

## \*A SHORT COURSE IN PRAYERWALKING

In hundreds of cities across the globe, ordinary believers are prayerwalking through the streets of their communities. They pray while walking, with eyes open for the spiritual awakening God is bringing.

We define prayerwalking as "praying on-site with insight." There is no set pattern or proven formula. Prayerwalkers have set out with every imaginable style. There's nothing magic at all in the footsteps. God's Spirit is simply helping us to pray with persistent spontaneity in the midst of the very settings in which we expect him to answer our prayers. We instinctively draw near to those for whom we pray.

Getting up close to the community focuses our prayer. We sharpen our prayers by concentrating on specific homes and families. But we enlarge our praying as well, crying out for entire communities to know God's healing presence.

Quiet prayerwalks complement more high-profile praise marches and prayer rallies. Worship and warfare blend with intercession that Christ would be welcomed as Lord by many throughout the entire city.

Prayerwalks give us a simple way to continually fill our streets with prayer. Many are praying city-size prayers while ranging throughout their towns with disciplined regularity in small bands of two or three. Thus prayerwalkers keep near their neighbors in order to touch our cities with the gospel and transforming service. Quiet triumphs often follow as God changes the city day by day and house by house.

### How to Get Started Prayerwalking

Join with other believers. Join your faith with others to help prayer flow in an engaging conversational style. Large groups sometimes fail to give everyone a chance to participate. Pairs and triplets work best. Set aside time. Allowing one or two full hours gives prayerwalkers a good chance to manage preliminaries and follow-up discussions, although much can be done in less time.

Choose an area. Ask God to guide you. It's best by far to learn the joys of prayerwalking in unfamiliar neighborhoods. You'll return quickly to your own neighborhood with fresh vision. Centers of commerce and religion are fascinating, but there's nothing like touching families, schools and churches in residential areas. Use elevated points to pray over a panorama.

Linger at specific sites which seem to be key. Pray with insight. Pray for the people you see. As you do, you might find the Spirit of God recalibrating your heart with his own sensitivities. Enhance these responsive insights with research done beforehand. Use knowledge of past events and current trends to enrich intercession. Above all, pray Scripture. If you have not clear place to being praying, select just about any of the biblical prayers, and you will find that they almost pray themselves.

Focus on God. Make God's promises rather than Satan's schemes the highlight of your prayer. Your discernment of evil powers may at times exceed God's specific guidance to engage them in direct combat. Consider the simplicity of first making direct appeal to the throne of God before attempting to pick street fights with demonic powers. Seek a restraining order from heaven upon evil so that God's empowered people may bring forth God's intended blessings on the city

Regather and report. Share what you have experienced and prayed. Expressing something of your insights and faith will encourage others--as well as yourself. Set plans for further prayerwalking.

Coordinate efforts. Enlist other praying people to join with friends to cover special areas. Give leadership by forming and mixing prayer bands. Seek to collect written notes recording which areas have been covered and what kinds of prayers have been prayed. Pool your insights to ascertain whether God is prompting a repeated focus on particular areas. Eventually aim to cover your entire town or city, unless God guides otherwise.

#### Themes for Prayerwalking

Attempt to keep every prayer pertinent to the specific community you pass through. As you do, you will find prayers naturally progress to the nation and to the world.

Use a theme passage of Scripture. Unless God guides you to use another, try 1 Timothy 2:1-10. Many have found it to be a useful launching point for prayerwalking. Verse 8 speaks of the important territorial dimension to prayer connected with God's desire that all people be saved, "I want the men in every place to pray" (italics added).

Copy this and other passages in a format easy to read aloud several times during your walk. Each of the following prayer points emerges from this passage.

Concerning Christ: Proclaim him afresh to be the one Mediator and the ransom for all. Name him Lord of the neighborhood and of the lives you see.

Concerning leaders: Pray for people responsible in any position of authority -- for teachers, police, administrators and parents.

Concerning peace: Cry out for the godliness and holiness of God's people to increase into substantial peace. Pray for new churches to be established.

Concerning truth: Declare openly the bedrock reality that there is one God. Celebrate the faithful revelation of his truth to all peoples through ordinary people (1 Tim.2:8). Pray that the eyes of minds would cease to be blinded by Satan so that they could come to a knowledge of the truth.

Concerning the gospel: Praise God for his heart's desire that all people be saved. Ask that heaven would designate this year as a "proper time" for the testimony of Christ to be given afresh with simple power (1 Tim.2:6), Name specific people.

Concerning the blessing of God: Thanksgivings are to be made on behalf of all people. Give God the explicit thanks he deserves for the goodness he constantly bestows on the homes you pass by. Ask to see the city with his eyes, that you might sense what is good and pleasing in his sight as well as what things grieve him deeply. Ask God to bring forth an enduring spiritual awakening.

Concerning the church: Ask for hearing in relationships, that there be no wrath or dissension among God's people. Ask that God would make his people, men and women alike, expressive in worship with the substance of radiant, relational holiness. Ask that our worship would be adorned with the confirming power of saints doing good in our communities.

Excerpted from Prayerwalking by Steve Hawthorne and Graham Kendrick (Creation House, 1993). This appendix may be photocopied and distributed as an introduction to prayerwalking.

