

For Further Study: Prayer

Prayer must precede all planning and implementing.

A. The example of Jesus:

But the news about Him was spreading even farther, and great multitudes were gathering to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But He Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray.

Luke 5:15-16

1. Mark 1:35: After a day of miracles, and before he preached
2. Luke 6:12: Before choosing the twelve
3. Luke 9:18: After feeding the 5,000, before questioning Peter about who he was
4. Luke 9:28: The Transfiguration, before he went to the cross
5. Matthew 14:23: Before walking on water
6. John 6:15: When he perceived that the people wanted to make Him king

B. Example of the women in Ukraine

Pastor Glen Knecht tells of going to the Ukraine after the fall of communism and attending a church service. “How mistaken the Communists were when they allowed the older women to continue worshipping together! It was they who were considered no threat to the new order, but it was they whose prayers and faithfulness over all those barren years held the church together and raised up a generation of men and young people to serve the Lord. Yes, the church we attended was crowded with these older women at the very front, for they have been the stalwart defenders and maintainers of Christ’s Gospel, but behind them and alongside them and in the balcony and outside the windows were the fruit of their faithfulness, men, women, young people, and children. We must never underestimate the place and power of our godly women. To them go the laurels in the Church in Ukraine!” . . . One of the thrills of heaven will be to discover how the Father blessed the prayer power of His daughters.

By Design, pp. 109-110

C. Prayer suggestions:

- a. Form a prayer team for each Bible study, activity, task, or event.
- b. Select a prayer partner for each leadership woman.
- c. Actually spend time praying as a leadership team.

D. A prayer guide, for local church leadership,

Adapted from *Equipping the Church for Kingdom Praying*, by Barbara Thompson.

1. ELDERS

- a. Qualifications for Elders (pray that God will develop and maintain these qualifications—use scriptural references for your specific prayers) from 1 Timothy 3:1-7
 - i. Blameless:
 - Fully committed to Biblical morality
 - Morality recognized by believers and non-believers alike
 - ii. Sexually Pure:
 - Eyes—television watched; movies seen; books and magazines read
 - Guarded from adultery—physical and emotional
 - iii. Domestic Authority:
 - Managing his own family
 - Spiritual authority recognized by wife and children
 - iv. Suitable Temperament:
 - Under control of Holy Spirit
 - v. Hospitable:
 - Love strangers with open heart, open arms, and open home
 - vi. Doctrinally Stable:
 - Understand the Gospel of grace in all its truth
 - Firm grasp on doctrines of scripture
 - vii. Biblical Capability
 - Committed to the Word of God; a student of the Word of God;
 - Know the word of God
 - Encourage others by sound doctrine; refute opposition to sound doctrine

- b. Duties of Elders: Pray for elders in their responsibilities
- i. Oversight of Christ's flock (Ezekiel 34; 1 Peter 5:1-4):
 - Diligently watching over the flock given to them
 - Vigilant regarding corruption of doctrine or morals
 - Exercising government and discipline over the church
 - ii. Visiting people at their homes (James 5:13-16):
 - Especially the sick
 - Instructing the ignorant
 - Comforting the mourner
 - Nourishing and guarding the children of the church
 - iii. Evangelizing the unconverted (Luke 15):
 - Setting an example to the flock by zeal for the lost
 - iv. Discipling the flock for their duties the law of love (Philippians 2):
 - Loving God with heart, soul, mind, and strength
 - v. Putting others before self prayer (Ephesians 6:10-20):
 - With and for the people
 - Asking for and seeking fruit of the preached Word

2. TEACHING ELDER AND HIS PARTICULAR DUTIES:

- i. Reading, Expounding and Preaching the Word of God:
 - Pray for pastor's personal devotional time that he will know the power of the resurrection and desire to know Christ (Phil. 3:10);
 - Study time (Colossians 2:6-8);
 - Boldness to proclaim Christ in preaching (Colossians 1:28)
- ii. Administering the Sacraments: pray for wisdom in the ministry of the sacraments:
 - Preparation for the Lord's supper, wisdom in baptism (Colossians 1:9-12 and James 1)
- iii. Declaration of the Will of God:
 - Beseeching that sinners be reconciled;
 - Bearing the good news of salvation (2 Timothy 4:1-5)

3. LEADERSHIP WIVES

Pray that the wives of church leadership will:

- Be worthy of respect (Proverbs 31):
- Lives may be such that they are respected by believers and non-believers, not malicious talkers (James 3; Colossians 4:6; Ephesians 5:4):
- Control of tongues
- Talk that builds up temperate and trustworthy in everything (Proverbs 31; Titus 2):
- Prudent and balanced
- Wisdom in families, homes, ministries

4. DIACONATE

- a. Qualifications: Pray that diaconate exhibit these qualifications
 - Spiritual character (Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8–13): full of the Holy Spirit and full of faith; holding the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience
 - Honest repute: worthy of respect and sincere; not pursuing dishonest gain
 - Exemplary lives: sexually pure
 - Brotherly spirit (Acts 6:1): friend to those in the church
 - Warm sympathies (Acts 4:32–37): concern for mercy to those in and outside the church
 - Sound judgment: wisdom; discernment; and perception
 - Submission to authority: the diaconate is to serve under the supervision and authority of the session

- b. Duties of the Diaconate: Pray for the exercise of their responsibilities
 - Helping others: in the time of need; service after the example of the Lord Jesus; expressing the communion of saints
 - Specific ministry: to the sick; to the friendless; to any who may be in distress including widows, orphans, prisoners
 - Grace of liberality: to develop the open hearted and sacrificial giving by members of the church
 - Collecting the gifts: to devise effective methods of collection of gifts
 - Distributing the gifts: to distribute gifts among the objects for which they are given
 - Care of property: keep in proper repair the church building and properties

5. WOMEN'S MINISTRIES LEADERSHIP TEAM

- Thanksgiving for the foundation of life-giving theology from God's Word including covenant, church, and principles of Biblical womanhood.
- Pray that women will exhibit biblically mature qualities in their marriage, family, and church (Ephesians 5, Matthew 25).
- Pray that leadership women will be brought together in love and unity (Colossians 2:2–3).
- Pray for male leadership and specifically those with oversight of women's ministry (1 Peter 5:1–4).
- Pray for focus, wisdom, and application of biblical principles in all planning (2 Timothy 3:16, James 1 and 3).
- Pray for leadership confidence based on the power of Christ (2 Cor. 12:9–10).
- Pray for "grace empowered virtue of submission."
- Pray for servant hearts, attitudes and behaviors (John 13).
- Pray for control of tongues (James 3).