

FAQs About A Prayer Room

There are two primary reasons that people struggle to engage in a prayer room. One is a result of misconceptions about prayer and the other is simply not knowing what to do once there. It's important that we create a *value* for prayer while equipping believers to *practice* prayer as a part of normal and healthy spiritual life. If you have questions regarding prayer or a prayer room, email us at riversoffireconnect@gmail.com

As we get started keep in mind that in a prayer-room we are primarily focused on developing the dynamics of corporate prayer. The New Testament deals with the subject of corporate prophetic gatherings by establishing context, setting boundaries, and affirming the value of each individual.

What do I do in a prayer room? It's important to understand that a prayer room can have many different expressions that please God. There isn't any one particular ministry that has a comprehensive and perfect expression of all that honors and pleases God related to prayer. With this being said, the primary value in a prayer room should be prayer. Prayer, worship and Bible reading are three of the essential activities that we encourage people to engage in. Prayer involves speaking to and listening for God. Worship includes participating in music and songs that glorify God. Reading the Bible instructs us, strengthens our spirit and encourages our faith.

How do I study the Bible? The best way to study the Bible starts with reading the Bible. A prayer room provides the environment for doing just that. Start with a book of the Bible and read it all the through. This may take one, two or even many more sittings but getting a sense for what the author is saying generally requires reading the book or letter all the way through. Taking notes and journaling your thoughts and questions as God speaks to you through His word is an important part of processing and developing your understanding. In addition, I enjoy using colored highlighters to help me as I read. I assign different categories to different colors. For instance, I use my green highlighter to underline verses that talk about prayer and my red highlighter to underline verses that deal with things like judgment or strong commands from the Lord in the form of warnings. Most importantly, stick with it! Don't bite off more than you can chew. Bible reading is not a sprint, it's a

marathon. Don't overwhelm yourself with unrealistic reading goals. Instead, set a slow and steady pace for yourself.

How do I pray? There are many forms of prayer that the Bible mentions. We do not have to engage in all of them every time we pray. Believe it or not the most practical form of prayer involves praying the Bible. Praying the Bible is as simple as pausing while we read it and talking to God about it. For instance, if I'm reading a passage like 2 Cor.1:3 in which God is called the "Father of mercies and the God of all comfort" I might stop and ask God to reveal Himself to me as the God who comforts. I may take the time to thank Him for His kindness to me as a Father who is filled with mercy. I may ask God to help me to show mercy, or to comfort others the way He does. This is the most practical way in which the "word of God dwells in us richly" (Col.3:16). A prayer list is another great way to engage in prayer. A list helps us to remember those things that are important. It also helps us to organize our thoughts when we feel overwhelmed or distracted -a bit like a shopping list does when we are at the grocery store on a busy day. A prayer list will help you to be consistent in your prayer life as well. We tend to forget much of what we intend to remember! Write down your needs and the needs of others and bring them before your Father in Heaven.

What about the prophetic, you know when the Spirit wants to move? This is a great question and one that I have heard asked many times. Small group prayer meetings, especially those with worship music accompanying, can provide opportunities for believers to engage one another with expressions of the Holy Spirit that may not always arise in a larger Sunday service type meeting. When speaking of things like prophetic utterances, words of knowledge, an exhortation or a particular sense that God wants to emphasize something in prayer it is important to remember that the underlying condition for sharing something corporately is whether or not it benefits the hearer(s). Not everything we feel or sense is necessarily to be shared publicly. Some things, though, ought to be shared publicly and it is important that we recognize and make room for those. Again, there are many ways in which a pray room may choose to do this and for varying reasons some may choose to do it differently than others. A great way to share revelation is to write it down and submit it to the person or persons leading the prayer meeting. This is helpful because it gives us a written account of what one is hearing from the Lord and offers leaders the time to consider it and its corporate application, if any (1 Cor.14:29). In many prayer rooms, the primary way that the prophetic spirit is nurtured and expressed is through the singers and musicians working in harmony

with one another in worship. Training singers to hear and respond to the Lord through scripted times of singing through the Bible or through times of spontaneous singing as God fills them with inspiration is one of the best ways for a corporate people to be impacted by the Holy Spirit (Eph.5:17-21).

Shouldn't we be doing more than just praying? Aren't we supposed to go out into all the world? The short answer is, "Yes". We are to do more than prayer. Wonderfully, Jesus taught us to pray to our Father in Heaven asking Him to thrust laborers into the harvest field (Mt.9:38). The Great Commission has a prayer dimension attached to it! Many imagine that prayer equates to a lack of outreach somehow. But the New Testament tells a different story. Prayer allows for us to walk in loving obedience to God (Jn.15:7). Prayer creates opportunities for ministry (Col.4:3). Prayer releases the power of the Spirit in ministry (Mt.18:19; Ac.4:29-30). Prayer helps to be effective and fruitful in ministry (Col.1:9-11). Prayer provides us with prophetic clarity and wisdom regarding our assignments (Eph.1:17-18). Prayer strengthens us in the midst of adversity while walking in the will of God (Eph.3:16). Prayer and the Great Commission are inseparable. I like to think of prayer as the power-source for effective ministry, not a competition with it.

Won't we get fat and lazy spiritually by just sitting in a prayer room? One could potentially find themselves spiritually complacent in any setting. Complacency, or spiritual lethargy, is a spiritual condition not a reflection, necessarily, of the particular environment or activity one is engaged in. A Christian can be heavily involved in outreach and evangelism and still be distanced from God on the inside. Likewise, a Christian mother of young children can find her time completely accounted for by the demands of raising children and managing her home and yet walk in tremendous confidence in God, engaged and filled with the Spirit. We must be both eager to pray and zealous for good works. Our time in prayer ought to give birth to practical expressions of the overflow of the grace and love of God in the rest of our lives. And the pouring out of ourselves in service to others ought to cause us to run to the place of prayer for strengthening and refreshment just like Jesus did (Lk.5:16).

Is there really freedom in the prayer room? It seems so structured. *Structure* and freedom are not opposites. *Control* and freedom are opposites. Structure serves like the banks of a river. It allows for the movement of the water, its flow. Without the boundaries of the river's banks its waters would spill everywhere -potentially damaging and overwhelming the area around it. Another good example of structure is the various boundaries that we have placed in our roadways. Without healthy boundaries like stop-signs, speed limits, and directional arrows, traffic would fail to run efficiently and would ultimately come to a complete standstill as drivers attempted to navigate in whichever way seemed best to them. The apostle Paul dealt with precisely this issue in 1 Cor.12-14 in regard to the manner in which the church was attempting to express their liberty in the Spirit in corporate gatherings. The Holy Spirit through Paul wasn't trying to quench God's river he was trying to grow it. There are differences in leading a prayer meeting with 5 people and leading that same meeting with 75 people. Structure is ultimately put into place so that all can benefit from what God is doing in the room.

What about flags, shofars, tambourines and dancing? Can we do that in a prayer room? All prayer rooms are a bit different than the next. While it can be fun for us to blow our shofars during the meeting or shake our tambourines or tap on hand-drums like djembes or congas this usually creates an entirely different set of problems for the worship team who is trying to hear one another and follow a particular rhythm or beat -especially if the zealous shofar-blower or tambourine-shaker lacks skilled on their instrument (let the reader understand). I was part of a prayer room that addressed this particular issue by designating specific prayer set each week for young children to come with their families and bring their instruments with them. When it comes to dancing and flagging it helps to have a designated area for that, usually someplace away from the majority of seated people. Depending on the amount of space a prayer room has and the number of people participating flag size may need to be limited. And, as always, the number one thought by those with flags and those dancing should always be to add to what's going on in the room and never serve as a distraction. Make sure to ask the person or persons leading the prayer meeting if it would be ok to dance and/or wave your flag -and remember to be considerate of entryways, exits and walkways.

With all of the needs out there, why aren't we doing less worship and more intercession? Some Christians have an amazing value for intercessory prayer. They understand the nature of spiritual

warfare and the release of God's power through prayer. Many are gifted prophetically and bring a unique perspective to the meeting. They are ready to pray. They are ready to pray *now*. They are ready to pray hard. It is important to remember that just because we may not open the microphone for corporate prayer that shouldn't stop intercessors from praying. Jesus told us that God hears us pray in the secret place. We don't need to shout it. We can whisper it within our hearts and God still hears us and moves in answer. Also, because we want to create a value and template for a lifestyle of prayer, we recognize that there are also many other valuable expressions of prayer. For instance, Paul taught the Ephesians that we are filled with the power of the Spirit when we sing together (Eph.5:17-18). So, don't stop praying just because the prayer mic. may not be open. Be faithful in the secret place!

I like worship, do we really need to stop for intercession? You might be one of those folks who wish Sunday service could just be a prolonged worship meeting. You love the sense of God's presence during anointed worship. If so, the prayer room is the place for you. But, it is important to remember that God has knit the release of His power to prayer. Jesus said, *"And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."* (Jn.14:13). God desires partnership with His people. In intercession we are partnering with His heart in asking Him to release His power in specific arenas of natural and spiritual life.

How should I intercede, do I rebuke the darkness or release the light? Sometimes intercessors make the mistake of focusing primarily on what the Devil is doing and not necessarily on what God is doing. With so much darkness present in the world today this can be easy to do. But the New Testament model for prayer, as demonstrated by both Jesus and the apostles, tends to focus on releasing the beauty and power of God into a people, city, or region. We don't ignore the darkness, pretending it's not real, but light overcomes darkness. For instance, the apostle Paul asked for a spirit of revelation to be given to the Ephesian church that the eyes of their understanding might be opened (Eph.1:17-18). He didn't rebuke or cast out spiritual lethargy or blindness, He released light. This is the New Testament model. In Acts 4:29-31 the apostles were facing the threat of growing persecution against them. They didn't rebuke the persecution or even ask for the destruction of their enemies, instead they asked for boldness in preaching and the release of dynamic healing power to confirm their words. Many today focus primarily on the tearing down of ancient strongholds in America, or other nations, seeking to war with spirits, not realizing that our

warfare is much more powerful when we ask God for His power to be released and established in a given area. It is not wrong to rebuke darkness in prayer but in a prayer room our focus should remain primarily on the beauty of God. This helps to aid in enjoyable, sustainable prayer.

I'm a bit new at this. Does it really matter if I pray from the prayer microphone up front? The beauty of prayer is that God hears our sincere cries no matter where we are or how loud, or softly, we say them. Praying from the prayer mic. is a great way for others to hear and agree with you. It also gives courage for others in the room who may want to pray publicly.