

## THE PRAYER MEETING

There are two or three special matters in the prayer meeting which the brothers should pay attention to.

### Be Short

... In the prayer meeting everyone should learn to pray in a short way... Long prayers are often padded with many empty words. When you come to a prayer meeting, you should remember to tell the brothers to pray short prayers.

### Be Genuine

...prayer in the prayer meeting must be honest...in their [our] own **personal** prayer time and their [our] prayer in the **prayer meeting** should not differ too greatly. Learn to be real...there are times when the words you use in the prayer meeting are not the words you use in your personal time of prayer. Many prayers in the prayer meeting are indeed not genuine. Sometimes when you are in a prayer meeting, you do not know whether a certain brother is **praying for you or for God to hear**...pray from their [our] heart; they [we] must **pray for God to hear**.

### The Topic Needing to Be Focused

...make a decision concerning the topics of prayer in the prayer meeting...Never allow the brothers to pray as they see fit.

...The items for prayer need to be determined, but not necessarily determined beforehand. However, on the night of prayer you need to mention these items. **Perhaps** you would pray only for one item in one prayer meeting. **For example**, there might be problems in a locality, and we would pray just for that one locality. In our prayer there must be only one matter, and we must ask all the brothers and sisters to lay aside everything else and pray for this one matter. From beginning to end, the church should pray for this one matter, with everyone bringing this matter to God. A real prayer meeting will be like this.

...In a prayer meeting we must pray specifically with one accord. The responsible brothers should say, "Today we must pray specifically for this one matter." Everyone then prays for this one matter.

**If there are five or six items to pray for** and a responsible brother stands up to announce them, **he should announce one item first**. He **may say**, "We have several matters to pray for; however, we will pray for this one item first." Do not mention other matters. **After** three or five prayers, you have to see whether the burden is discharged or not. If you feel that you should still pray for that matter, let them continue to pray. If the burden is gone, while the brothers are still sitting there or kneeling, a responsible brother should announce another item. Then the prayers of all the brothers and sisters will be on this topic. **After** five, ten, or twenty minutes, it may seem that the burden is gone again, and that no one has anything more to pray. The responsible brother should then stand up again and say that there are still a third and a fourth item which need prayer. Do you see? **The topic must be focused**. **Even if** there are three or four topics, they should not be announced at one time. Wait until the first topic has been thoroughly prayed for; then announce the second topic. In this way you will be able to make all the brothers and sisters pray for one item. After the first topic is over, bring in the second; after the second is over, bring in the third. Therefore, in the meeting **the responsible brothers should learn before God to guide this meeting**. The spirit of the responsible brothers must be open and sensitive. One responsible brother may say, "The prayer for this matter can stop here. There is no need to drag it on any longer." Perhaps there are times when you still need to continue praying. At any rate, after the first matter is finished, the second matter can be brought in. If the burden is finished, you should then rise up immediately to announce the next item.

Sometimes during the entire meeting we can pray only for one matter, perhaps just for a sick brother. At other times we may pray only for the sick ones the entire night. At still other times we may pray for all the unemployed brothers or for just one unemployed brother. Always pray with a focus so that God's children can pray with one accord. I think that this is a very crucial matter. Many prayer meetings are not strong because there are too many topics.

## **EVERYONE WHO ATTENDS THE PRAYER MEETING NEEDING A SPIRIT OF PRAYER**

For sixty years, from the time I was saved up to the present ... According to my experience, everyone who comes to the prayer meeting must have a spirit of prayer. As soon as we step into the meeting, we should not care for anything but to pray. If someone is praying, we should wait until he finishes and then continue the prayer. We should not rely too much on the responsible brothers to lead the meeting. We should not expect them to call a hymn, open the prayer, or announce the items for prayer. Such a prayer meeting will not be strong.

In the prayer meetings...whoever arrives first begins to pray, and those who come later join in the prayer; everyone prays. No one waits until seven-thirty to begin praying, they do not sing first and then have an opening prayer, and there is neither a message nor an announcement concerning items for prayers. They just pray. This kind of prayer meeting is powerful and very living; oftentimes the prayer lasts for one and a half hours.

Generally speaking, if someone stands up to announce some items for prayer or to call a hymn in the middle of the prayer meeting, it is an interruption. The spirit of prayer should not be interrupted. Once it is interrupted, it is not easy to raise the meeting. Hence, when we come together to pray, we must take this as the goal. **We should not rely on a program, nor should we depend on a few designated people.** As soon as we come together, **we should begin to pray.**

### **Not Regarding the Prayer Meeting as a Routine**

Someone may ask what we should pray for **if** the items for prayer are not announced. Since we are all in the church life, **we should know the needs of the church.** When we come to the prayer meeting, **we should not pray for trivial matters but for important matters**, such as **God's will, God's kingdom**, and the **propagation of the church.** **For instance**, the church in Taipei is now at a turning point, a new beginning; we should pray earnestly for this. This does not mean, however, that no one should make a prayer request. If a family member is very sick, a saint can look for an opportunity to fellowship this matter by following the leading of the Holy Spirit. Then he can make a request for prayer.

**The prayer meeting will be dead if** we pray according to a list that is distributed to every hall or district. **I am not saying that we should not have such a list but that it should not become a routine.** When the brothers and sisters come together to pray, they should **pray mainly for** God's kingdom, the propagation of the gospel, and the building up of the church. **Furthermore**, they should **also pray** for the saints' growth in life and for the move of the church. These matters are our major concerns, and we should remember them in our prayer. **If the elders, co-workers, and deacons realize** that there is a crucial matter in the church that needs to be made known in the prayer meetings of the church, **then it is proper to make an announcement.** **In addition**, it is **also good to allow the saints to fellowship some personal burdens.** They may have a relative or a friend who needs to be saved and needs the intercession of the saints in the prayer meeting. This is acceptable. In any case, the prayer meeting should be living and not regarded as a routine.

### **Prayers Needing to Be Short yet Strong**

Furthermore, **there should not be long prayers...** Strong prayer is not usually long. I pray two sentences, another prays two sentences, and yet another follows by praying two sentences. **After praying in this way for one item, we can move on to another item.** **In the end all the saints will pray as one man.** This is the best prayer meeting. The more we pray, the more living the prayer becomes; and the more we pray, the higher and stronger the prayer becomes. We need to learn and exercise to have simple but strong and uplifting prayers. We should not worry about what to pray for next. The Holy Spirit will lead us to pray for different burdens one by one.