# So many ways to pray, so much fun to be had while doing it!

# Basic principles:

Anything you use is great. It can be any action/object/rhythm/order/etc. that helps you or your community pray.

Yes there is a desire for strategic prayer models, but we all continue to learn that quiet, instrumental music, stances - all of these are powerful in the practice of God's presence. In fact, more and more I find that presence is THE strategy... or rather our strategy to hear the strategy of heaven.

Small groups of 3-5 can stay together. Any bigger than that I find it good to have some all together activitities and some smaller group activities. Once you have 6 people you can do groups of 2, groups of three, etc.

Always good to encourage short prayers, even in small groups (15 second prayers, two-sentence prayers, etc)

Don’t fear silence and listening. People may squirm a bit but it may the only minutes of stillness and silence they’ve gotten in their day. 1 or 2 minutes is great for a group that is “less practiced” 5, 10, 15 minutes can be powerful for a group that has grown comfortable with silence and listening. All depends on what you are listening for and how much prayer time you have.

Before the prayer time if you are leading, take time to listen and plan. Ask the Spirit for what He wants prayed about and how He’d like the group to engage in prayer. Many of these ideas have come from those asking and listening times. And definitely borrow any creative, different, powerful prayer idea you’ve experienced anywhere!

It’s okay to have to more in your plan than you end up doing. Do them next week. Be flexible. Have a plan but rearrange it if need be. I often put my plan on a piece of paper not in a list or order but in clusters on the paper. I have a sense of order of things, but the spread out clusters also give me some flexibility. I also put an estimate of how long I’m going to spend on each activity so I can work with how time is moving along. Best to estimate a low time frame for an activity and let it go a little longer if it is going well. If a prayer activity is losing steam, stop it and go on to another.

# Getting people to move around

Switching people around is good for fellowship and to stimulate praying as we hear and pray with and experience other people. Making it a bit of a creative game keeps the time light and fun and unpredictable. There are a few people in the world who might thrive on a predictable group prayer time but most seem to appreciate movement, freshness, creativity. They are more likely to go out and lead other prayer times (and enjoy doing it) if they can make them fresh and fun.

So, do whatever you’d like to do to switch groups around that won’t take too much time and might even release a bit of get to know you info in the group. Here are a bunch I’ve heard/used to get people to switch groups:

Tallest/shortest person

Person with darkest/lightest hair

Birthday closest to today

Earliest/latest birthday in the year

Go find someone you haven’t prayed with

Person with name closest to A or Z

Longest name/shortest name

Person who has moved the least this evening

Person who drinks the most/least coffee

Person with most/least friends on Facebook

Oldest/youngest person in the group (careful with certain age mixes…)

Count your group, divide by 3 or 4, then have people count off 1,2,3 etc up to that number. Then you can tell people to get with their number or form a group with a 1,2,3, & 4 in it. Or form larger groups with all the 1’s&2’s and all the 3’s&4’s

# Ideas for small groups of 2-4…

Say you are going to pray for Lebanon. Several rounds of prayer could look like this ~5-7 min total:

1. In your group take a minute to listen for a verse that God wants you to speak over Lebanon.
2. Now each of you read that verse and pray a one sentence prayer over Lebanon.
3. Now with short 2-3 sentence prayers, a round of blessing and praying for the local Christian believers in Lebanon.
4. Now a round of blessing and praying for the MBBs in Lebanon.
5. Now a round of blessing and praying for the expat workers in Lebanon.
6. Do a round of giving thanks for what you are sure God is doing in Lebanon right now.

You can do this for a people group, for a city, for a region.

You could encourage the group that the person to the left of the one who started the last round, starts the next round.

You can substitute other things into steps 3,4,5 such as…

Reaching of traditional Christian groups, Muslim groups, other groups living in the country

Leaders of each these groups

People in the workplace, stay at home moms, the handicapped

Three different people groups in a country

Three different cities

Three different areas in a city

National leaders, religious leaders, community leaders

CBBs/MBBs to grow in their expression of fellowship, to reach out to others around them, to go out to the nations

You can also give a group of 2-4 free time to do any of these things above for 5 minutes. Just keep your eye on the clock and your ears open to see if praying has dropped off or turned into fellowship time. Groups of 2 may take less time, groups of 4 will need a little more.

Often at the end this kind of activity you can ask one person from the group to pray out from their group into the larger group.

You can have times of asking people in the prayer group to identify with people in the target place, pretend that they are the target people and pray out on their behalf:

Repentance for sins, strongholds, wrongs, attitudes, acts, etc

Crying out for light, dreams, visions, the Spirit’s work among them

Blessing other groups who are their enemies or have wronged them

Praying the words of a verse over their people

-in a group: put one person in the middle (set a timer for 3 minutes) and people just pray/bless the person – the first thing that comes to them. change to next person after 3 min.

# Big groups:

# Using scripture:

-Take a story: pray through the different ‘types’ of people in the story. ex: Saul’s conversion… There is Saul (the people in power/oppressors), The men with him (gov workers?), the man God spoke to to receive Paul and return his sight (obedient Believers) etc.

-Read a long Psalm: think about/discuss the different sections. Pray through each one.

-read a passage: in a group (or alone) first each person must repeat a verse or phrase from the passage, then pray.

-Proclaiming Promises: ask everyone to pray out promises from scripture (whatever comes to their mind) (or read them out).

# Symbolic/Prophetic Prayers:

Read a few examples from scripture (esp. Isaiah, Jeremiah, or other scriptures) about prophetic acts. Share the prayer focus. Listen for a few minutes for something visual, symbolic, prophetic that God wants you do or perform over the prayer topic. Give each person a chance to do what they were given and say/pray something about the meaning. If you do this early in the prayer time, there might be other powerful ways to use some of these acts later on in the prayer time…

Stack of clay and rock

Bowl and pitcher of water with towel

Perfume

# Using paper & objects:

-Take an object (something God created) like an apple, a seed, or a leaf…look at it, and begin praying the things it brings to mind.

Something I really enjoy . . . I have people split into two groups. Everyone in Group 1 writes 3-5 names/places on a pieces of paper without saying anything. They put the papers in bucket/bowl 1. Everyone in Group 2 writes 3-5 words/themes/colors/scripture/blessings etc. on other pieces of paper without saying anything and put theirs in bowl 2. Then gathering together again, one person draws out a paper from \_each bowl \_and prays the words/etc. over the person/place. Everyone else agrees, and can add on, etc. depending on time.

I've had a lot of fun doing it. It's been great to how He matches up the words etc. for the right people!

# Miscellaneous Ideas:

At the beginning of the prayer time, share the general focus of the prayer time—say, Palestinians or Iraq or child trafficking. Then tell the group that they each will get 5-10 minutes to lead a prayer activity of their choice on any aspect of this focus that they choose. Take a few minutes to listen and come up with their plan. Designate the order, and then turn them loose. Works best with a prayer group of somewhat experience in creative prayer.