

EVERYTHING STARTS WITH PRAYER | PASTOR WENDELL



Everything in Church and the Christian life and ministry begins with prayer!

- We prayed and asked forgiveness of sins when we started our walk with Christ
- We prayed and received the Holy Spirit
- When we worship we pray and call on our Heavenly Father for grace
- We pray over our meals, pray for sick loved ones, and pray over our children at night when we tuck them into bed
- We pray for unsaved friends and family members
- And every morning is started by a time of prayer asking God for grace for the day to serve Him effectively

A disciple of Jesus Christ should have both a vision and theology for prayer as well as a life that models it.

The Praying Church

A true praying church has several ingredients, and these are the vital parts that make prayer effective and powerful in God's house- which Jesus called the "House of Prayer."

1) Private Prayer

"But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly (Matt 6:6).

Every dedicated follower of Jesus Christ practices a lifestyle of passionate prayer. They love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength. They take up their cross and follow Jesus. And every day they find their secret place and commune with the Lord. They receive strength and grace and impartation from the Lord. They receive their daily directives and guidance from Him.

2) Prayer of Agreement

Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven (Matt 18:19).

Not only should we know how to pray personally and in private, but we should also know how to get in agreement with another believer. For married couples, this would be our spouse. For others it might be a small group, a friend, a roommate or a business associate. But if we want to see answers to prayers, employ the power of agreement in prayer.

3) Church Prayer

So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: "Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth... And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness (Acts 4:24, 31).



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Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church (Acts 12:5).

The concept is simple. The church gathers together for prayer with every member lifting up a voice in agreement for issues that affect the entire church. Corporate prayer is mobilizing the entire church into spiritual agreement.

A Pastor or church leader will lift up their voice above the rest and lead the church, while the members get in agreement and verbally support the petitions and supplications of the Pastors as they lead.

4. Ministry of Prayer

This woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. Luke 2:37

“So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one. Ezek 22:30

He saw that there was no man, And wondered that there was no intercessor; Isaiah 59:16

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints– and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, Eph 6:18-19

One area that is so important in Church life is the ministry of prayer and intercession. While all believers are called to pray, some give themselves more diligently and fervently to specific and strategic intercession. Groups of intercessors can be assigned to specific ministries and to pertinent issues in the church, the city, the Nation, and even the nations of the world.

5) Apostolic Prayer

Samuel

far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you; 1 Sam 12:23

Paul to Colossians

we do not cease to pray for you Col 1:9

Paul to Ephesians

do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers Eph 1:15-17

Paul to Galatians

My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you, Gal 4:19

Jesus interceding for us

He always lives to make intercession for them. Heb 7:25

Christ is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Romans 8:34
In today's church there are so many urgent needs and issues that must be addressed. Pastors of local churches and apostolic leaders of multiple churches should dedicate time each week to apostolic prayer, i.e. praying for other Pastors, for other churches, for leaders and laborers and for the work of the Kingdom of God around the world. The apostles of the New Testament...



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...did not just pray for survival- they prayed for revival!

Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. 3 "Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; 4 "but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word." Acts 6:2-4 (NKJV)

A healthy Church is a praying church, with individual members praying privately (using the Lord's prayer model); praying together with family members in agreement; praying together as a Church for corporate needs; praying for their pastors, who in turn pray for them, and having anointed and assigned Intercessors who add double coverage to the priorities of the church in prayer. Every church should nurture these important aspects of prayer.

The Praying Church of the 21st Century

- Every member praying at home and in private
- Every believer praying in agreement with another believer
- Church members fasting and praying each week
- Every church member in harmony with God and with other members of the church and in submission to those who lead
- Committed Members joining with the rest of the church in corporate prayer gatherings
- Prayers prayed fervently, effectively and specifically
- Continual prayer at all hours of the night and day as all members respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in supplication and intercession

Can we imagine the increase of effectiveness and exponential impact of an entire church praying in agreement. Every hour the church prays together is multiplied times the number who are gathered.

When two or three are gathered and pray an hour- three hours of prayer are sent to heaven. When two or three hundred gather, three hundred hours are lifted up to God. And when two or three thousand pray- three thousand spiritual sacrifices are offered on the altar of incense before God.

And can we imagine how much incense arises to the throne of God when churches of all nations agree in prayer, and the body of Christ unites in worldwide supplication and intercession?

In our first installment of our new "Advanced Discipleship Classes" we are presenting here the messages recently preached to our congregation here in Seattle during a scheduled "Prayer Week". Also available are the notes for downloading and study.

May the Lord bless and enrich your prayer life and your understanding of the importance of this aspect of a true Christian disciple's life.



WE HAVE DECIDED TO START A PRAYER MINISTRY—NOW WHAT?

LISA MARSHALL



You have gotten the burden, realized the importance, and now you are ready to launch full-force into a thriving prayer ministry. You go to www.he/pmestartapayerministty.com and nothing is there! Where exactly do you go from here?

The first thing is to pray! The proper way to begin anything in the church is with prayer, and the prayer ministry is no exception. Seek God for direction for this ministry.

Choose a leader. The most common mistake made in this area is appointing the church's most fervent prayer warrior to this position. In most cases, this is a mistake. True intercessors usually do not make good leaders. Prayer Lesson 101: All are called to intercede at times, but not all are called intercessors. Intercessors can pray for hours. They do not need a prayer list, how-to helps, or a missionary list. All they need is for you to leave them alone and let them pray.

Your prayer leader does not need to be the best pray-er in the church: he needs to be gifted in administration. Why? Have you ever tried to get a group together to pray for an hour? After fifteen minutes most are starting to repeat what they have already prayed for. For the majority of people, a theme, a focus, or some type of prayer guide is needed to pray for extended periods of time. Thus, enter the administrator—someone to plan and organize the prayer meeting, copy the prayer list or focus for the week, do the research and instruct the people how to pray. The leader should have a broad understanding and pick up on things that need to be prayed for. He should make sure the lights are on, the keyboard is ready and someone to lead worship is on cue. He can evaluate where the group is as a whole and put a plan in place to reach specific goals.

Set Goals. What do you want to accomplish in this ministry? Do you want to get your people to pray more consistently? more effectively? more for the kingdom? Do you want them to pray less self-centered prayers? Come up with goals and put the necessary plan in place to see this accomplished. For example, perhaps your church prays consistently, but the majority of the prayers are for personal things. Your goal would be to help them pray less for self and more for the kingdom.

Each week pray with an agenda for the month. Here is an example: Week 1: Pray for missionaries. Week 2: Pray for nations. Did you know that one out of every three people on the earth live in either India or China? How incredible it would be if revival began to sweep through these countries! Week 3. Pray for finances for the kingdom's work to be done. Week 4: Pray for an outpouring upon all flesh. It is okay to pray for your local church, but pray for the big picture first. By doing this, God will take care of needs on a personal level.



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Teach Prayer. The pastor could do a series of sermons or Bible studies on prayer. It could be a focus for the adult, youth, and children's Sunday school classes. Each week send everyone home with a "nugget" of information. The World Network of Prayer's Web site, www.wnop.org has plenty of free material to assist you. Search the Internet; there is a wealth of information available. Most people do not know how to communicate with God. Your job is to educate them.

Do not start too many things at once. Go slowly. People get overwhelmed by too many changes. It is better to start one new

thing at a time.

Report what you are doing. Out of sight, out of mind. People do not get excited about what they do not know about. Use whatever means possible to keep what is happening in front of the church. The church bulletin board or weekly bulletin is a great place to put updates or prayer events. When God answers prayer, ask that the praise report be read in service. It will build faith and pique interest. People want to be involved where good things are happening.

Finally, do not just talk about prayer—pray! Do not organize God out of your prayer ministry. You can spend all day talking, teaching, and discussing prayer, but make sure that you do not talk and teach more than you pray. You can know everything there is to know about prayer, but if you do not pray, you are not affecting the kingdom.

Jesus said, "house shall be called a house of prayer." It seems to me He was clear in the fact that He wants His church to be a praying church.

For free information and helps on your prayer ministry, visit www.wnop.org or www.kidsprayer.com.

Lisa Marshall is the Strategic Prayer Coordinator for the World Network of Prayer at the World Evangelism Center.





PLANNING A PLOWING BEFORE THE PLANTER EVENT

LISA MARSHALL



Planning a Plowing Before the Planter event will include the following information: Choosing a location, choosing a leader, assigning a team, planning the event, executing the event and follow-up after the event.

Choosing a Location

The locations for Plowing Before the Planter events will be chosen by the World Network of

Prayer and North American Missions. These locations and dates will be placed on the WNOP website in an area designated for Plowing Before the Planter and promoted in our weekly Prayer Connect. Information

will also be sent to all WNOP district coordinators to promote and distribute in the districts.

Suggestions for locations may be submitted to WNOP or NAM for consideration. Please send suggestions to WNOP, 8855 Dunn Road, Hazelwood, MO 63042, or by email to Lmarshall@upci.org.

A Leader is Chosen

Leaders for the full Plowing Before the Planter events will be selected by WNOP. Leaders are required to complete all PBTP training and have the endorsement of their local pastor and district superintendent. There will be one leader for each PBTP team, although this leader is encouraged to have others assist to lighten the responsibility load.

A Team is Chosen

Any interested intercessor will be considered for placement on the PBTP team as long as they meet the following criteria:

- Are in good standing in their local church and have their local pastor's approval.
- Have gone through the Plowing Before the Planter training videos posted online.
- Are willing to be self-supporting in this endeavor.
- Have completed and submitted a Plowing Before the Planter application which will be posted on WNOP's website. (wnop.org)

Any minister will be considered for placement on the PBTP team as long as they meet the following criteria:

- Are in good standing in their local church if they are working under a pastor.
- Have pastoral approval if working under a pastor.
- Have approval from their district superintendent.
- Have gone through the Plowing Before the Planter training videos posted online.
- Are willing to be self-supporting in this endeavor.
- Have completed and submitted a Plowing Before the Planter application which will be posted on WNOP's website. (wnop.org)

A team of intercessors will be chosen for each location. Applicants will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis. Applications may be mailed to WNOP, 8855 Dunn Road, Hazelwood, MO, 63042 or submitted by email to Lisa Marshall, Lmarshall@upci.org. There will be two alternates chosen for each location in the event someone approved has to cancel. Applicants will be...



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Plans are Made

Six months out:

- Location is chosen and announced
- Team is selected
- Correspondence between the team leader and the church planter begins
- Correspondence with the team begins
- Updates are given
- Fasting and prayer is encouraged

Three months out:

- A plan decided by the PBTP leader and the church planter for the three-day event is put in place. A copy is sent to all team members. As the program progresses, WNOP will provide written, suggested plans. Each area will be unique. A basic structure will be suggested for all events but there will be flexibility allowed to adjust as needed.
- Travel arrangements need to be solidified.
 - Flights or ground travel for all team members needs to be coordinated. Some target PBTP locations are a lengthy distance from the airport. Team members will need to arrive as closely together as possible. This may require work on the leader's part to assess times from the home cities of team members to choose a time target time frame. Travel will need to be made by the team members as close to the targeted time as possible. If team member cannot get a flight within the suggested time frame, they will be responsible for their own travel to the target city.
 - Transportation from the airport to the church plant locations needs to be solidified by:
 - Van rental from a company
 - Arrangements with a local church to have a van and driver
- Hotel rooms reserved.
 - It is preferred the church planter or a neighboring pastor suggest a hotel. This will keep the hotel in a safe area
 - It may be possible to get a group rate if requested
 - You may also check with any local churches in the area who may have a special rate with an area hotel
 - Have each member secure their room with their personal credit card
 - If team members are interested in sharing a room, it is recommended they contact one another and the leader not make suggestions.
 - A meeting room will need to be secured for a centralized place for everyone to meet. This room will also serve as a corporate prayer room.
- Gas Cost
 - An estimate of gas cost should be projected so that team members will have an accurate idea of how much money they will need.

Two months out:

- A fasting and prayer plan for the event should be put into place. This can be done several ways: have each person choose a day to fast each week, have the entire group fast on the same day, have all members of the team fast at least one meal each day
- Material on effective prayerwalking and prayerwalking tips should be sent to your team.



PLANNING A PLOWING BEFORE THE PLANTER EVENT

LISA MARSHALL



One month out:

- Leaders should put into place a more stringent schedule for prayer and fasting. It is imperative those going be in top spiritual condition.
- A list of suggestions should be sent out to the team covering:
 - Type of clothing to wear (is it hot, cold, windy, etc.)
 - How-to tips on prayerwalking and any new material developed on the area you will be going to
 - Do's and Don'ts while on location
 - Budget of remaining items needed (Food, Gas, etc.)
- All maps and prayer guides should be printed to be distributed to the team on location
- At this point, locations should be chosen as where to walk and drive. Times should be chosen for group prayer in the hotel. A detailed schedule, including time assignments, should be completed. We suggest 6-7 hours of planned activities. The team members may spend any additional time praying in their room or in the meeting room.
- A plan should be put in place as to where to meet once arriving at the airport or designated meeting place. Each team member should have a clear understanding of where they are to go once they arrive as well as how much luggage is allowed. (If you have a larger group, you will have to limit the amount of luggage each person brings)

The Event

- Arrive at the airport
- Secure ground travel (rent van or make contact with church van driver)
- Check into hotel (The leader will need to make sure all is in order with the meeting room. A key to the meeting room should be provided for each team member when they check in.)
- Announce a meeting time and the location for first meeting.
- Have orientation meeting and a time of prayer.
- Execute plan for the weekend
- Have a closing meeting prior to time to leave.
- Check out of hotel.
- Travel back to the airport.

After the Event

- When you meet for your final time of prayer, we suggest getting feedback from your team. What worked? What didn't? Suggestions for improvement? How they felt about what they were doing? What God spoke to them personally?
- Encourage each team member to make a commitment to continue to cover the church planter and city in their personal prayer time.
- The leader will send a report of the prayer walk to WNOP. promptly of their approval by email. The leader of the event will promptly set up an email group and will begin communicating with the group.



THE DISCIPLINE OF FASTING

CELEBRATION OF DISCIPLINE BY RICHARD FOSTER



The Purpose of Fasting

Fasting must center on God. It should draw us closer to God, where we will experience a deeper relationship with Him. Like Anna, in Luke 2:37, we should be “worshiped night and day, fasting and praying.”

Fasting reveals the things that control us. We tend to cover up what is inside us with food and other good things, but in fasting these things surface. If pride controls us, it will be revealed almost immediately. David said, “I put on sackcloth and humbled myself with fasting.” (Psalm 35:13) Anger, bitterness, jealousy, strife, fear – if they are within us, they will surface during fasting. At first we will rationalize that our anger, for example, is due to our hunger. We will

then discover that we are angry not because of hunger, but because the spirit of anger is within us. We can rejoice in this knowledge because we know that healing is available through the power of Christ.

Fasting helps us keep our balance in life. How easily we begin to allow nonessentials to take precedence in our lives. How quickly we crave things we do not need until we are enslaved by them. Paul wrote, “Everything is permissible for me” –but I will not be mastered by anything.” (I Cor. 6:12) “No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.” (I Cor. 9:27) David wrote, “My knees give way from fasting; my body is thin and gaunt.” (Psalm 109:24) That is not asceticism; it is discipline – and discipline brings freedom.

How to Have a Spiritual Fast

Purify your motives. The purpose of a spiritual fast is to focus upon and worship God, not to lose weight, go on a hunger strike, save money on food, etc.

“When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.” Matthew 6:16-18

Begin with a partial fast. It is wise to learn to walk well before we try to run. Many people find that beginning with a twenty-four hour fast from lunch to lunch works well. This would mean that you would not eat two meals. Fresh fruit juices are excellent to consume during this time. You may be fascinated with the physical aspects, but the most important thing to monitor is the inner attitude of worship. Outwardly you will be performing the regular duties of your day, but inwardly you will be in prayer and adoration, song and ministry to the Lord. Break your fast with a light meal of fresh fruits and vegetables and a good deal of inner rejoicing.

Progress to a twenty-four hour normal fast. Use only water, but use healthy amounts of it. You will probably feel some hunger pains or discomfort before the time is up. That is not real hunger; your stomach has been trained through years of conditioning to give signals of hunger at certain hours. In many ways your stomach is like a spoiled child, and spoiled children do not need indulgence, they need discipline! Tell your “spoiled child” to calm down and in a brief time the hunger pains will pass. You are to be the master of your stomach, not its slave.



THE DISCIPLINE OF FASTING

CELEBRATION OF DISCIPLINE BY RICHARD FOSTER



Fasting can have a powerful impact on your spiritual life. Consider a regular discipline of fasting one day a week for six months. Regular or weekly fasting had such a profound effect in the lives of early church leaders that some sought to find a Biblical command for it. John Wesley refused to ordain anyone who did not fast every Wednesday and Friday. promptly of their approval by email. The leader of the event will promptly set up an email group and will begin communicating with the group.

