

# Leading a Prayer Time

The worksheet “The Role of a Helper in Prayer” explains principles on how to lead others in a conversation with God so that He can bring healing into their lives. Here are practical guidelines for when you meet with a person to lead them through prayer – this can be in a structured pre-arranged prayer time, or as it comes up in meeting and training people.

## The prayer team and other participants

- Leader: takes responsibility for the prayer time and leads the people involved so that God’s will can happen. It should always be clear who is leading a prayer time.
- Co-leader: Supports the leader by giving impressions to the leader, writing down the truth God is showing the other person, and praying.
- Trainee: Observes how you lead and supports with prayer. May write down his thoughts and questions so that you can evaluate afterwards.
- Person of trust: Joins because it’s normal or helpful for the person who wants prayer (e.g. partner, mentor, close family member, good friends). Clarify before if both sides agree on them joining.

It is important that the person who wants prayer is comfortable and has agreed to everyone on the prayer team, and that the prayer team has agreed to confidentiality.

It is often helpful to pray in a team of at least two. Meet before the session if possible and pray through what God wants to do and any impressions that He gives. They should also settle their own hearts with the Lord before they pray for others.

## Making notes

We don’t want to forget what God is speaking. You or a co-leader should write down all the truth that God is showing (as well as pictures or things He gives). Use the worksheet “How to Continue After a Prayer Time” and give it to the person receiving prayer afterwards.

It is also very helpful to make notes as a leader to stay on top of and not forget important things: unforgiveness, lies, open doors, and whatever you notice during the prayer time. When you’ve worked through an issue, you can cross it out.

A good way to communicate as a team is by handing each other small notepapers with your impressions (don’t forget to explain that before).

## Starting a prayer time

Help them feel comfortable by explaining what to expect in this session. You can also ask if they have a specific burden they’d like to let go of today. Depending on how much they already know you may need to explain different details. Example:

“This will be a conversation between you and God. I’ll support you in this and make suggestions on what question you can ask God next. If that doesn’t really fit for you, please let me know directly or re-phrase it so that it fits for you. Speak the question out loud, close your eyes and tell me the thoughts, feelings, or impressions that come. Please share everything with me, even if it doesn’t make sense for you, or you don’t sense an answer. Don’t analyze your impressions, just speak them out. Remember, God is leading this whole session. He won’t lead us to places that we are not ready to go and He won’t force us.”

Clarify any questions. Make sure you won’t get distracted. Start with a prayer: put the prayer time under the protection of Jesus and invite the Holy Spirit to take the lead. Let also the other person start with a prayer if they want to.

In the case that God has already spoken on what He wants to address today (e.g. forgiving a specific person), directly start there. Otherwise, it’s a good idea to start with the questions from the worksheet “Family and our Relationship with God” and to observe what hints are coming on what God wants to address next.

## How to lead

We are leading into an intimate encounter with God. Be sensitive to how they relate to God and observe the signals that they are giving you. Be humble and don't be afraid to ask questions. We want to interfere as little as possible with the conversation between God and the other person.

Sometimes people don't answer for a while (they may be stuck, are analyzing too much, or just encounter God in a deep way). You can always ask clarifying questions. For example, after around 10 seconds you may ask, "What did you sense already?" In most cases, God's answer to the questions we ask come directly in the beginning with the first thoughts. But make sure that they don't feel pressure "to hear something." When they don't hear any answer to a question they asked, let them try another question.

Be aware of how much guidance the other person needs. For some it's necessary to pre-formulate everything so that they can pray after you. If they have more experience you don't need to lead them with such small steps. Still, always formulate your questions in the form of "I..." so that they just need to repeat them. Whenever applicable, lead them into free prayer from their heart (Example: "Give this anger into God's hands and add anything you also want to give to Him.")

Follow the main themes that God is showing so that you don't get off track. To work together with the Holy Spirit as closely as possible, continually have these two questions in mind: What does God want to achieve in this prayer time? And what is the next step now to get there?

## How to deal with challenges

It is normal if you are unsure where you should lead or if you're surprised by the serious things that come to light. Don't lose your composure even if you hear strange or intense things. Trust God that He can heal, He is never overwhelmed by what is going on.

If they begin to cry, check with them after a while to find out what is going on: Is this good? Then give them the time they need to cry. Ask God if you should comfort them. If the crying is not healthy, help them to take authority in the name of Jesus, and to connect to God again.

If you're really hopelessly stretched, wrap up the prayer time, and then search for the right person to help.

## Ending a prayer time

Keep an eye on the time and especially towards the end check carefully when a new topic comes up: Does God want to address this now or is this a topic for a next prayer time?

Find an appropriate place to finish (you can also let them ask: "God, is this a good point to end?") Bless the person afterwards and repeat all the truth that God spoke to them during the prayer time.

## How to continue from here

Give the notes of the truths to the other person. Encourage them to pray through these truths every day for the next few weeks so that they fully internalize them and learn to use them. Destroy your own notes.

Think about what support the person will need for this and check with God what your responsibility is in that.

This was a battle – as a prayer team bless each other and make sure you cleanse yourselves. Give anything left from the prayer time back to God so it doesn't continue to burden you. Thank God for everything that He did!