

**Omega Course:  
Practical Church Planter Training**

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# ABOUT THE ALLIANCE

This curriculum has been prepared by *The Alliance for Saturation Church Planting* in cooperation with Project 250 of Peter Deyneka Russian Ministries. *The Alliance* is a partnership of churches and mission agencies committed to mobilizing believers to saturate each country in Central/Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union with evangelical churches. Saturation Church Planting is a strategy that seeks to establish local churches in every town, village and neighborhood so that those who accept Christ will have a local fellowship in which to grow in Christ and be equipped for ministry. *The Alliance* is built on the premise that joining forces will increase effectiveness, reduce duplication, and demonstrate unity within the body of Christ.

## WHAT WE BELIEVE:

- The local church is God's primary tool for evangelism and discipleship.
- Partnership with churches and mission organizations is crucial for the multiplication of local churches and the development of saturation church planting movements.
- Training leaders is essential to church planting and church growth.
- The Lausanne Covenant is the statement of faith for *The Alliance*.

## WHAT WE DO:

### Church Planter Training and Mentoring

*The Alliance* provides skill-based training in seminar fashion with practical ministry assignments geared towards starting reproducing churches.

### Information Gathering

Accurate information leads to good decisions in the church planting task. *The Alliance* can help with training and consultation for your information gathering needs in the areas of church planting and church growth.

### Prayer Movement Consulting

A church planting movement starts with vision, which is discovered and refined through seeking God's heart in prayer. *The Alliance* can help you better understand the role of prayer movements in the church planting task, and how you can facilitate a prayer movement in your region.

### Vision Casting

What does God want for your country? He wants churches everywhere! *The Alliance* can help foster a vision for new churches with conceptual seminars on the principles of saturation church planting.

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PRAYER

LESSON 1,2

# Concert of Prayer

## PRAYING FOR REVIVAL

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### ☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to explain the concept of a concert of prayer, and to demonstrate how to use it in praying for revival.

### ☞ Main Points

- Church planting begins with revival of the believers.
- Prayer is a key element in revival.

### ☞ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should:

- Understand the form of a concert of prayer.
- Be convicted about the role of personal revival in church planting.

### ☞ Suggestions to Trainers

This is a two-hour lesson. Use it as an outline for the first concert of prayer. The majority of the lesson should be spent in actual prayer, using section III of the lesson as a guide.

## INTRODUCTION

Prayer is a vital ingredient of church planting. Without God's blessing and direction, all our best efforts will fail. For that reason each of the seminars includes a concert of prayer. The word "concert" brings to mind the idea of an organized presentation of music— whether instrumental, vocal or both. A concert always consists of more than one song but is usually arranged according to a particular theme— whether according to composer, musical type, instrument, holiday occasion, or an endless variety of relationships.

A concert of prayer is also organized to focus on a particular theme. It might involve many prayers and many people, but there is a common direction. The audience for a concert of prayer is God Himself. Therefore, it should be based on biblical themes that will be pleasing to Him.

## I. How To Plan And Lead A Concert Of Prayer

Often Christians are stirred to prayer by participating in a dynamic prayer event that takes them beyond their previous experience. By praying with a large group of other Christians from various backgrounds and churches, believers realize that they are not alone and isolated but part of a great movement of God. They see that prayer is not a boring exercise but something exciting, faith building, and power releasing. On all five major continents of the world, prayer concerts have stimulated prayer on a large scale, promoted unity among Christians, and fueled evangelism and church planting efforts.

Concerts of prayer focus on two main biblical concepts:

- Prayer directed *inward*— asking God to reveal to His church the "fullness" of Christ as Lord in her midst. This is the idea of revival, renewal and awakening of the church.
- Prayer directed *outward*— asking God to "fulfill" His purpose through His church among all the nations. This is the fulfillment of the Great Commission - world evangelization, local church evangelism, and saturation church planting.

Concerts of prayer can be organized for a local church or on an area basis involving many local churches with an emphasis on unity and working together. The following is a suggested model for a Concert of Prayer that can be adapted to your local situation. The important thing is to pray regularly and corporately.

The following are suggested elements that should be included in a concert of prayer. Plan on 2-3 hours for the prayer concert, such as an evening or afternoon. The length of each element depends on the particular goals for each concert of prayer. However, it is important to have all of the elements as part of the concert of prayer. This ensures that the concert stays focused, balanced and flows well.

**A. Theme:**

It is helpful to develop your concert of prayer around a particular theme. This will help the concert of prayer to stay focused and allow prayers to be specific. For example, in the capital city of Kazakhstan, a concert of prayer was held around the theme of reconciliation. The celebration focused on God as the reconciler of people to, and on Christians as agents of reconciliation. During the prayer times, both Russians and Kazaks asked forgiveness for past wrongs done to each other. This prayer concert helped to create a spirit of unity and common purpose among the Russian and Kazak churches in the city.

**B. Agenda:**

Welcome everyone and use Scripture to present the topic of the concert of prayer. What does the Word of God say about that theme? Introduce the basic components of the concert of prayer format. Explain the flow of the concert, why each component is important and how each fits. Give suggestions about being sensitive to each other - how long their prayers should be, how loud, etc.

**C. Celebration:**

Praise God for His faithfulness, His Kingdom, His Son Jesus Christ, etc. Be sure that praise focuses on God's character. Use this time to highlight important issues in spiritual awakening and world evangelization. Provide a good mixture of hymns and choruses, making sure to tie each song into the major theme of the concert of prayer. This can be done by just a few brief comments to introduce each new item, being careful not to preach but to lead others into worship and praise.

**D. Confession and Preparation:**

Have participants reaffirm their readiness to hear God's voice and their desire to serve the Church and the world through this ministry of intercession. Lead them in prayer for confession of any known sin, that they might be clean and ready to pray. This does not mean that the confession has to be out loud. Ask for the filling of the Holy Spirit and His leading in all that is prayed. Spend time quietly waiting on God to hear what He is saying in Scripture or through the Holy Spirit.

**E. Small Group Prayer:**

Have participants form small groups of 2-6 people and pray about the topic as it relates to local, regional, national and international level. After the designated time for small group praying, lead in prayer for a growing prayer movement. Pray that God will daily keep all participants consistent and persistent in prayer. Pray for the emerging prayer movement in your city or town or locality. Pray for God to raise up concerted prayer in the church nationwide.

**F. Presentation:**

Information and materials may be used throughout the prayer time to help focus and motivate those praying. Maps showing areas of need can be great visual aids. Local maps can be made showing where churches exist in the area and where there are none at all. Also maps showing where there is high unemployment, single parent families, etc. can help inspire breakthrough prayer.

**G. Praise and Worship:**

Conclude with a time of praise and worship of God for His wonderful ways. Offer yourselves to be answers to your prayers and live accordingly.

## II. A Concert Of Prayer

The theme for this concert of prayer is revival. Revival is a renewal of the spiritual life of a believer. Revival involves a supernatural awareness, abhorrence, and confession of sin. It results in turning to God with a deeper love for Him and greater obedience to His commands.

During times of spiritual revival of the church, there is an accompanying spiritual awakening among those who have not been born again. Individuals and groups of individuals come to vital faith in Christ, new churches are born and the society is changed. This means that revival of believers is necessary for church planting.

Use the remaining lesson time to pray through the following material on revival. The normal type sets the agenda, and the bold type indicates what the group should do in response. Allow enough time for participation on each point before moving on.

### A. The Conditions for Revival

Revival takes place as the Spirit of God moves in the lives of His children, convicting them of sin and calling them to repentance. Read the following verses to help each trainee remember that: "Revival starts in a heart: MY HEART."

#### 1. Loving God with All One's Heart and Total Obedience to His Commands

- Read Deuteronomy 30:1-10.
- Sing songs of worship and praise that declare your love for the Lord.
- Have silent time for individuals to ask the Lord to show them areas of their life that are not in total obedience to His commands.

#### 2. Humbly Seeking the Lord

*"If My people who are called by My name, shall humble themselves and pray and seek My face, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and will heal their land" (2Ch 7:14).*

- Together as His people, humbly seek His face.

#### 3. Acknowledging One's Sin and Guilt

*"Return...declares the Lord, I will frown on you no longer, for I am merciful. I will not be angry forever. ONLY ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR GUILT you have rebelled against the Lord your God...and have not obeyed me" (Jer 3:12-13).*

*"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Ps 139:23,24).*

- Have time for individuals to quietly confess to the Lord any known personal sin and to ask Him for cleansing (1 Jn 1:7,9).

### B. The Role of Leadership in Revival Movements

God has placed leaders in the Church to guide His people in paths of righteousness. Pastors and church planters should be an example to the people that they lead.

#### 1. Leaders Set an Example by Personal Repentance.

*"Put on sackcloth, O priests, and mourn; wail, you who minister before the altar. Come spend the night in sackcloth, you who minister before my God" (Joel 1:13).*

## 2. Leaders Call God's People to Repentance.

*"Declare a holy fast; call a sacred assembly; summon the elders and all who live in the land to the house of the Lord your God, and cry out to the Lord" (Joel 1:14).*

- Divide into small prayer groups to pray for all of the people in that group. Pray that they might be kept from the evil one so that they may minister to the Lord in holiness. In a spirit of love and without criticism, pray for their denominational leaders, pastors, elders and deacons by name. Thank the Lord for them and ask Him to bless their personal lives, their family lives and their ministries.
- Ask God to help leaders know the steps to take in calling their people to repentance.

### C. What you can do to see a Revival / Awakening in your Land

- Still in small groups, ask God to show you what you could and should do to begin the process of revival in your church, city and nation.
- Ask God that as He works reviving His church, He would also work in the hearts of unbelievers to bring many to repentance and faith.

### D. Praise God for His faithfulness

- Join together again into one large group and spend the remaining time praising God for His faithfulness to accomplish the Great Commission through His Church and thanking Him for the privilege of serving Him in that task.
- Close the time concert of prayer with a hymn or chorus that reminds you of God's faithfulness.

## ACTION PLAN

Do an inductive study of Ezra 9:1-10:17. Include answers to the following questions:

- What was the specific sin of the people? (Ezr 9:1-2)
- What was the response of Ezra and the other leaders to this sin? (Ezr 9:3, 5; 10:1)
- What was the attribute of God on which Ezra based his hope? (Ezr 9:15)
- What was the response of the people who saw Ezra's repentance? (Ezr 10:1-4)
- How did the revival penetrate the society? (Ezr 10:9-17)
- Remember to include the application to your own life, your church and your society.
- Organize a concert of prayer for your church or small group using the pattern you have learned in this lesson.



# How to Facilitate Prayer

## HOW TO MOBILIZE PRAYER FOR YOUR CHURCH PLANT

### ☞ Lesson Purpose

The Purpose of this lesson is to help church planters understand the strategic role of prayer in church planting and to give them practical ideas on how to mobilize prayer for their church planting ministries.

### ☞ Main Points

- Prayer plays a strategic role in the church planting process.
- There are many ways to facilitate prayer support for church planting.

### ☞ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should:

- Understand how to mobilize prayer for church planting.
- Know the principle of the strategic role of prayer in church planting.
- Participate in praying and mobilizing prayer for his/her specific church planting efforts.

### ☞ Appendix

3A Prayer Triplets

### ☞ Suggestions to Trainers

This is a workshop lesson. Review the key verses identified in section I and then talk with students about ideas for mobilizing prayer for church planting. What strategies have they tried in mobilizing prayer for their own ministries? Share experience from your own personal or ministry life, showing how prayer undergirds church planting.

## I. Prayer - A Vital Aspect Of Evangelism And Church Planting

The apostle Paul believed that prayer was a vital aspect of evangelism and church planting. He prayed and encouraged the early Christians to pray for the advance of the Gospel. We see examples throughout the New Testament Scriptures:

- In talking about his desire for the Jews to receive the Gospel, Paul tells the believers in Rome, "Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved" (Ro 10:1).
- When Paul warned the Ephesian Christians of the spiritual battle they were to engage in, he told them to put on the whole armor of God and to stand against the devil's schemes. Standing against the devil's schemes involved understanding God's truth about salvation, using the Word of God as a sword, and continuous prayer. Paul urged the Ephesian believers to "...pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints" (Eph 6:18).
- In regard to the advance of the Gospel, Paul specifically asked believers, "Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given to me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the Gospel.... Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should" (Eph 6:19-20).
- Paul wrote a similar message to the believers in Colossae: "Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains" (Col 4:2-4).

- Paul also told the church in Thessalonica, “...pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you. And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith. But the Lord is faithful and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one” (2Th 3:1-3).

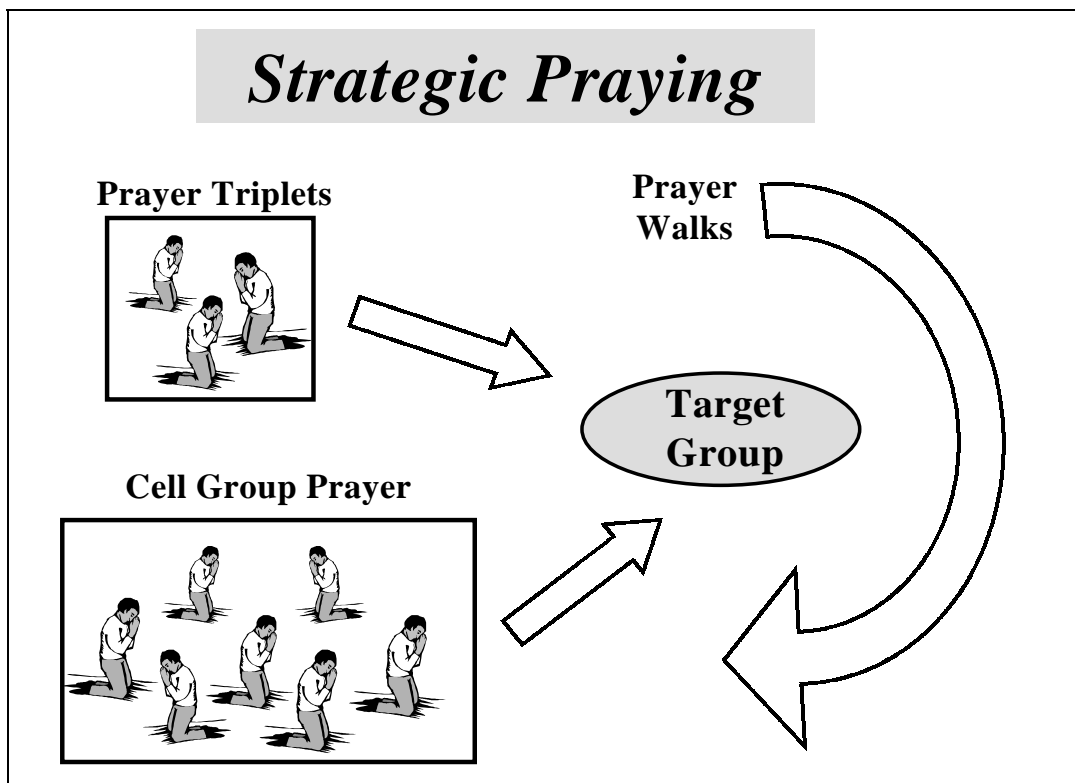
It is clear from these passages that the early Christians prayed strategically for the spread of the Gospel and against the evil influences which hinder the Gospel from advancing.. These same prayer needs still exist today. In developing and implementing a church planting strategy, **take prayer seriously**. Do nothing without prayer. Your saturation church planting ministry must be born out of prayer and then continuously be bathed in prayer from start to finish.

## II. How To Integrate Prayer With Evangelism And Church Planting

In the previous section, we saw that the apostle Paul viewed prayer as a vital aspect of evangelism and church planting. What are practical ways in which you can involve believers in praying for your church planting ministry? Several ideas are discussed in this section. The essential points for mobilizing prayer for church planting are:

- Ask God to lead you to people with a burden for your target area.
- Be committed to good information dissemination between your church planting work and your prayer team.
- Encourage regular, specific, concentrated prayer *for* the Gospel to penetrate the hearts of people living in your target area and *against* evil influence which keep people in bondage to Satan and which hinder the advance of the Gospel in your target area.

Figure 3.1 Forms of Strategic Prayer



### A. Cell Group Prayer

As will be discussed in the cell group lessons, cell groups are a place where people can encounter Christ in His Word and in the lives of believers in the cell group. Cell groups are intended to grow

and multiply and at each cell group meeting, time should be spent praying for non-Christian friends, relatives and colleagues of cell group members. Cell groups may also want to prayer walk in their community and pray for special evangelistic events. Cell group leaders can keep people informed of special events for which to pray (Refer to Manual 2 Cell Group Lesson 4, "Cell Group Evangelism").

## **B. Prayer Triplets**

A prayer triplet consists of three individuals or three couples committed to meeting regularly together (weekly or every two weeks) to pray for 3 non-Christian friends, colleagues or neighbors they would like to see become Christians. Ideally, those prayed for should be people whom the praying individuals frequently see or speak to. Prayer triplets are discussed in more detail in appendix 3A.

Prayer triplets are ideal when the church planter has a nucleus of believers in his target area who are seeking to help him plant a church. They are an excellent way to involve new believers to pray for their unsaved relatives and friends. In addition, prayer triplets are very effective for involving existing churches in evangelism of their own communities.

## **C. Prayer Walking**

Prayer walking is not a new idea. In Europe, many famous walks were created by monks who used to walk and pray on pilgrimages from cathedral city to cathedral city. Prayer walking enables the participants to get out to see and be where the needs are. When we are shut up in a room, we do not have the same understanding as when we are face to face with real life situations and needs. Walking around a neighborhood in prayer gives a totally different perspective on that neighborhood and its needs than just taking a pleasant stroll through the same neighborhood.

In church planting, prayer walking is a tool that can help to break up the fallow ground and prepare the soil of people's hearts to receive the Gospel. Prayer walking should be done by the church planting team or others with a burden for the particular area being targeted for church planting. The prayer walkers will need to walk and pray around, through and in the target area repeatedly. They should do this with sensitivity to the Holy Spirit.

Prayer walking should be followed by strategic evangelism. Evangelism must be preceded and accompanied by prayer. If you and your church planting team are going to distribute literature, show the Jesus film, feed the poor, or utilize any other type of evangelism activity, a key part of that outreach should include prayer before and during the event. Prayer walking has the effect of breaking up the fallow ground and preparing hearts and homes for the sowing of the seed of God's word. Streets that have been prayed over in this way are much more fruitful than those streets that have not been prayed over.

Prayer walking can be done in various ways: individuals, large groups or small groups. The following two case studies are real-life examples of how prayer walking was used as part of a church planting ministry.

### **Case Study 1:**

A neighborhood known to contain a large number of problem families was being targeted for a church plant. Social problems like unemployment, family breakups, drug addiction and crime were very common. In the early part of the church planting effort, a prayer walk was planned for every street in the neighborhood. As they walked and prayed, they recorded the insights the Holy Spirit gave them. Many other prayer walks followed the initial one. Some prayer walks took place around the local school, some in and around the shopping area, and some around the circumference of the neighborhood. One prayer walk took place in the woods overlooking the neighborhood. In these woods, known to be a place where drugs were handed out, witchcraft symbols were found on the trees. The prayer walk team spent time praying against these evil influences. In the three years since the neighborhood was targeted for church planting, social problems have diminished, crime has decreased by 40%, and a church of 70-80 people has been planted. There is now a spiritual influence to challenge the

pervading evil, and God is at work in many lives (DAWN Europa Prayer Manual, August 1994, pg. 13).

## Case Study 2:

A church planter and his family moved into an apartment block in the city in which they desired to see a church started. Late one evening, the family walked through the apartment block together. They stood in front of each apartment door and each family member prayed for the people in the apartment. The young son prayed that each person in the apartment would ask Jesus into his or her heart. One daughter prayed that the family's financial needs would be met, another daughter prayed for good family relationships. The mother prayed for the health of the family members and the father prayed for the blessing of God to be on that household. After the prayer walk, the church planter and his family saw 14 people in that apartment block come to Christ and a small church formed.

## Practical Considerations for Prayer Walking

- **Determine the area to prayer walk.** You will need to decide whether to take quite a small area and regularly prayer walk it (e.g. once a week) or to take on a larger area bit by bit. This decision should be made together with the church planter or team so that prayer walks can be tied in with evangelistic activities.
- **Set a specific time for the prayer walk.** Prayer walk in small groups of two's or three's. This is less threatening for people to see two or three strolling along, apparently in conversation with each other rather than a large group or a single individual. Set a time limit for the prayer walk.
- **Decide on a particular focus of prayer,** such as protection of children, prayer for the poor, conversions to Christ, racial harmony, etc. (Paragraph D. below contains a list of suggested topics). Decide on a particular passage of Scripture to focus your prayers around. For example, you may want to use the different phrases of the Lord's prayer to guide your prayers. Or, you may choose to pray through the verses of a psalm.
- **Walk at a leisurely, but steady pace, taking in the surroundings as much as possible, without obviously staring.** Pray with your eyes open and in a conversational manner, talking to the Lord about the needs of the people around you, the homes you pass, the schools, shops or factories, etc. Pray silently some of the time, particularly when you pass other people.
- **At the end of the prayer walk, share briefly together.** - Write down these thoughts and impressions in your spiritual journal. Set a date for the next prayer walk.

### D. Prayer Support Team

Each church planter or church planting team should try and develop a prayer support team. These are people from your own church or other Christian friends or family who have a burden to pray for the you, your team, your families and your church planting ministry. Ask people to pray for you regularly, such as once a week, daily, or monthly. Write your prayer supporters' names on a calendar and the days that they have committed to pray for you. This will help you to remember who is praying for you and when they are praying for you so that you will know whom to contact with urgent prayer requests.

Your prayer support team may choose to meet together to pray corporately for you and your ministry - once a month or even more frequently. One person on the prayer support team should take responsibility for contacting the church planter or church planting team for updated prayer requests and answers to prayer. The prayer support team needs to be kept informed of answers to prayer and new prayer needs so that they can rejoice in what God is doing and also be encouraged to keep on praying.

## E. Topics for Strategic Prayer

Cell groups, prayer walkers, and prayer support teams all need specific topics on which to focus their prayer efforts. The following are examples of topics for prayer that can be used during prayer walking or by prayer teams. Through your research, you will have learned about other specific things to pray for as well as those listed here.

- For families- that they might be strengthened and blessed, and acknowledge the Lord.
- For the unemployed, that they may be able to get jobs.
- For churches and individuals- that they might have a hunger for God.
- For schools- that the teachers and students may know peace, harmony and the love of Jesus.
- For shops and banks- that righteousness might prevail in money matters.
- For local government offices- to become places of righteousness where good decisions are made and power used rightly.
- Pray for God to reveal the gatekeepers - those who are influential in their community and if won to Christ will open the way for the advance of the Gospel.

## III. Research: Gathering Information For Prayer

One of the first activities you did as a church planter was to research your target area (Manual 1, SCP Vision Lesson 4 "Principles of Research"). Use that research now as a prayer guide.

You began your research by locating the churches and mission groups working in your target area. Pray for each by name; for their spiritual growth; for their outreach in the area; for any problems you might know of that they are having. Has the Church been perceived as making a positive or negative contribution to the area? Is there a history of division or cooperation? Is the Church growing? Where? Pray as Jesus prayed in John 17:23, "May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that You sent me and have loved them even as You have loved me."

As you continue praying, remember the different groups you identified in your harvest field research. Are there areas that have always been known for their poverty, wealth, prostitution, persecution, etc.? Ask God to show you how you might reach people in the different groups. Are there physical needs that you should be helping to meet in the name of Christ? Are there any new age, occultic or satanic groups or centers? Pray for God to deliver His people from the influence of the evil one through these groups (Ma 6:13). Pray by name for government leaders and people of influence in the community. Ask God to give you divine appointments with people who can open doors for the Gospel.

The information you gained in your research should be a part of your daily prayer for your target community. Continue to use it to determine areas that should be targeted for prayer walks and to give you insight into potential evangelistic ministries. Share this information with your prayer team and others with a burden for your target area.

## CONCLUSION

There is a saying among Christians that the "army of God advances victoriously on its knees." This word picture captures the strategic role of prayer in the advancement of God's Kingdom on earth. Church planting is a spiritual activity, involving spiritual warfare against the powers of darkness (Eph 6). As church planters, our work must be born in prayer, preceded by prayer and accompanied by prayer. Only then will it bear the fruit that God intended.

## QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- How do you devote yourself to prayer (Col 4:2-4) or pray at all times (Eph 6:18) as Paul exhorted the early Christians to do?
- Have you ever been on a prayer walk? Describe your experience. What did you do? Where did you go? What kinds of things did you pray for? How did it impact your ministry in that area?

- What are some other ideas to help facilitate prayer for your church planting ministry?
- What are ways in which you can keep your prayer support team informed of prayer needs and answers to prayer?
- What types of information do you feel would be appropriate to share with a prayer team and what kinds of information would be inappropriate?
- Give examples of how you have seen prayer linked with evangelism. What were the results?

## **ACTION PLAN**

- If you have not already done so, develop your prayer support team. Ask at least 3 other believers to pray weekly for your ministry. How will you keep them informed of prayer requests and answers to prayer?
- Do at least one prayer walk in your target area with your church planting team or others with a burden to see that area reached for Christ. Discuss this experience with your mentor or trainer.

## **SOURCES**

- Livingston, Glenn. *Prayer that Strengthens and Expands the Church*. South Holland, IL: 1999. (This *Alliance for Saturation Church Planting* publication is available from The Bible League, 16801 Van Dam Road, South Holland, IL, 60473 USA. tel 1-800-334-7017. Email: BibleLeague@xc.org)
- Mills, Brian. *DAWN Europa Prayer Manual*. Birkshire, England: DAWN Europa, 1994.

# Prayer Triplets

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## I. WHAT IS A PRAYER TRIPLET?

It is a simple convenient way to win people to Christ. You just link up with two other Christians and pray together regularly for the salvation of nine friends or relatives who do not know Jesus personally. Then rejoice as you see Matthew 18:19-20 fulfilled: *“Again, I tell you that if two or three of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them.”*

## II. HOW TO MAKE A PRAYER TRIPLET WORK

- A. Choose two Christian friends or relatives to make your “triplet.”
- B. Each of you choose the names of three people who do not know Jesus as personal Savior and Lord.
- C. Agree on a time to meet once a week to pray together for your nine. You can meet in your home, workplace, school or before church.
- D. Pray together for the nine people by name to accept Christ as personal Savior. Include their personal needs and family members.
- E. As much as possible, as God leads, involve yourself with your “three” in a friendly, helpful way. Look for God to give you opportunities to share the Gospel message with these people. Pray for each other as you seek to do this.
- F. When the people you have been praying for become Christians, continue to pray for them as God leads, but in your triplet choose other friends and relatives to pray for who don’t know Jesus. The focus of the prayer triplet should be friends and relatives who do not know Jesus personally. *Note: You may want to pray as a family using the “Prayer Triplet” concept!*

## III. PRAYER TRIPLET WORKSHEET

A. My prayer triplet partners are:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

B. We are praying for:

List the names of nine unsaved friends for whom your prayer triplet will pray regularly:

My List:	List 2	List 3

PRAYER

LESSON **4**

# Concert Of Prayer

## WORSHIP AND MEDITATION

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☞ **Lesson Purpose**

The Purpose of this lesson is to worship the Lord together and to encourage each other in the Lord.

☞ **Main Points**

God convicts and directs us as we take time to worship Him and meditate on His Word.

☞ **Desired Outcomes**

This is not a lesson, but a workshop. People will have had an experience of strategic prayer and gain an idea of how to lead a concert of prayer.

☞ **Suggestions to Trainers**

This concert of prayer is NOT a time to lecture but to lead the trainees through a time of prayer. You will need to study Psalm 95 ahead of time and notice the divisions given in the lesson.

This prayer and worship time should provide an opportunity for each trainee to reflect on the content of the seminar and humbly seek God's direction as to how it should change his or her life and ministry.

### INTRODUCTION

The Psalms were written to inspire God's people to celebrate, worship and obey the Lord our God. They were not written just to be read. For this concert of prayer, follow the pattern given in **Psalm 95** as your outline for praise, worship, and prayer.

This psalm leads us through three steps, as shown in the graphic below:

<i>Psalm 95</i>	
<b>1. Sing to the Lord</b>	<b>vv. 1-5</b>
<b>2. Bow before the Lord</b>	<b>vv. 6-7</b>
<b>3. Listen to the Lord</b>	<b>vv. 8-11</b>

## I. Celebrate The Lord (Psalm 95:1-5)

*Come Let Us Sing For Joy To The Lord*

- Sing joyous songs

*Shout Aloud to The Rock Of Our Salvation*

- Read together in a loud voice from a Psalm of deliverance: Psalm 18:1-3, 30-36

### ***Come Before The Lord With Thanksgiving***

- Have a time of testimony, especially thanking God for what He is doing in the prayer triplets and other areas of church planting

### ***Extol The Lord With Music And Song***

- Have another time of singing praises to the Lord
- Read together verses 3-5; thank Him for His sovereign rule over all the universe

## **II. Worship The Lord (Psalm 95: 6-7)**

### ***Bow Down...Kneel Before the Lord Our Maker***

- Encourage trainees to pray in a spirit of humility. If they feel free to do so, kneel down.

### ***He Is Our God...We Are The People Of His Pasture***

- Acknowledge Him as your personal Shepherd. Praise Him for His care for you.

## **III. Hear His Voice (Psalm 95: 8-11)**

### ***Do Not Harden Your Hearts...***

- Confess any known sin in your life. Read 1 John 1:9.
- Take time to listen to the Lord. Ask Him to show you if there are areas where you need to yield old forms, habits, or methods of church planting that no longer seem biblical as a result of the Scripture you have studied in this seminar. Wrestle with God about what He would have you keep and what He would have you change in your life and ministry.
- Read Hebrews 3:7-19. Verse 13 says to encourage one another daily. Divide into pairs. Pray prayers of encouragement for each other.

# Prayer and Fasting

## ☛ Lesson Purpose

To take a fresh look at the roles of prayer and fasting in the church planting process.

## ☛ Main Points

- Prayer Is Essential To The Accomplishing Of The Spiritual Work Of Church Planting.
- Fasting was a biblical method of intensifying prayer in both the Old and New Testaments.

## ☛ Desired Outcomes

When he has mastered the content of this lesson, each participant will ...

- Know biblical teaching on prayer and fasting.
- Be consistent in his or her dependence on God through prayer and fasting.
- Pray and fast for the church planting task.

## INTRODUCTION

As church planters are involved in the many activities necessary to see a new church planted, it is easy to neglect spiritual disciplines. If we attempt to do spiritual work in the flesh, discouragement may set in as the desired results are not forthcoming. At this point the church planter needs to stop and take a fresh look at the role of prayer and fasting.

## I. The Essential Nature Of Prayer

God has revealed Himself to be omniscient: He knows all things. God is also omnipotent: He is able to do all things. Why then should we pray? If something is God's will, won't He just do it? Or if we do not pray, does that somehow impede the all-powerful God from working?"

### A. Old Testament Examples - God Is Waiting For His People to Pray

#### a. Exodus 3:7:

The Israelites were in captivity in Egypt, and God appeared to Moses and said, "...I have heard them crying out...and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them...."

#### b. Exodus 32:7-14

Israel had turned away from God and made a golden calf to worship. God said to Moses, "Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation." But Moses prayed to the Lord, reminding him of his promises. "Then the Lord relented and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened."

#### c. 2 Chronicles 7

After Solomon built the temple, he prayed, dedicating it to God. God responded by sending fire from heaven to consume the burnt offering and sacrifice. And his glory filled the temple.

He told Solomon, "I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself as a temple for sacrifices." Furthermore, he promised that "if My people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and forgive their sin and will heal their land. Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place."

## **B. New Testament Examples - There Is A Relationship Between Action Taken In Heaven And Our Prayers On Earth**

### **a. James 5:13-18**

In this passage, the apostle James talks about the prayer of faith and confession of sin. He says, "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" (v. 16). James then goes on to cite the example of Elijah who prayed for no rain for three and a half years. God responded to Elijah's prayers by withholding the rain. Then Elijah prayed for rain and God sent it.

### **b. Luke 6:12-16**

Just before an important decision (the choosing of the twelve disciples), Jesus went up on a mountain to pray and continued to pray through the night.

### **c. Matthew 26:36-44**

As Jesus approached His death, He prayed in agony, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will." The second time Jesus cried out, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done." Jesus cried out a third time, praying the same thing.

### **d. Matthew 6:5-18**

Jesus taught His disciples to pray. Even though the "Father knows what you need before you ask him," (v. 8). Jesus encouraged the disciples to ask for their daily needs to be met, to be kept from temptation, and for the Father's will to be accomplished on earth as it is in heaven.

### **e. Matthew 7:7-12**

Jesus, in speaking to His disciples, tells them, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." Jesus encouraged the disciples not to be afraid to express their needs and desires in prayer to the Father.

## **C. Some Conclusions Regarding the Essential Nature Of Prayer**

God can do anything that He desires to do, but it seems that He has determined to wait, to postpone His work until His people express their agreement in prayer before He acts. From the examples and teachings of Scripture, it appears that God has linked Himself to our prayers, choosing to accomplish His purpose through these prayers.

God respects man's will and He desires man to exercise his will in union with God's will and in opposition to the will of Satan. Prayer is the expression of our desire for God's will and is one way we work together with God in accomplishing His purposes. Prayer is not a battle to convince and compel God to change His mind to suit our own pleasures. Rather, through prayer we discern His will and then bend our own will to God's desires and purposes. Therefore prayer has the dual purpose of

- Expressing our thoughts and desires to God
- Discerning His will for us

## **II. The Role Of Fasting**

Fasting is our deliberate abstinence from some or all food or drink for the purpose of undistracted prayer. Also there may be times of withdrawal from activities and the fellowship of friends for a time in

order to devote one's self more fully to fellowship with the Lord - to seek Him and His will. **Fasting is a spiritual discipline, not a commandment.** Therefore, if a person has medical problems or for some other reason cannot fast, that person should not be made to feel guilty or be accused of sinning. Fasting is done in some cultures and religions as a ritual or tradition. The function of biblical fasting is to focus one's undivided attention on the Lord. It should never be done merely as a ritual.

#### **A. The Teaching Of Christ**

Jesus taught fasting and fasted himself (Mt 4:2). His disciples may not have fasted while he fasted while with them.(Mk 2:18-19). However, even this text clearly states that Jesus expected that the disciples *would fast after He was taken up to heaven.* He also taught His disciples regarding fasting in prayer. In a context of teaching about prayer, twice Christ said about fasting, "When you fast...do not be as the hypocrites..." (Mt 6:16-17). Note that He said "when" not "if," as if this were a regular practice of the disciples.

#### **B. The Example Of The Early Church**

In the book of Acts, we see prayer, fasting and church expansion all going hand in hand. As the church relied upon the Lord, the Gospel advanced.

##### **1. Acts 13:1-3**

As the leaders of the church in Antioch ministered (prayed) unto the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit came to them with instruction and guidance. The expansion of Paul's ministry and the expansion of the church into Asia Minor and Europe began with prayer and fasting.

##### **2. Acts 14:23**

Paul and Barnabas committed the elders of the new churches into the Lord's care with prayer and fasting. Through prayer and fasting, Paul and Barnabas gained the courage to release control of these elders and how they would lead their churches into the Lord's hands.

#### **C. The Nature Of Fasting**

Christ taught that to receive heaven's answers we need to ask, seek and knock (Mt. 7:7). Each word indicates a deep intensity of seeking. Deliberate fasting reveals a yearning desire, a persistent burden of the heart that is greater than the desire for physical food. The motivation for fasting seems to be two-fold. The believer enters into a more intense seeking of God for the dual purposes of

- Spiritual strengthening
- Advancement of the kingdom of God.

As shown in the instruction of Christ and the example of the early church, fasting is an expected and a vital aspect of prayer.

### **QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION**

- Have you ever spent time in prayer and fasting? What was your experience like? Did you sense a spiritual strengthening or see God answer your prayer in a special way?

### **ACTION PLAN**

- Read Matthew 6:16-18.
- Describe how the "hypocrites" looked as they fasted. Why did they do this?
- Describe how a person should look when he fasts.
- How can we keep our fasting from becoming a ritual?
- Plan and experience the spiritual discipline of fasting. Below are a few ways that some Christians do this. You may wish to follow one of these, but the form is up to you.
- Abstain from some food and drink for a specific time.

- Abstain from all food but drink juices and other fluids for a specific time.
- Abstain from a specific food but not all food for a specific time.
- Set aside one day a week/month that you will fast.
- Make a list of specific things for which you will pray when you fast.
- Record in your spiritual journal your experiences during your fast. How did you feel? What did you learn about yourself? About God?

## **SOURCES**

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- Eastman, Dick, *No Easy Road*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1971.
- Piper, John, *Hunger for God*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1997.



PRAYER

LESSON 6,7

# Concert of Prayer

## PRAYING TO SPREAD THE GOSPEL

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### ☞ Lesson Purpose

To provide opportunity for the church planters to have united prayer for themselves and for other church planters throughout Central/Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

### ☞ Main Points

It is important to pray for the spread of the Gospel beyond our local area.

### ☞ Desired Outcomes

When he has mastered the content of this lesson, each participant will ...

- Know how to better use biblical prayers as a model for his praying.
- Be strengthened through the prayer of others.
- Pray not only for the local church planters, but also for church planters working in other countries.

### ☞ Suggestion to Trainers

Lead the trainees in praying through the prayer of Paul in Colossians 1:3-14, keeping the instruction time at a minimum so that most of the time can be spent praying.

It is suggested that trainees pray for church planter trainees in other countries who are going through the same training program. The countries where this is presently happening are Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Serbia and Ukraine. For current information, contact the Alliance office in Budapest.

## INTRODUCTION

One of the best ways to pray is to use biblical models. For this concert of prayer, follow the prayer of the Apostle Paul for the Colossians given in **Colossians 1:3-14** as your outline for praise, worship, and prayer. Note that this prayer begins and ends with thanksgiving to God (cf. Fig. 6.1). The fact that this is a common biblical pattern stresses the importance of praying *with thanksgiving*. We will follow the same cycle in this concert of prayer. We will progress from thanksgiving, to the Gospel, to knowledge, and back to thanksgiving again.

## I. Thank The Father - Colossians 1:3-5

Read together verses 3-5: *"We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints--the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the Gospel that has come to you."*

### A. Thank the Father for the saints

- in this training (specifically, by name).
- in your church.
- in your life: those who have had a spiritual influence in your life.

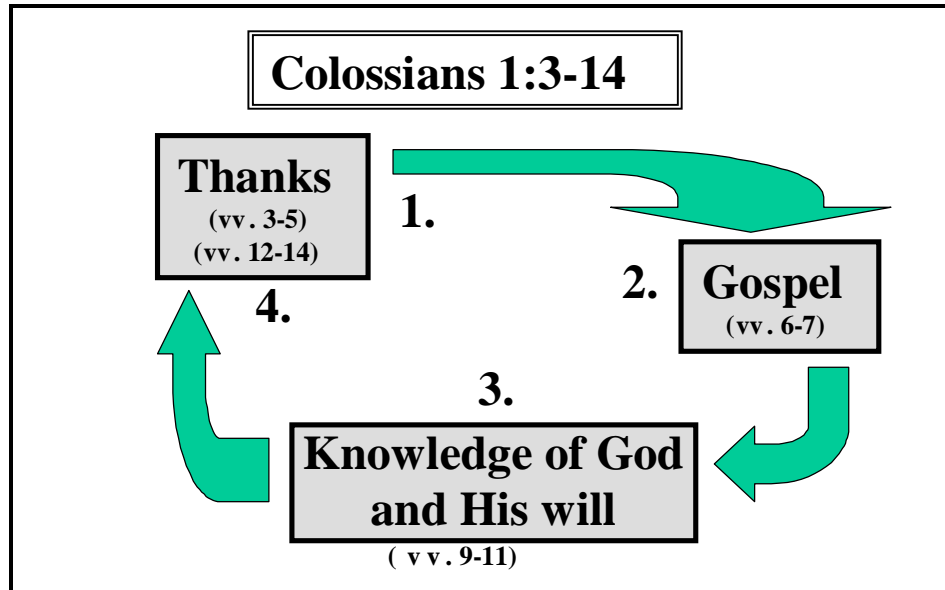
### B. Thank the Father

- for the love He has shown to you.

- for the faith He has given you.
- for the hope that you have in the midst of a hopeless world.
- that the Gospel came to you.

Note: Be specific in your prayers. Thank and praise the Father for specific instances in your life where God has shown you love, faith, hope, and when you received the Gospel.

Figure 6.1 The Prayer Cycle



## II. Pray For The Gospel To Be Heard Throughout The World - Colossians 1: 6-7

Read together verses 6 and 7: “...the Gospel that has come to you. All over the world this Gospel is producing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God’s grace in all its truth. You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf, and who also told us of your love in the Spirit.”

- Pray that the Gospel would bear much fruit in the lives of people you have witnessed to (Be specific in your prayers).
- Pray that the Gospel would bear fruit in the places where others are planting churches (The trainer will have a list of countries where Church Planter Training is going on now.)
- Pray for other missionaries that you know, that their ministry would result in much fruit.
- Pray that God would call more faithful ministers to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

## III. Pray That God Would Fill You With The Knowledge Of His Will - Colossians 1:9-11

Silently read verses 9-11: “For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience....”

A. In the spaces below, list the reasons that Paul prayed that they would be filled with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. What were the intended results? The first two are completed for you.

1. That the believers may live a life worthy of the Lord

2. That the believers may please God

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

B. Using the list you completed in part A above, pray these things for your fellow-participants in this training.

#### IV. Give Thanks To The Father - Colossians 1:12-14

Read together aloud verses 12-13: *"...and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

A. Praise the Father for bringing you into His kingdom.

B. Praise the Father that you no longer live under bondage to Satan.

C. Praise the Father that you have been redeemed.

D. Praise the Father that your sins have been forgiven.

E. Praise the Father that you can call him "Abba" or "Daddy."

PRAYER

LESSON 8,9

# Concert of Prayer

## PRAYING BIBLICALLY

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### ☞ Lesson Purpose

To provide opportunity for the church planter trainees to join together in praying for the fulfillment of the Great Commission—not only in their area, but to the “end of the earth.”

### ☞ Main Points

- Prayer was the starting point of the spread of the Gospel in Acts.
- Biblical prayer should include intercession for the work of the Lord around the world.

### ☞ Desired Outcomes

When he has mastered the content of this lesson, each participant will ...

- Be more aware of the global scope of the Gospel.
- Be more convinced that prayer is the key to seeing God work as powerfully today as He did in the Book of Acts.

### ☞ Suggestions to Trainers

Note that this is a two-session block that combines teaching and praying. Each section presents a biblical principle that relates to prayer for church planting. Immediately after each principle is introduced, time should be taken to pray about that topic. You may want to alternate between praying as a whole group and breaking up into small groups.

## INTRODUCTION

Every church planter who desires to be effective must be committed to prayer. Prayer is a source of both power and direction from the Lord. Nothing of lasting spiritual value will be accomplished without it. However, it is possible to pray often and fervently, but not pray for the important things. While it is certainly true that God wants us to pray for our own needs, that by itself is not enough. He also expects us to pray for the needs of others, and for the fulfillment of His plan to reach all nations—that is, the Great Commission.

## I. The Gospel For All People

God's heart desires for all to hear the Good News of the Gospel. Jesus Christ left heaven in order to provide salvation through His shed blood, and the apostles traveled throughout the known world of their day to announce that fact. Many believers today are content to care for their own needs or the needs of those who are close to them and ignore the needs of the world. In some ways, the early church struggled with this same problem. The first believers were all ethnic Jews, and they had a difficult time deciding to take the Gospel to the other nations. What finally convinced them? In a word, prayer. There are four very significant occasions in Acts where prayer provided the power or the motivation to witness, or both.

### A. The 120 disciples in Acts 1:12-14

The final command of Jesus before His resurrection was for the disciples to wait in Jerusalem. They spent their time together “*constantly in prayer*” in an upper room. The result of this extended prayer meeting was the arrival of the Holy Spirit, the powerful preaching of Peter, and the conversion of 3000 people in one day!

### **B. The Jerusalem Church in Acts 4:23-31**

The young church in Jerusalem faced strong opposition from the religious authorities, who ordered them to stop spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In response, the believers met together and poured out their concern to God. The result was an outpouring of the power of the Holy Spirit and the accompanying boldness to continue their witness despite the opposition.

### **C. Peter on the rooftop in Acts 10:9-15**

At this point in Acts, the Gospel had not penetrated beyond the Jewish people. Once again, God used prayer—this time the prayer of Peter alone—to bring a desire to reach even the Gentiles. Peter was unwilling to even *enter the house* of a Gentile or to *eat with him*, let alone to witness to him. But after God met Peter in his prayer time, he not only willingly went to the home of Cornelius and opened a door of faith to the Gentiles, but he even defended the right of the Gentiles to be saved before the hostile Jewish believers (Acts 11).

### **D. Paul and Barnabas at Antioch in Acts 13:1-3**

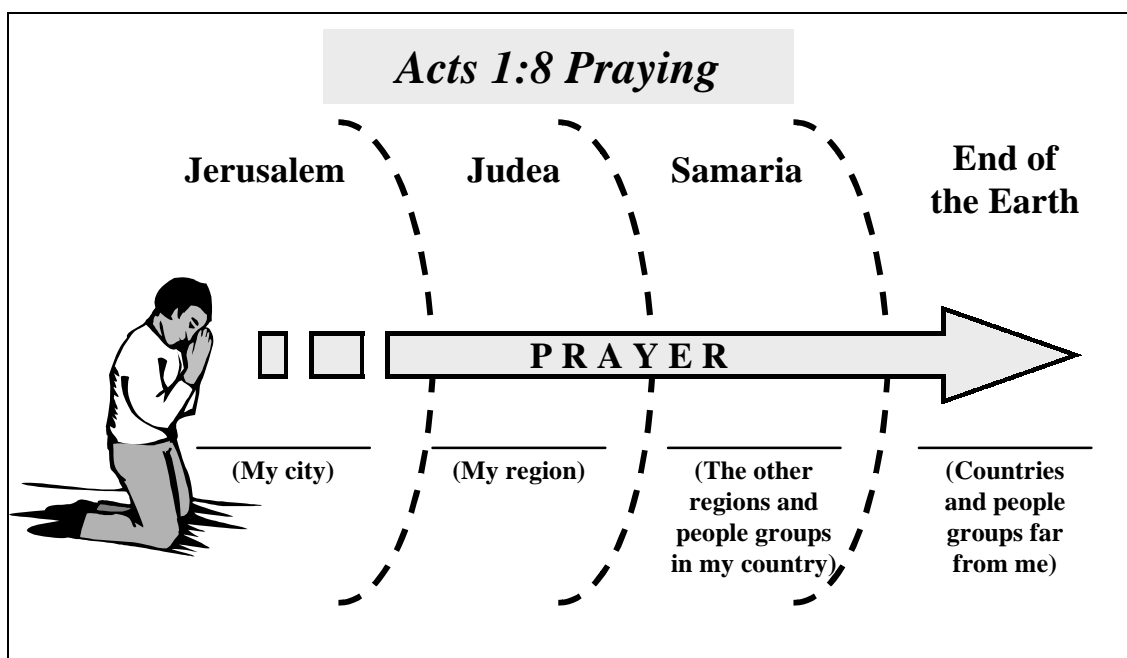
The first serious attempt by the early church to truly deal with the Great Commission and take the Gospel to *all nations* is found in the missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul. Those journeys grew out of a prayer meeting of the Antioch church. In this instance, the Bible specifically says that they were fasting. Prayer Lesson 5 explained that fasting was normally a setting aside of food or drink for the express purpose of *undistracted prayer and fellowship with God*. It was during this intense time of communion with the Lord that He instructed them to set aside Paul and Barnabas for missionary work. The church immediately complied and sent them off *with prayer*.

## **II. Praying For The World**

It took the early church a long time to understand their responsibility to reach all nations. This is one biblical example that we should not repeat. At the same time Jesus told them to wait for the Holy Spirit, He also told them *where* and *to whom* they were to preach the Gospel. It was to go to those in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the earth (Acts 1:4-8). And yet we follow the history of the church through thirteen chapters of Acts before they took this seriously. How sad!

The purpose of the following concert of prayer is to focus not only on our personal and local needs but to expand our prayer to the “end of the earth.” That was the Lord’s intention. As you look at the figure below, think about what each of the areas might represent to you, and fill in the blanks accordingly. Refer back to these as you move through the prayer time.

Figure 8.1 Acts 1:8 Praying



### III. Concert Of Prayer – Praying For The Whole World

The following section presents biblical, strategic topics for prayer which facilitators and leaders can use as a foundation to more effectively focus and guide their prayer groups and networks. Use this format as a guide for today's concert of prayer.

#### A. Pray for Personal Needs and Problems

Even though our prayer groups are to pray for saturation church planting, we sometimes have to release our own burdens so that we can better keep our minds on the things that are on God's heart for our nations, regions, cities, towns, villages, and neighborhoods. Philippians 4:6-7 tells us that as we pray about our anxieties God's peace will guard our hearts and minds in the things of Christ.

- **Divide into groups of two or three, briefly share personal needs, and spend time taking turns praying for each other.**

#### B. Pray for God's Church

As we look at the needs of the church, we may be tempted to pray about things that bother us personally or even pray with a critical attitude. This is not wise as the church is Christ's bride (Ephesians 5:22-32) and no groom appreciates a negative attitude toward His beloved bride. The following prayer requests can help guide our prayer for the church.

**Spend a few minutes praying together as a group for each of the following areas:**

#### 1. Pray for Unity

When Jesus prayed for believers, he prayed for unity. He prayed that we would be one because of our love for Him and for the Father, and our love for one another that resembles the love between Jesus and the Father (Jn 17:20-23). This contributes to saturation church planting because through this unity the world will know about Jesus.

## 2. Pray for the Love of Christ

The Apostle Paul prayed for the church in Philippi to abound in love, but not in blind love. He prayed for an intelligent love with deep knowledge and insight (Php 1:9). This contributes to saturation church planting because as we love one another all men will know that we follow Jesus (Jn 13:35).

## 3. Pray for Obedience

Paul prayed that the church in Ephesus would understand her call, and the great hope that the call of God holds (Eph 1:18). This contributes to saturation church planting because as the Church understands her call, she will multiply and take the Gospel to the world (Mt 28:18-20).

### C. Pray for More Workers for God's Harvest

This is a direct command from Matthew 9:38. If Jesus commands us to pray for something, and we are faithful to pray, will He be faithful to answer? Could it be that there is such a shortage of workers because there is a lack of prayer for this very thing the Lord Jesus himself commanded? Think about it.

**Ask the Lord to send more workers into His harvest both here and around the world.**

### D. Pray for Church Planters

Paul was a church planting apostle. Knowing the needs of his calling, he asked the church in Ephesus to pray for him that he would have the right words to say and the boldness to proclaim the Gospel (Eph 6:19-20).

**Pray by name for those among you and others that you know are planting new churches.**

### E. Pray for Political, Social, and Religious Leaders

1Timothy 2:1-5 gives clear instruction to Christians to pray for governmental leaders and those in authority. The *purpose* of this prayer is so that there will be peace—resulting in the *salvation of many*.

**Divide into small groups again and pray for your government and other leaders by name, asking that God might use them to create a better environment for the preaching of the Gospel.**

### F. Pray for Your Nation and the Nations of the World

Paul preached to the Gentiles, but he openly stated that he interceded to God for his own nation, Israel. In Romans 10:1 he wrote, "Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved." In another example, following the prayers of the saints in heaven, God blessed their intercession by purchasing men from all the nations for Himself with the blood of Jesus Christ (Rev 5:8-10). As we pray for whole nations, we contribute to saturation church planting before the throne of God.

**Close this concert of prayer by taking the remaining time to pray as one group for the salvation of your own people, and also for those of other people groups in your country and around the world. Mention each one specifically and by name as God brings them to your mind.**

PRAYER

LESSON

10

# Facilitating Prayer for A Church Planting Movement

## HELPING OTHERS PRAY FOR SATURATION CHURCH PLANTING

### ☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to give church planters ideas on how to mobilize prayer in support of a church planting movement.

### ☞ Main Points

- A church planting movement requires that prayer resources be organized toward the "Z."
- Prayer leaders must be identified and developed to coordinate prayer movements.

### ☞ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should . . .

- Know how to mobilize others for prayer in support of church planting efforts.
- Participate in prayer events that are foundational to a citywide, region-wide or nation-wide church planting movement.

### ☞ Suggestions to Trainers

Use this as a practical guide for discussing how to facilitate prayer that leads to saturation church planting. Have trainees or others share any experiences they have had with concerts of prayer, or mobilizing prayer for a city or region. Have trainees discuss what steps they can each take to help mobilize prayer in their denominations, for their city, region or nation.

Share with the trainees any resources or contact information concerning prayer movements already happening in their city, region or country..

## INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of this training, in Prayer lesson 3, "How To Facilitate Prayer" (Manual One), we discussed how the apostle Paul saw prayer as a vital aspect of evangelism and church planting. We discussed various strategies for mobilizing prayer in support of your own church planting ministries. In order for a region-wide, city-wide or nation-wide church planting movement to happen, prayer must be mobilized to focus on evangelism and church planting on a large scale. A prayer strategy for saturation church planting must be focused at the point where it matters - each village and neighborhood of every town and city of your nation and among every unreached people group.

There is a wide variety of ways in which people can organize concerted prayer for a city or nation. In Korea, it is not uncommon for churches to spend whole nights in prayer, to go to prayer mountains for periods of fasting and prayer, or to rise at 5 a.m. every morning for prayer. In America, Christians will gather for special days of prayer, such as a national day of prayer. People might set aside an hour during that day to pray specifically for the nation. In Europe, teams of people have walked the same routes as the Crusaders - from England to Istanbul - and prayed for reconciliation and conversions to Christ in cities and villages along the way.

Strategic prayer on a large scale requires certain key elements: research, vision casting, training, and finding and networking prayer leaders. In this lesson we will discuss these elements required for mobilizing prayer for city, regional or national church planting movements.

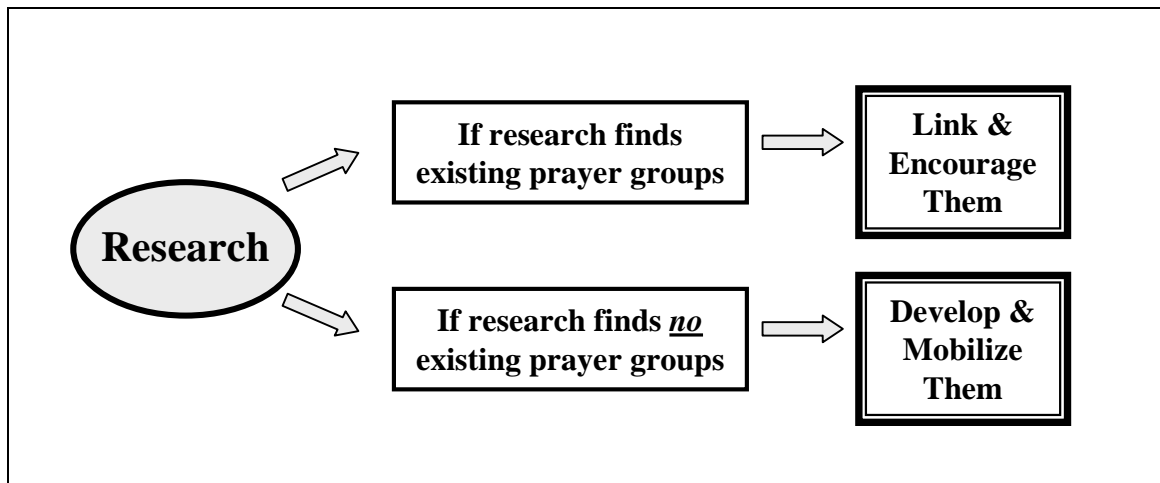
## I. Research

Because it is God's desire to reconcile people to Himself and declare His glory among the nations, it is likely that the Holy Spirit has been already giving people a burden to pray for their neighborhood, region, city or nation. The first step in mobilizing prayer on a wider scale is to seek out people who have a burden for prayer. In some nations these are highly organized groups of men or women, such as the Lydia fellowship. In other places you may come across scattered individuals who are praying by themselves for the advance of the Gospel.

The strategy you develop and implement for mobilizing prayer will depend upon what your research reveals. If you find a number of prayer groups and networks, your work may focus on linking those prayer groups with evangelism and church planting ministries so that prayer can be focused on specific advances of the Gospel. Oftentimes the prayer groups or networks are isolated from evangelism and church planting efforts and so are a lost resource to those efforts. Your strategy will primarily focus on organizing information sharing between the prayer efforts and the evangelism and church planting efforts. Your strategy could also include encouraging and mentoring these prayer groups or network leaders into mobilizing prayer in other parts of your city, region or nation. Another part of your strategy could include bringing these prayer groups and their churches together periodically for larger concerts of prayer. Because concerts of prayer are focused on the praise and worship of God and on the advance of the Gospel, they are good for helping to promote unity among Christians, rejoice in the diversity of the body, and can be a springboard for future cooperative efforts.

On the other hand, if your research reveals very little activity in the way of organized prayer, your strategy will focus on asking the Lord to lead you to potential prayer leaders. You may also focus on vision casting and mobilizing strategic prayer at a grass roots level among believers in local churches.

Figure 10.1 Research Results

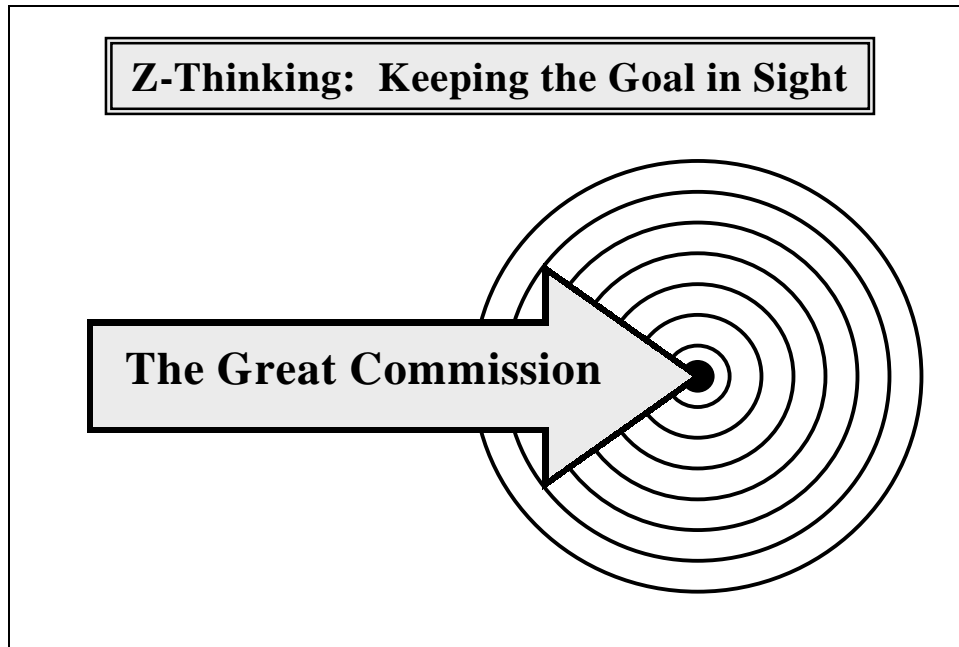


## II. Vision Casting - What Does God Want For This Place?

Lack of prayer often stems from lack of vision. People dedicate time and effort to things that they believe are important or for which they have a deep passion. A key element for mobilizing prayer for saturation church planting is to give people a vision for what God wants to see happen in this city, region or nation. People must have rekindled within them a passion for the heart of God - that is, His desire to reconcile sinful man to Himself, to redeem mankind from the bondage of sin and restore man to fellowship with Himself through Jesus Christ. God has chosen the people of God to be ambassadors of that good news of reconciliation to a lost and dying world (2Co 5:18-20). As Christians regain a sense of their calling as ambassadors for Christ, they will naturally want to become involved in God's purposes.

Another part of vision casting is to give people a picture of "Z" - what will their city, region or nation look like when it is discipled? How many churches will that be? What percentage of the population would be Christian? Compare "Z" to the reality of their situation today. *How many churches currently exist? About what percentage of the population are active Christians?* Then pose the challenge, *How many churches need to be planted in order to see this city, region or nation discipled? How many people need to believe in Christ?* (Refer to the SCP Vision lesson, "Z" Thinking, and the Church lessons, "The Purpose of the Church").

**Figure 10.2 "Z"-Thinking**



A third element of vision casting is to help people see the strategic role of prayer in evangelism and church planting. By having them discover the prayers of the apostle Paul and the things for which he asked prayer, they will catch a vision of how important their prayers are to the advance of the Gospel in their area. (Refer to Prayer Lesson 3, "How To Facilitate Prayer.")

### **III. Train And Equip People To Pray For Saturation Church Planting**

Once people catch a vision for what God wants for their neighborhood, city, region or nation, and the role of prayer in the advance of the Gospel, they will need to be given practical ideas and helps on how to participate prayerfully in the advance of the Gospel. You should be able to provide practical training in various methods of encouraging prayer, including

- Prayer Triplets
- Prayer Walking
- Developing a prayer support team for a church planting effort
- Spiritual Warfare
- Sharing information between prayer groups and evangelism and church planting efforts
- Concerts of Prayer
- National Days of Prayer
- Prayer and Fasting

Most of this type of training will be born out of your personal experience of prayer in your church planting ministry. These topics have all been covered in the training manuals. Remember that

prayer is more caught than taught. As people actually spend time in prayer, God will show them how to organize themselves and give them creative ways of mobilizing prayer in their own spheres of influence.

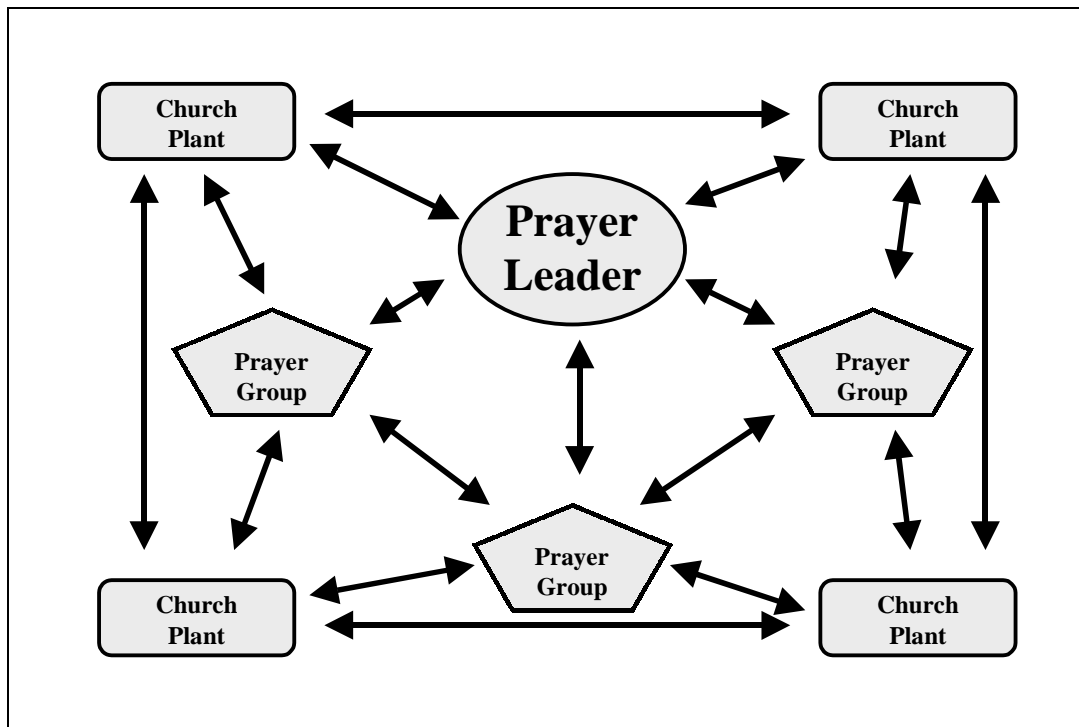
## **IV. Find And Network Prayer Leaders**

In order for any movement to be effective, it needs leaders. As you do research and vision cast, ask God to lead you to men and women who have a particular burden for prayer and leadership skills. These intercessors cast vision, provide training and focus prayer on issues related to the advance of the Gospel in a city, region or nation. They need to be kept informed of evangelism and church planting efforts so that they can mobilize prayer in support of those efforts. Below are some characteristics you should look for in prayer leaders:

- Have submissive and humble attitudes toward church leadership. They should not consider themselves more important than their church leaders.
- Be good facilitators of prayer meetings - able to keep the prayer meeting focused and able to restrain any inappropriate or unhelpful praying.
- Have a strong commitment to Christ and be faithful in spiritual disciplines, such as Bible reading, personal prayer, fellowship, etc.
- Have good relationships with people and a good reputation among the believers in their church.
- Emotionally well-balanced. Prayer leaders have learned to control their emotional swings and do not let their emotions rule their praying.
- Not prone to gossip; able to keep confidences.
- Have an understanding of and vision for saturation church planting. They are able to communicate this vision with others.
- Able to coordinate information flow between prayer groups and evangelism and church planting efforts.

Prayer leaders will function at different levels in a prayer movement. Some will be leaders of specific prayer groups - maybe in a local church, or with members from several local churches in a community. Others will be leaders of prayer networks - small groups or individuals throughout a region, city or nation, who are linked by a burden to pray for the advance of the Gospel in that area or among a particular people group. Denominations might be challenged to appoint prayer coordinators who would be responsible for helping churches in that denomination develop and implement prayer strategies.

**Figure 10.3 Prayer Leaders Facilitate Prayer**



National prayer leaders rally prayer for issues and concerns that affect an entire country. They also promote prayer for those serving in government, the military, etc. They rally prayer networks throughout the nation for specific prayer efforts and might coordinate activities, such as a national day of prayer. These national prayer leaders may be networked to national prayer leaders from other countries around the world.

**EXAMPLE:**

In Romania, the beginning signs of a prayer movement can be seen. From Alba Iulia, Romania, a group of three women began praying for each other and their husbands. They progressed to pray for their churches, their region, for the nation and for new churches to be planted. This fellowship grew to over 30 groups with approximately 150 women involved in prayer. It spread to Bucharest where a prayer brochure for Romania was produced and used all over the nation and outside the country. In Sibiu two churches which are not of the same denomination pray together. In Cluj there is a monthly women's prayer gathering open to all churches, and often unconverted women attend and some have become believers through this fellowship.

**CONCLUSION**

Encouraging prayer and prayer initiatives is not a new idea. Rather, we are joining God in His work. From the time of the early Christians, prayer was considered a vital part of evangelism and church planting. Regardless of whether prayer is at a local, city, regional or national level, the goal of facilitating prayer and prayer movements is to see Christ-centered, growing churches accessible throughout each nation so that every person can hear and see the Gospel in a way which is relevant to them and their situation.

**QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION**

- What personal experience have you had in mobilizing prayer for saturation church planting?
- Do you know of any national or regional or city prayer networks?
- What are ways in which you have kept good communication between your prayer team and your church planting ministry?

- In class take time to discuss how you as church planters can share vision for saturation church planting and prayer with other churches and within your denomination.
- Have you ever attended a prayer rally or concert of prayer? What was it like? How would you organize a concert of prayer in your city or town?
- What is God's will regarding prayer in your life? Is prayer, as a priority, a non-negotiable issue for leaders?
- Why is prayer not a more vital part of our lives and ministries?

## **ACTION PLAN**

Review the different aspects for mobilizing prayer for saturation church planting. Decide on what steps you can take to help mobilize prayer for your city, region or country.

## **SOURCES**

- Livingston, Glenn. *Prayer that Strengthens and Expands the Church*. South Holland, IL: The Bible League, 1999. (This *Alliance for Saturation Church Planting* publication is available from The Bible League, 16801 Van Dam Road, South Holland, IL, 60473 USA. tel 1-800-334-7017. E-mail: BibleLeague@xc.org).
- Mills, Brian. *DAWN Europa Prayer Manual*. England: DAWN Europa, 1994.

PRAYER  
LESSON  
**11,12**

# Concert of Prayer

## THANKING GOD FOR HIS FAITHFULNESS

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### ☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to celebrate the goodness and faithfulness of the Lord throughout the training program.

### ☞ Main Points

- Thanking God for His faithfulness.
- Asking His blessing on our future ministry.

### ☞ Desired Outcomes

At the end of this lesson, each participant should . . .

- Be encouraged as they recall some of the Lord's blessings during the months of training.
- Be challenged to trust God for even greater things in their own lives and ministries.
- Be challenged to form or participate in a church planter's fellowship for on-going help and encouragement after the completion of these training materials.

### ☞ Suggestions to Trainers

This two-hour concert of prayer should follow the prayer lesson and should be the final closing of the Church Planter Training. Plan carefully to make it a time of encouragement, blessing and celebration. Choose three or four people to share how the Lord has blessed their church planting efforts. Then divide into small groups to give more people time to share. Finally, come back together for a time of praise and worship.

Have a map of the country and a list of unreached people groups to use during the concert of prayer. Also, Church Lesson 18 on the history of Christianity in the country can be used as a source of praise topics on God's faithfulness to the people of this country and His desire to fill the nation with His glory.

Note: Psalm 67 is an excellent Psalm to use as a theme for this concert of prayer.

## I. Praise God For Being A Faithful God

Sing together a number of songs or choruses that focus on thanksgiving to God for His faithfulness.

Ask trainees to think of any short portions of Scripture that relate to God's faithfulness, and to read them to the group as they come to mind.

## II. Recall The Lord's Past Blessings

### A. To Each of Us Personally

Share brief testimonies of how the Lord has worked in your personal salvation and growth.

### B. To Our Families

Share testimonies of God's work in your family.

### C. In Your Church Planting Ministries

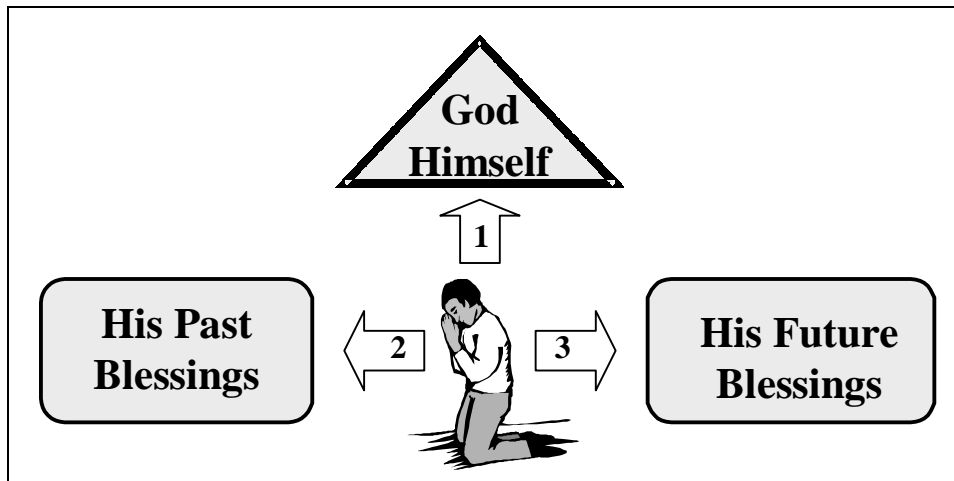
- Have three or four individuals share with the whole group ways in which they saw the Lord bless their church planting ministry or lessons which the Lord taught them during this cycle of training.
- In small groups, allow everyone who wishes to share blessings from the Lord.

### D. To the Church In Your Nation

Church Lesson 18, "The History Of Christianity In \_\_\_\_\_," discusses a basic history of Christianity in your country. Use this as a guide for prayer.

- Thank God for the first missionaries who brought the Gospel to your country.
- Thank God for preparing the hearts of the first believers to receive the Gospel.
- Praise God for Christian martyrs - those who died for their faith in your country.
- Thank Him for the missionaries that have been sent out from your country to other parts of the world.
- Praise God for His preservation of the church through history.

Figure 12.1 Thanking God for . . .



## III. Pray For The Ongoing Work Of Church Planting

In small groups, have trainees pray for each other's ministries. Pray for the advancement of God's Kingdom in the cities and regions where the church planters are working. Pray for freedom and boldness to proclaim the Gospel.

In a large group, pray for the entire nation. Ask God for the continued growth and expansion of His Kingdom to penetrate all parts of the nation. Pray that the Gospel will penetrate the unreached people groups. Use a map of the country and a list of unreached people groups to assist this prayer time.

## IV. Celebrate The Lord's Goodness In Song And Worship

Note: In closing, you might want to make plans for an on-going church planter's fellowship which could meet regionally on a regular basis (monthly or quarterly) for prayer, sharing, continuing education and encouragement of the church planters in their ministry.