

6 Reasons You Should Be Part of a Prayer Group

“Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.” Mark 11:24 - NIV

First, What Is a Prayer Group?

Whatever you call the group you are in that gathers together, whenever they gather together, we should pray. A Men’s Group, Bible Study, Life Group; when believers get together we should pray. Also, when we gather our primary focus should continually be growing in our knowledge of God’s Word, the Holy Bible, and time of prayer and praise.

My previous church had a time of Prayer/Praise during Sunday morning worship where the congregation could ask for prayer or share praises and then, I as Pastor, would lead in corporate prayer. What a precious time, but admittedly not always feasible in a larger church, such as I attend currently.

However, like the believers who met in a home to pray for Peter when he was in prison (Acts 12:1-17), church members often form a prayer group to pray during times of emergencies or crisis. Permanent prayer groups might spawn from such an experience, there’s something to pray about.

Some churches also have a weekly prayer group meeting on a pre-determined day each week for the sole purpose of praying over prayer requests, church needs, the community, and the country . . . whatever the Holy Spirit leads them to pray.

A prayer group is simply a group that meets regularly to pray and praise in the name of the Lord Christ Jesus. Some prayer groups might have a specific focus like praying for their community praying for church leadership or directions, or praying for elections and government. Moms praying for children. Some groups might pray for prisoners. The neighborhood. Schools. The list is endless.

A prayer group doesn’t require many members so that everyone has a chance to participate, but it also shouldn’t be exclusive or limited. If a prayer group grows beyond six then, when it is time to pray for the chosen focus, they can break into smaller groups when it’s time to pray, and then join back together when it is time to wrap up.

Ask, using my name, and you will receive, and you will have abundant joy. John 16:24 NLT

Previously I’ve asked prayer group members what their reasons were for participating, their answers covered the spectrum of the blessings that brought them together. Here are six reasons that might connect with you:

Reason #1 - Accountability

“...It refocuses my thoughts each day.”

Even when they knew no one else was able to show up on the day and time designated in a prayer group I once attended, one member (a long-time church member) would always show up to pray. Their reason was that they knew they would be able to take the full designated time to pray without being pulled away by outside distractions.

Often, we mean to pray, we want to pray, but the day gets away from us; the phone rings, a neighbor interrupts, whatever, and we never get back to our time of prayer. Gathering together as a group, one that meets at a specific time and day with a focus and purpose to pray keeps us accountable.

There is also the added benefit of group accountability. Gathering with those who expect your attendance and participation helps build relationships and fosters growth. Gathering together with the family of God allows us to become more comfortable (in time) bringing our prayer requests to words (verbalizing). We believe that God doesn't care how we pray, he just wants us to pray. Prayer is a conversation with God.

You do not get things because you do not ask for them. James 4:2 NLV

Reason #2 - To grow in Faith

"The greatest blessing for me has been knowing God in a deeper way."

When together as a group, prayer partners discern or see other parts of the matter we are discussing and fill in the parts that have been missed so everything, the whole, is covered.

The Bible tells us that iron sharpens iron (Pr. 27:17). Listening and hearing the discernment and heart of others during prayers works to expand our knowledge and wisdom of God as we are joined together in the power of the Holy Spirit. What a joy it is to feel the power of the Holy Spirit move within us and put thoughts and words into our minds to express the Lord's leadership.

We grow in our faith by reading and studying God's Word, speaking His truths, and learning more about what it truly means to be a follower of Christ. Being part of a prayer group presents the opportunity for God to grow us spiritually and emotionally into the children of God who can witness to His supernatural power we experience through prayer.

"As for me, this is my covenant with them," says the Lord. "My Spirit, who is on you, will not depart from you, and my words that I have put in your mouth will always be on your lips, on the lips of your children and on the lips of their descendants—from this time on and forever," says the Lord. Isaiah 59:21 NIV

Reason #3 - Our Personal Relationship with God Grows

"I see God move more in my life when I'm in Bible study and prayer groups."

Gathering together in a group, you draw closer to God as you gather into His presence at the same time placing the distractions of the world to the side and joining together as one in prayer.

In addition, your quiet time with God will increase as the realization that nothing can compare to the glory of time spent with Him.

Praying will begin to occur in all areas of your life and you will feel the urge to pray more and more over all things. Talking with God about even the smallest things like finding a parking spot, an item in the grocery store, or big decisions like relocating or job changes. Anxiety, stress, and worry are replaced with prayer. You will find God to be your closest friend, not just during group time, and you will be talking with Him constantly.

“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you...” James 4:8 NKJV

Reason #4 - Affirmation that God Answers Prayer

“An added blessing is to watch in awe at prayers answered.”

“Praise helps us to focus on our LORD God Almighty and to line up our hearts and thoughts with Him and His will, His perfect will. We see the hand of God move in our lives as He answers our prayers.”

An important piece to any prayer group is taking the time to share in the praises of answered prayers from the group. We often focus on what it is we are praying for that we forget to take the time to praise God when we see an answer to those prayers. Most times it is because He answered them differently than expected, but together in the group, others may have the discernment to see what it is we might miss then all can join together in praise.

An integral part of any prayer group is sharing praises for the answers to the group’s prayers. So often, we center our prayers on requests of God but forget to thank Him when we see an answer. Sometimes that’s because He answered differently than we expected, but in a group, there’s a higher probability that someone will notice and everyone can take time together to praise the Lord.

And we are confident that he hears us whenever we ask for anything that pleases him. And since we know he hears us when we make our requests, we also know that he will give us what we ask for. 1 John 5:14-15 NLT

Reason #5 - Fellowship and Support

“Listening for how the Holy Spirit leads and confirms in the prayers of others, plus praying with others, knits our hearts together.”

Friendship, fellowship, and bonds to each other are an important part of any group, not just prayer groups. During the close time of sharing that naturally occurs during a prayer group when open requests, thoughts, and ideas are shared in a safe environment a connection is made in the presence of the Most Holy. Each participant offers encouragement and support, comfort, and presence through difficult times and the celebrations of victories.

“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing” 1 Thess. 5:11 NIV

We need each other in this mess of a world we live in today. A sense of joy and peace is had when a part of the body of believers gathers together in the name of the Lord and for a common purpose and His Glory. This is a glimpse of what it will be like in eternity.

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Matt. 18:20

Reason #6 to Join a Prayer Group: Because You Care!

“We can be the hands and feet of God.”

“We have helped each other so much. In making decisions both large and small, we laugh, cry, encourage, listen, and most importantly, we pray for each other and those who God puts in our lives.”

In our personal time often our prayers are centered on us and/or those close to us. When gathered in a group our prayer focus grows to include the needs of others. Group members are prayed for, but also are the requests brought to the group by them. The group organically grows to pray for more than what is “brought to the table”, they often grow to include the concerns and events of the world that need spiritual intervention.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:17, God calls on us to pray continuously for all things and all needs He brings to our attention. We may not be able to change the outcome or even know the plans of God, but we become part of His process when we gather together to pray over each of the items/issues in another group member’s heart.

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.. 2 Chr. 7:14 NIV

To wrap it up - Final Thoughts

“It helps to keep us mindful of each other’s needs and value of their time with us.”

As you’ve read the quotes from participants of various prayer groups, if you’re in one now, you were hopefully shaking your head in agreement. If not in a prayer group, I hope you’re encouraged to join one or possibly begin praying about starting one yourself.

When we get to watch God at work during the group, in my opinion, is without question one of the most rewarding blessings I have ever witnessed. Prayer is a privilege, a special privilege, and an honor that God gives to us to experience His power in our lives. A little bit of heaven while we await His return.

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. Heb. 10:24-25