitually nearer to God in prayer.”¹²

Praying For Unbelievers

In Luke 23:33-34, the High Priest continued to pray for others, even as He died on the cross for the sins of humankind. In John 17:20 (NIV), Jesus prayed, “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message.”

Use the “Heart” Acrostic to Pray for Unbelievers

- Pray for receptive and repentant **h**earts (See Luke 8:5-15)
- Pray for their spiritual **e**yes and **e**ars to be opened to the truth of Christ (See 2 Cor. 4:3-4; Matt. 13:15)
- Pray for them to have God’s **a**ttitude toward sin (See John 16:8)
- Pray for the person to be **r**eleased to believe (See 2 Cor. 10:3-4; 2 Tim. 2:25-26)
- Pray for a **t**ransformed life (See Rom. 12:1-2)

Biblical examples of personal prayer needs:

- Pray in repentance and belief in Christ. (See Mark 1:15)
- Pray in confession of sin. (See 1 John 1:9)
- Pray for our daily bread. (See Luke 11:3)
- Pray that we can forgive everyone. (See Luke 11:4)
- Pray that we will not be led into temptation. (See Luke 11:4)
- Pray for God’s will and not our will to be done in our lives. (See Luke 22:42)
- Pray for the fruit of the Spirit to characterize all that we say and do. (See Gal. 5:22-23)

TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS

Praying For Believers

The book of Luke concludes in 24:50-53 with Christ praying a blessing on His followers as He ascends back into heaven. The response of the disciples was to spend their time “in the temple, praising God” (v. 53). In Luke 22:32, Christ told Peter, “I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail.” In John 17:9 (NIV), Jesus prayed, “I pray for them . . . for they are yours.”

Prayer is essential for believers to be Christlike. Those who respond to Christ’s teaching on prayer can become prayer warriors. A prayer warrior confronts the gates of hell with biblical, specific prayer for personal needs, for believers, and for unbelievers.

Pray for Believers by Asking for:

- Christ to send believers into His harvest fields (See Matt. 9:38)
- Christ to keep Christians in His name and unity (See John 17:11)
- Christians to have Christ’s joy made full in themselves (See John 17:13)
- Christ to guard and protect believers from the evil one (See John 17:15)
- Christ to sanctify (set apart) believers in the truth of God (See John 17:17)
- Christians to be unified in one mission, purpose and spirit, even as the Father and Son are one (See John 17:21-22)
- Christians to be where Christ is and join His work (See John 17:24)
- Christians to be filled with spiritual wisdom; pleasing in all ways to Christ; strengthened spiritually, mentally, physically, and emotionally; and bearing fruit in every good work (See Col. 1:10-11)

Response Time

Pause for a brief prayer time. Ask for these things:

- Pray for the Holy Spirit to make us prayer warriors and to become like Christ in prayer.
- Pray for someone who does not know Christ.
- Pray for your best friend, and pray for an area of spiritual need for yourself.

“Prayer will make a person cease from sin, or sin will entice a person to cease from prayer.”

TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS

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OR LIFEWAY CHRISTIAN RESOURCES

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NAMB RESOURCES (CONTACT THE CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTER
AT 1 866 407-6262 OR VISIT US AT NAMB.NET/PRAYER.)

If My People. . . Pray. Steps to Effective Church Prayer Ministry

North American Missions Prayer-Gram

North American Missions Prayer Map

Pray for the President

Pray for your Family

Pray for your Pastor

Praying Your Friends to Christ instructor's manual, student booklet, triplet brochure, and Power Point presentation

TAKING PRAYER TO THE STREETS

Appendix A

PREPARING TO TEACH THE PRAYERWALKING GUIDEBOOK

The Abridged Version

The condensed version of the study can be taught in about one and a half hours using the Leader's and Listener's Guides along with the Power Point presentation.

Following the orientation, the group can then go on a practice prayerwalk for about 30 minutes, followed by a debriefing session to complete the training. In less than three hours, a group can be trained and given hands-on experience. Frequent prayerwalking builds enthusiasm for working with God through prayer in motion.

To prepare to lead a group, read through the Leader's Guide (abridged version) to familiarize yourself with the scriptures and main points. Review the Power Point presentation so you know each slide. Notice that the Listener's Guide is just like the Leader's Guide except for blanks that are underlined in the Leader's Guide.

This material can be used in conjunction with national emphases to increase desire to pray for the lost. Prayerwalking encourages praying, and helps people share their faith.

I. Other Teaching Options for the PrayerWalking Guidebook

The PrayerWalking Guidebook can be taught completely in six one-hour sessions. Each session can be presented in as little as one hour.

A. Choose a format

1. Offer *Taking Prayer to the Streets* in a one-hour meeting for six weeks on Sunday night or a week night. End each class in a response time for guided prayer. This may be the best format with a local teacher.
2. Offer a two or three-night seminar. You could begin on Sunday evening with dinner and a two-hour session. Continue Monday and Tuesday or Wednesday with a light dinner and two-hour sessions. Adapt the length of time for your congregation.
3. A one-day seminar would work well. The training time can begin at 9:00 a.m., break for lunch, and continue until 3:00 p.m. The prayer journey field and support teams receive their assignments and return to the church by 4:00 p.m. for a 30-minute reporting time.
4. A weekend conference or retreat is another option. Begin with dinner on Friday evening and introduce session one. Complete the training on Saturday and conduct a prayerwalk that afternoon.
5. Can be used as a personal study guide for daily time with God.

B. Create a teaching schedule that works best for your church. These suggestions may help new teachers:

1. Begin each session on time with prayer. Maybe include a short praise song.
2. Cover the material so students can complete the listening guides. Plan your time to ensure the material is finished.
3. Vary each session to maintain interest.
4. Lead the response time as the Spirit guides you. Allow enough time for people to pray about what they learn in each session.

C. Prepare to teach, helping everyone learn the material and become more like Jesus.

1. Teaching styles include discussion, lecture, and question and answer. Vary your approach so everyone can learn effectively.
2. Encourage class participation; ask students to read Scripture or share testimonies and comments. Encourage everyone to say something. Gently guide those who might dominate the discussion to let others have a turn.
3. Use teaching aids and audiovisuals whenever possible. Make posters of key points and use the Power Point presentation, which does not require the Power Point program.
4. Repeat key facts and ask the students to recite them. This aids memory.

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5. Apply the lessons to your church and community.
6. Study the material and be prepared, sharing it with enthusiasm.
7. Start and stop on time.

II. Teacher/Prayer Coordinator's Duties. Delegate as much as possible to the prayer council.

A. Pre-seminar preparation

1. Decide on the best format schedule
2. Plan early enough to find a good time on the church calendar
3. Choose a teacher or invite the guest teacher as early as possible
4. Provide childcare, if possible
5. Decide if meals and refreshments will be provided, and make plans
6. Order the materials – *Taking Prayer to the Streets* Leader's Guide, pocket guide, evangelistic booklets and Power Point presentation
7. Make postcards and follow-up cards from Appendices B and D
8. Decide on the communities to visit
9. Create maps of the areas and determine the number of teams. Make copies of maps and mark streets to be covered in the prayer journeys. Distribute the maps to the field and support teams.
10. If your church does not already have them, prepare brochures about the church for teams to give out. In the brochure, include the schedule of services and ministry activities. When writing the pamphlet, tailor the wording for the unchurched. Include the church address and a map. Always provide a brief plan of salvation or Gospel booklet.

B. Preparations immediately before seminar

1. Set up room, with scattered seating around tables to allow screen visibility
2. Arrange refreshments, and provide hard candies or mints for tables
3. Make copies of the listening guides from the CD, and put one at each place, along with a pencil.
4. Prepare to give brief demographic and cultural information for each area

III. Communicate with the church, using all channels to publicize prayer journeys. Post a notice (with clip art from the CD) in the bulletins and newsletter. Include announcements in every Sunday school class and activity. Ask children's classes and missions groups to make posters to display in hallways and classrooms. Let the congregation know if meals and childcare will be provided.

- A. Get copies of the "Eternal Life" witnessing booklet, and review them in the session
- B. "Keep everyone informed and involved," advises a veteran church prayer coordinator. Delegate jobs to as many as possible
Find clip art for publications on the CD ROM.

IV. Communicate with the community; consider these for future prayerwalks:

- A. Mail prayer request postcards to people in the target area, telling them the date and time your church will be there (see Appendix B or the CD ROM). Encourage them to contact the church with prayer requests, or talk to a visiting team member.
- B. Identify the field teams by wearing your church's caps, t-shirts or jackets, and make signs for your cars. This helps people find team members to share their prayer requests.
- C. Combine with servant evangelism to improve your church's reputation in the community. Acts of kindness done in Christ's name include door-to-door giving away a light bulb, providing a free car wash, wrapping presents, etc. Take every chance to share Christ with contacts.

V. Consider coordinating your prayerwalk with other churches in the county or association. Share the assigned areas to cover every home and business with prayer. Steven Hawthorne's *PrayerWalk Organizer Guide* helps in organizing city-wide prayerwalks and prayer journeys.

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Appendix B

SAMPLE PRAYER REQUEST POSTCARD

The prayer request postcard also is available on the CD ROM and at www.namb.net/prayer.

This sample postcard has a return card attached. You can download a free copy of this form from www.namb.net/prayer, make the needed changes and print it on card stock. Please use the person's name when possible. *See sample below...*

Front Card 1

(Church name) prayer ministry

Address

Phone number

Web page address

Name

Address

“If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.” (John 15:7, NIV)

.....
“The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.” (James 5:16)

Dear (church name) prayer ministry,

Please pray for _____

Thank you,

(optional)

Name -----

Address -----

Phone number-----

I would like to talk to someone from the church. Best time to call _____

I would like a free New Testament and other literature

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Back Card 1

Dear neighbor, (personalize when possible)

The people of (insert church name here) wish to serve our community by praying for you. There is no obligation to our church, however. Please send us your prayer requests on the attached card, or call our prayer line at 000-000-0000 or write us on our online prayer page at Prayer@address. Members of our church will be walking (driving, etc.) and praying through the community on (day, date, time). Please feel free to give your prayer requests to one of us.

Please let us know if we can serve your family as you seek to know the Creator God through His Son, Jesus Christ. We meet for Bible study and worship at (times) on Sundays. We want to give you a New Testament and other literature if you would like more information. We are praying for you!

Pastor John Doe and the church family

.....

(Church name) prayer ministry
Address

NOTE:

For additional instructions, please see Read Me document on CD.

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Appendix C

GRAPHICS

Graphics are available on the CD ROM.

Appendix D

PRAYERWALK FOLLOW-UP CARD – ALSO AVAILABLE ON CD ROM

Prayerwalk Follow-up Card

Visitor name _____ Date _____

Subdivision/community/map number _____

Contact name _____

E-mail address _____

Contact address _____

_____ Apt. # _____

Phone _____

Type of contact: Shared Gospel Made profession of faith

Requested a follow-up appointment

Date and time for follow-up _____

Prayer request _____

Recommended follow-up _____

Church and community ministry needed in this community: _____

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ENDNOTES

- ¹Steve Hawthorne defines prayer journeys as “intercessors traveling to cities other than their own in order to prayerwalk within, throughout or around them.” *PrayerWalk Organizer Guide*. (Austin: PrayerWalk USA, 1996), p. 12. His definitive book is entitled *PrayerWalking: Praying On-Site with Insight*.
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- ⁹Quoted in *Purpose in Prayer*, p. 143.
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- ¹²Spurgeon, p. 49.

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