



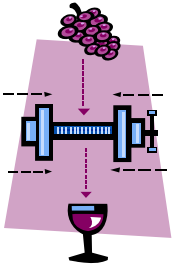
Moving Outward: Prayer in the Church

Community Reflection is Vineyard Boise’s small group leader resource to help you lead/facilitate your group effectively. It’s made up of four parts: **CONNECT**, **PROCESS**, **COMMIT**, and **SHARE**. It’s a basic plan for your group time as you track with our current Sunday teaching series. Leading a small group is as much an art as it is a science, so consider this a “palette” from which to draw colors for the “canvas” of your small group time. This guide is intended to be your servant, not your master! Be creative, have fun, and stay attentive to what God is doing in your group this week. The time listed for each of the four parts is just a guideline to help keep you on track as you lead your group. (Total suggested time, just under two hours.)



CONNECT (15-20 minutes)

1. Welcome everyone. If your group is new or you have new people in the group, take a few minutes to introduce yourselves.
2. You might consider having the group read a Psalm together as a lead into worship. Pick a favorite, or you could use **Psalm 84** (theme: the joys of being “in the house”). Let the Psalm lead you into group prayer and...
3. Worship! Live, CD, DVD, or however...worship is one of the best defenses against a purely intellectual group experience and really helps set the stage for what is usually the “main course” of a small group meeting – processing the truth together.



PROCESS (35-45 minutes)

1. Last week we focused on the intimacy of prayer (the movement of prayer inward and upward with our “Abba”). This week we focus on the fellowship of prayer (the movement outward – out of the “closet” into the church). A great night to really pray for one another!
2. Ask your group how they did with their devotions this past week. What stood out as they worked through them? What questions or issues were raised?
3. Pick one of the options below to start or spur on further group discussion:

Option A

Discussion/Teaching Option: Effective Prayer for Others

You can start by reading **Luke 9:28-45; Matthew 17:19-20; Mark 9:28-29**.

Two key things happen here – the ultimate “mountain top experience” of the transfiguration and the frustrating failure of the disciples down below in the valley. What here’s to explore is the connection of intimate prayer and experience of God’s glory on the mountain so we are equipped and ready to face pain with others in the valley. You can use any of the following questions to help get the discussion going:

Weekly Discipleship Track



1. Life reflection – need for change, hunger for God
2. Presentation of truth – teaching and studying
3. Processing the truth – reflection and debrief in community
4. Life change – response to truth, new habits and actions

Community Reflection

- *Why did Jesus take his inner circle of disciples up on the mountain? What happened to Jesus as he prayed? What was going on with the three disciples while all of this was happening? What was the point of this mountain top experience?*
- *What crisis met Jesus and his disciples when they came down from the mountain? How did the disciples react to this crisis? How did Jesus respond? What lessons do you see here?*
- *What reasons did Jesus give for the disciples' failure to cast out the demon? What lessons do you see as to the nature of effect prayer for others?*
- *How can we pray for each other tonight?*

Option B

Just Do It Option

Read **James 5:13-20**. The point of reading this passage is not to launch a discussion about elders and oil but to clearly affirm and establish our need to pray for one another and to lead your group right into doing it. Here are some ways you might proceed:

- The straightforward approach: set the tone with some quiet worship music in the background if you think that would help (a CD would work great). Facilitate group prayer by asking who needs prayer, starting with yourself if you have needs or issues you would like to share with the group. Consider having each person who is prayed for sit in the center of the group, share their needs (stress to the group the importance of watching and listening and to refrain from offering advice and counsel). Then have the group lay hands on each person and pray.
- Hand everyone a blank half sheet of paper and ask each person to write down one prayer request for themselves (many will share all kinds of requests for others but are reluctant to make requests for themselves – stress that the Lord is interested in *their* needs and the group wants to stand with them in prayer). You can then either collect the sheets and have them drawn at random by different group members or simply have them pass the request to the right. Then group members can take turns praying for one another. Be prepared to step in for any group members who really aren't ready to pray aloud before the group.
- Break your group into smaller groups for focused prayer on common issues. Men with men, women with women; parents with parents; singles with singles – all depending on the make-up of your group.



COMMIT (5-10 minutes)

Have each group member commit to praying for one other member in the group during the next week, so that everyone in the group is covered. Suggest that each one daily pray one of Paul's prayers (you could suggest Colossians 1:9-12), personalizing it to their assigned "partner" for the week.



SHARE (15-20 minutes)

This should have done extensively already! So now celebrate with some more worship, some laughter, food, etc.