

APPENDIX B

GUIDELINES ON PRAYER FOR THE PRAY-OVER SESSION

1. Much of the effectiveness of the prayer session on the participants will be related to the kind of atmosphere which the team itself establishes. Thus the atmosphere should be one of:
 - a) **FAITH.** We need to turn to the Lord and put our faith in Him. We need to be centered on the Lord. And the more we have faith, the easier it will be for the participants. Faith catches. In an atmosphere of worship and faith, it is much easier to have faith.
 - b) **PEACE.** We do not want to encourage emotional excitement. Rather, we want to encourage relaxed joy. Those conducting the prayer should be warm and friendly and relaxed and should themselves convey a mood of peace and calmness to the participants.
 - c) **OPENNESS.** We should be especially open to spiritual gifts during this time. The Lord will work through the team with prophecy and words of wisdom, with discernment and faith, and even with healing. If we obey the promptings of the Spirit, we will see God work in many ways that we might not have expected.
2. The gift of tongues.
 - a) The participants should come to see tongues as another means of growing closer to Christ. It is a gift we can all use right from the start of our new life in the Spirit. A person should claim this gift in confidence. No one needs to wait for this gift or shy away from it because of unworthiness. It is a gift God gives freely, simply because we ask for it. No one has to “psych himself up” or feel emotionally ready to receive the gift.
 - b) Three conditions dispose a person to receive the gift of tongues:

- He should desire the gift. Simply because it is a gift that comes from God.
 - He should ask in faith for the gift. Faith means relying on God's promise (Lk.11:13) and looking expectantly to Jesus to give the gift.
 - He must cooperate with God by speaking out in faith and expecting God to give him the utterance. What is needed is active, not passive, faith.
- c) There are some people who come seeking to receive the gifts of the Spirit who say that they do not want to have the gift of tongues. This is a wrong attitude because it would be placing limits on God's working. It is not being open to the Lord. Everyone should want to receive the gift of tongues.
- d) Tongues may not be of first importance in itself, but it has great consequences in a person's spiritual life. It can revolutionize a person's prayer life. A person who prays in tongues can normally pray more easily, and his prayer will be more likely to be filled with praise and worship. But even more significantly, tongues usually turns out to be the gateway to the charismatic dimension.

It builds a person's faith in a very concrete way. It gives him a clear experience of what it means to have the Holy Spirit forming something new through him. Yielding to tongues is an important first step, and it is worth putting effort into encouraging a person to yield to tongues.

- e) At the same time, we should make it clear that speaking in tongues is neither a necessary sign, nor by itself a certain sign, that a person has received the power of the Holy Spirit. We should encourage the participants to be open to this gift, as a valuable way of praying, especially in praising God, but we should not put too much stress on it that their attention will be on tongues and not on the Lord and his gift of the Holy Spirit.

3. Suggested Procedure in the Pray-over Session.

- a) Ask the participant to sit down, just relax, and be open to the workings of the Holy Spirit.
- b) Ask if there are any other specific areas that he wishes you to pray for, aside from those already discussed in your individual meeting. Ask if he desires any specific gift(s) from the Holy Spirit.
- c) Start with praising the Lord. Ask the participant to join you here. Then ask the Lord's protection for the participant and his loved ones and also for yourselves. Claim God's power and victory over the situation.
- d) Do a short prayer of exorcism, which means the casting out of evil spirits or the telling of spirits to leave a person or place free. It should be done simply and undramatically, in a quiet voice, so that only those praying for a particular person will hear it. Simply command whatever evil spirits there are to depart. If you have any discernment as to the kind of evil spirit present, then simply command that spirit to depart.

NOTE: This is not the kind of exorcism called for when an individual is actually possessed. It is simply the same kind of prayer that is part of every Catholic celebration of the sacrament of Baptism. To avoid misconception some prefer to use the term "praying for deliverance from evil spirits". Then always ask for an infilling of the Holy Spirit for the void left by evil spirits.

- e) Pray that the participant be delivered from the bondage of sin. Pray for all those areas of wrongdoing or of weaknesses, all negative emotions, all areas of concern and difficulty, and any other obstacles to the full release of the Spirit in his life.
- f) Pray for healing of memories and for inner healing.

- g) Pray specifically for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. For example:

"Father, we now ask you, in the name of your Son Jesus Christ, that you pour upon ____ the Holy Spirit so he/she may receive new life" or any other variation. The important thing is that you ask specifically that the Holy Spirit descend upon the participant.

- h) Pray that the participant receives the gifts of the Holy Spirit, especially those he specifically desires.

- i) Pray in tongues. Then you can ask the participant to pray in tongues. But you may have to help the participant to yield to tongues. Many will not understand or follow the instructions given in the opening remarks. Thus after praying with a person, you should lean over or kneel down and suggest that he should try to start praying in tongues. You should encourage him to speak out, making sounds that are not English or any other language he knows. You should then pray with him again.

When the person begins to speak in tongues, you should encourage him. Many will still be afraid that it is "just them." You can often supply the faith that will allow them to yield to the Spirit. Once the participant is able to pray in tongues, say a short prayer of thanksgiving to the Lord. If no tongues come, or the person feels inhibited, try encouraging but never force the person.

- j) Pray that the participant be given the grace to become a strong Christian. Pray that he commit himself to the Lord.

- k) Have a closing prayer for the participant, some words that will encourage and upbuild him. End with the Glory be.

- l) Let the participant go back to his seat, exhorting him to continue praying until everyone is finished.

4. Pastoral notes.

- a) You should get a prayer partner to provide support. However, you as the discussion group leader will lead the prayer. The prayer partner is in a supporting role. It is the discussion group leader who has been with the participant for the past 8 sessions and who has had two individual meetings with him. Thus he best knows the participant and what his needs are. However, as is called for, the prayer partner gives support to the extent necessary. And in some cases where the discussion leader himself does not have the gift of tongues, it would be the prayer partner who should handle this portion.
- b) Pray in a low but audible voice. Usually there will be other praying teams in the same room. Your prayer should be loud enough to be heard by the participant and your prayer partner, but not too loud as to disturb the other groups.
- c) Apply the right amount of encouragement and understanding for each participant. Some people will yield to the Spirit beautifully without any encouragement at all. Some will need just a little push. Some will need patient encouragement. Some should not be pushed at all. Let the Spirit lead you and give you wisdom on how to help your people.
- d) Should the participant become restless, immediately pray that the peace of the Lord be upon him.
- e) If the participant cries, alleviate his embarrassment by telling him that tears are a gift from the Lord. It is called the gift of tears or the gift of cleansing.
- f) Be aware of what is happening to the participant. Don't be lost in your own prayers. Be sensitive to the situation and adopt your prayers, your procedure, and your whole self to it.

- g) There is no set length of time to the prayer of this sort. It can range from as short as five minutes to as long as 30 minutes or more. It is not how long it takes that is important, but how effectively the participants are led to receive the power of the Holy Spirit through the pray-over. However, your prayers should also not be so long that the whole session is stretched out. A good rule of thumb is to take no more than one hour to pray over your whole group.

5. Remember:

- a) Study this guide and other available materials well.
- b) Prepare yourself spiritually, throughout the week but especially on the day of the prayer session. Pray, read Scripture, fast, and intercede for your people.
- c) Have faith and trust in the Lord!

