



6 Ways to Do Prayer During Online Small Groups

Whether through times of celebration, times of lament, or anywhere in between, prayer is essential to the Christian life, and engaging in this vital spiritual discipline allows us to spend time with our Lord and build a deeper relationship with Him. Let us unpack 6 different ways you can do prayer during your online small groups.

Leader prayer

Leader Prayer is when the group leader is the individual who prays over the group. Some group leaders may use this method too sparingly, arguing that a small group is the best opportunity to train up church members in becoming comfortable with the practice of leading prayer. On the other end of the spectrum, some group leaders may use this method too frequently, out of a fear of scaring some of their group members who may not be ready to lead the group in prayer. Naturally, the best recommendation is found to be in the middle of the road. A balanced strategy I have often used in the past is when I open the group meeting in prayer and then invite other group members to close the group in prayer.

Praying Over a Single Word

If interested in trying something new with the group, Praying Over a Single Word can be a method of prayer that, when used strategically, can become very powerful. After taking a moment for reflection, each person types one word and sends it as a private message to the group leader (Most online meeting software programs allow for direct/private messaging within the meeting). This single word is actually a prayer request, and only God and the person who wrote it knows what that word represents and why the person is submitting it as a prayer request. From here, the group leader then assigns each word to different members while ensuring that each member does not receive their own word. Although unique, this method of prayer offers two benefits: first, this exercise grows our spiritual muscles and challenges us to think outside of the cliché go-to phrases that we typically use during prayer; second, the anonymity of the prayer requests help prevent any assumption or bias from entering the prayer, which can help increase the chance of powerful encounters with the Spirit.

Intercessory Prayer

Earlier this year, I mentioned an individual I know who had been blessed by a small group practicing Intercessory Prayer. While the Holy Spirit may not move this quickly every time there is a prayer meeting, intercessory prayer nevertheless is powerful when we as a church body call upon the Lord and pray with a unified heart over another individual. Not only can it help us appeal directly to the Lord within the spiritual realm, but it can also positively impact our outward actions towards the individual when we interact with them in the physical realm.

Neighbor prayer

My personal favorite method of prayer within small groups, Neighbor Prayer is when each person prays over the person next to them, clockwise or counter-clockwise. Once everyone has given their prayer request, the group leader announces the direction that group members will face in order to pray over the person next to them. In the case of online groups, the leader can assign each person, making sure that everyone has someone praying over them and is also praying over someone else.

Breakout prayer

Utilized for groups of 6 or more, Breakout Prayer splits up larger numbers of individuals into smaller groups, thereby allowing more group members to become involved during prayer time. Depending on the time remaining within the meeting, the leader can split up the larger group into sizes of 3-6 individuals (The more individuals per group, the more time needed for prayer). Not only does this method allow the group to focus on the prayer requests of each individual member, it also gives each person the opportunity to gain more experience and grow more skilled in praying over another individual. To learn more about how to utilize the Breakout Room functionality within Zoom, [click here](#).

Praying scripture

Sometimes when we read Scripture, we do so out of intellectual pursuit, rather than out of a desire to rest in the presence of Jesus' love. However, praying through the Scriptures allows us to set aside our own agenda and calls us to be more open and attentive to God. Instead of coming to the Lord with a premade list of appeals, practicing the method of Praying Scripture can be refreshing when the group is able to simply open the Bible and let the Lord guide them through the Spirit.

—By Sean Buono

—Article from SmallGroupsNetwork.com