



## Ideas for Praying Together as a Small Group

Many find it difficult to pray out loud, but it can be so worthwhile! God wants to hear from each one of us, and doesn't need our prayers to be "perfect." These ideas are provided to help your group feel more comfortable praying together when you meet.

1. Go around your circle and **pray for the person next to you.**
2. Try "**popcorn**" prayer: short sentence prayers with no conjunctions (and), expressing only one idea. For example, "God I'm thankful for \_\_\_\_\_." "God help me with \_\_\_\_\_."
3. Read a **printed prayer** from a favorite devotional book. Suggestion: *Everyday Prayers: 365 Days to a Gospel-Centered Faith* by Scotty Smith
4. Read a **Psalm** to start your prayer time. Each person could read several verses out loud. Suggestions: Psalm 46, 84, 96, 98, 103, 138
5. Use the **ACTS Prayer Method** as described below and see page 2 for an example. The ACTS method of prayer is often called conversational prayer and is a spontaneous prayer led by the Holy Spirit. Concentrating on one subject at a time the ACTS method of prayer is very easy, personal, and effective. It doesn't require any great knowledge of or study about prayer. It also helps us pause in God's presence and not simply rush in with our requests. This method follows a simple acrostic:

**A** – Adoration

**C** – Confession

**T** – Thanksgiving

**S** – Supplication

**ADORATION:** Scripture tells us that we were made to give praise and glory to God. As you quiet your spirits, focus your attention on God's character or attributes. Begin to worship Him for Who He is in specific, but simple ways. Many short prayers can be offered by everyone in the group.

**CONFESSION:** This is a time to reflect on convictions from the Holy Spirit, bring them before God, and ask for His forgiveness. When we confess, we are agreeing with God about the wrong things we have done. This may be done out loud or in silence.

**THANKSGIVING:** The Bible tells us to "give thanks in all circumstances." Thank God for what He has already done in your life and for His faithfulness in your life and those of your family and friends

**SUPPLICATION:** This is when we humbly make known our requests to God.

### **ACTS Prayer Tips:**

- Encourage short prayers.
- Be comfortable with the silence.
- The prayer leader will transition the group from one section of prayer to the next so it is clear to the group what your focus is. It won't be perfect, and that's ok!

## Guided Prayer Example Using ACTS Method & Scripture

Here's an example of how you might lead your group using the ACTS format. Scripture suggestions are included for each section. Use these as you feel comfortable and/or incorporate others that you know.

### ADORATION

*Lord, we begin by worshipping you with words from Psalm 36:*

*"Your unfailing love, O Lord, is as vast as the heavens; your faithfulness reaches beyond the clouds. Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your justice like the ocean depths. You care for people and animals alike, O Lord. How precious is your unfailing love, O God! All humanity finds shelter in the shadow of your wings."*

*Lord God, we come into your presence now offering you praise for who you are.*

Brief, specific prayer examples for group members:

*God, your love is unfailing.*

*God, your faithfulness reaches beyond the clouds.*

*God, you are my shield and protector.*

*Your mercies are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness.*

### CONFESSION

*And now as we move into a time of confession, we join with the psalmist and ask:*

*"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life." (Psalm 139: 23-24)*

*Come, Holy Spirit. Bring conviction to our hearts. We offer our confession to you now, silent or out loud.*

Offer prayers, silently or out loud...

*Thank you, Lord, for the promise that you remove our sins as far as the east is from the west. (Psalm 103:12)*

### THANKSGIVING

*Lord, we have so much to be thankful for in our lives. We begin our time of thanksgiving with these words from Psalm 100:*

*"Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into his presence with singing! Know that the Lord, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations." (Psalm 100)*

*Let us offer our prayers of thanksgiving to God.*

### SUPPLICATION

*And now we'll move into supplication.*

*From Psalm 17: "I am praying to you because I know you will answer, O God. Bend down and listen as I pray."*

*Let's bring our requests to God for whatever is on our hearts.*