

MINISTRY TRAINING TRACKS | How to Pray With People

"The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." James 5:16

Let's begin by looking at some common struggles:

1. **We have a fear of judgment.** We are afraid of what others will think when we pray. This ultimately shifts our focus from God to others in the room.
2. **We have performance anxiety.** We have created the mindset that prayer sounds a certain way. It must be eloquent, profound, and polished. This is a common misconception because we are rooted in performance.
3. **We compare ourselves to others.** We must remember that every Christian is on the same journey yet at a different place. Our prayer language grows just as our language develops in the natural. Example- Babies do not have the same vocabulary and a teenager or as an adult.
4. **We lack the words to pray.** This is a common roadblock if we do not practice praying out loud. The more we pray, the easier it becomes. Remember that prayer is praying the promises that God has already spoken. Example- Public speaking or leading a group may be difficult, however the more that you put yourself in those situations, you become more successful.

THE FOUNDATION: WHY EVERY BELIEVER CAN PRAY WITH POWER

Before we talk about how to pray with people, we need to settle something theologically. Prayer ministry is not reserved for pastors, elders, or people with a special anointing.

Biblical reasons we can pray with power:

1. **We are righteous through our faith in Jesus Christ.**

Let's look at **James 5:16 (KJV) Confess your faults one to another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.**

Scripture does not say the prayer of a pastor avails much. It says the prayer of a righteous person avails much. Prayer is not a performance...it is not to showcase your ability...it is not something to prove. It is entirely based upon the righteousness that we have received through our faith in Jesus Christ.

2. **We abide in Him.**

John 15:7 (KJV) states "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

To “abide” is to live, continue, or remain; so, to abide in Christ is to live in Him or remain in Him. This means that we are held secure in a permanent relationship with Christ. As we allow our roots to grow deep in His word, then we have the assurance that He hears our prayer!

3. Our faith is in God.

Psalms 9:10 (KJV) states “and they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.”

This serves as a personal and communal reminder that trust in God is grounded in His character and past acts of faithfulness. When we cultivate a relationship with God, rely on His promises, and seek Him earnestly, then our faith will remain steadfast.

As a Spirit-filled, Pentecostal church. We believe in a God who still moves. We believe in the same Holy Spirit that fell in the upper room in Acts 2. We believe that the God who healed the sick, raised the dead, and baptized believers with His Spirit in the New Testament is the same God who is present in our services and in our everyday lives today. We pray with boldness and authority because we know that:

- We are righteous through our faith in Jesus Christ.
- We abide in Him
- Our faith is in God who is able to do above exceedingly anything we can ask or imagine.

As we begin to look at practical approaches to prayer let’s be reminded that...

“You are not praying as someone who hopes God might show up. You are praying as someone who carries the Holy Spirit. That changes everything.”

I would like each of you to take a moment to reflect on a time when someone prayed for you and it meant something. In that moment, you felt that you were seen, heard, and that the individual praying was intentional in bringing your need before the Lord. You walked away from that encounter with the faith that God had heard and there was an expectancy for what God was going to do in your life. As a spirit filled believer, you and I can impact others through the power of prayer!

You may be asking...How do I pray for the needs of others? How can my prayer be meaningful and impactful? How do I pray with people who desire the infilling of the Holy Ghost.

PART 1: PRAYING WITH SOMEONE FOR A PERSONAL OR FAMILY NEED

Most prayer opportunities do not happen at an altar. They happen in a parking lot, at a kitchen table, in a hospital hallway, or in a text message that says 'please pray for me.' This is where every believer needs to be ready. If we are honest with ourselves, we often respond with "I'll be praying for you" or "I'll put you on our church prayer list". As born-again believers we are to be in constant readiness with an unwavering commitment to be the vessel in which God works through.

This leads us to some practical steps in praying for someone for a personal or family need.

Before You Pray -- Listen First

The most common mistake people make when praying with someone is praying before they understand what the person actually needs. Before you pray, take a moment to ask and listen. A two-minute conversation before a one-minute prayer is almost always more effective than jumping straight into prayer.

- Ask: 'What specifically can I pray with you about today?'
- Listen without offering advice or jumping to Scripture.
- Repeat back what you heard: 'So it sounds like you need God to move in your marriage...'
- Then pray what they actually told you, not a general prayer that could apply to anyone.

How to Pray -- Simple, Specific, Personal

When you pray with someone, three things make a prayer feel real and meaningful to the person receiving it: use their name, be specific, and pray with faith not performance. You are not trying to impress God or the person you are praying with. You are simply bringing a real need before a real God.

- Use their name in the prayer. It tells them you are praying for them, not at them.
- Pray specifically about what they shared. Vague prayers feel like formality.
- Keep it short enough to be focused. Two to three sentences can be powerfully effective.
- Close with confidence -- in Jesus' name is not a formula, it is a declaration of authority.

Sample Prayer:

"Lord, I bring _____ (name) before You right now. You know exactly what they are facing with their family, and You are not surprised by any of it. I ask You to bring Your peace into this situation, to give _____ wisdom for what to do next, and to let them feel that You are with them in this. In Jesus name, amen."

PART 2: PRAYING FOR HEALING

As Pentecostal believers, we do not approach healing prayer as something God might do if He is in a good mood. We approach it as something God has already declared. Healing was accomplished at the Cross.

The Biblical Foundation for Healing Prayer

Isaiah 53:4-5 is the cornerstone of our theology of healing. Written 700 years before the Cross, it declares:

"Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows... He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed." Isaiah 53:4-5

Matthew 8:17 confirms this is not just a spiritual metaphor -- it says Jesus healed the sick in order to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah. Peter quotes it again in 1 Peter 2:24 in the past tense: 'by whose stripes you were healed.' The healing was accomplished. We pray from that foundation, not toward it.

How to Pray for Someone for Healing

- Ask what they need healing for. Be specific. The doctors said... tells you what to pray against.
- Acknowledge God's power and His Word before you pray. Faith is built on what God has said, not on what we see.
- Pray with authority, not desperation. You are not begging. You are agreeing with what the Cross already accomplished.
- Physical touch: laying a hand on the shoulder or hand is appropriate if the person is comfortable. Always ask first.
- Pray in the Spirit if God leads you. There are times when groaning too deep for words is exactly the right prayer.
- Do not tell someone they will be healed by a specific time. Trust God's sovereignty. Pray in faith and leave the outcome with Him.

Sample Prayer:

"Father, Your Word says that by the stripes of Jesus, _____ (name) was healed. That healing was accomplished at the Cross and we stand on it right now. I come against this sickness in the name of Jesus and I declare that Your healing power is at work in _____ body right now. Let Your Word be true and let _____ body come into alignment with what You have already done. We trust You with the outcome. In Jesus name, amen."

Key Point: *We pray for healing because God said it, not because we feel it. Faith is not the absence of doubt. It is choosing to stand on the Word of God in the presence of doubt.*

We do not hold the authority nor power for healing. Healing is not always instant. In times of doubt, we are to be reminded that our trust is in the promise of God and we continue to speak that healing is manifest in our bodies.

Scripture tells us that His word will "accomplish all that it is set forth to do". We also read that "His word will not return void". These promises here give us the authority to speak to the voice of the enemy and declare the finished work of healing even if we do not see it with our natural eye.

PART 3: PRAYING FOR SOMEONE TO RECEIVE THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

This is one of the most significant moments in a believer's life and every Spirit-filled member of TPC should know how to be part of it. Praying for someone to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not complicated. It is holy, it is expectant, and it requires sensitivity above all else.

The Biblical Foundation

"And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts 2:4

"Then Peter said to them, Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." Acts 2:38-39

The baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues is not a second-class experience reserved for the spiritually elite. It is a promise extended to every believer. Our job when praying with someone for this experience is to create an atmosphere of faith and expectation and then step back and let God do what only He can do

Before You Pray -- Make Sure They Understand What They Are Seeking

Before you begin praying, take a moment to make sure the person understands what the baptism of the Holy Spirit is and what they might experience. Do not assume they know. A brief conversation prevents confusion and builds faith.

- Ask: 'Have you heard about the baptism of the Holy Spirit? What do you understand about it?'
- Ask: Have you repented of your sins? Have you ever been baptized in Jesus Name?
- Briefly explain: This is a gift from God that empowers you for life and ministry. It is often accompanied by speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives utterance -- a prayer language that bypasses your mind and comes from your spirit.
- Reassure them: You do not have to perform or manufacture anything. Simply open yourself to receive and let God do the rest.
- Ask if they are ready and willing to receive. Consent and desire matter.

How to Pray With Someone for the Holy Spirit

In John 3, we read about Nicodemus. He approached Jesus with the question of how an individual can be born again. He asked....Does he enter the 2nd time into his mother's womb. Jesus explains that "flesh gives birth to flesh" whereas the "spirit gives birth to spirit". The infilling of the Holy Ghost is a new birth.



It is important to recognize that when an individual wants to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, we are participating in a spiritual birth experience. When I pray with someone, I find myself placing myself in a hospital room. I am with that individual to assist, coach, and see new life born.

Let's take a look at some medical facts:

In a standard hospital birth, 3- 5 medical professionals are directly involved in your care, plus additional staff for newborn care and anesthesia if needed. In high-risk or surgical deliveries, the team can expand to 6-10+ people, including specialists and support staff.

Medical professionals also become collaborative partners who value preparedness, communication, and shared decision-making. They help create an environment where expectant parents feel supported, informed, and empowered to make choices that align with their health and preferences.

The new birth experience is a birth to a brand new life! We as believers have the responsibility to create an environment where individuals feel supported, encouraged, and “coached” through the process of receiving the most beautiful gift that has ever been given to mankind. The gift of the Holy Ghost!

The atmosphere matters. This is a sacred moment. Be calm, be expectant, and be led by the Spirit yourself. If you are filled with the Spirit, your own faith and sensitivity will help create the environment for the person you are praying with.

- Physical touch: a hand on the shoulder is appropriate. Never grab, press, or push. Ask first and be gentle. This is not a moment for forcefulness.
- Pray in faith, not in pressure. You are not responsible for the outcome. God gives the gift. You simply create the atmosphere.
- Encourage them to praise God openly and freely. Tongues often emerge in the context of sincere, unhindered praise and worship.
- Pray in the Spirit quietly alongside them if you feel led. Your prayer language in that moment is powerful intercession on their behalf.
- Be patient. Some people receive quickly. Others are in a process. Do not rush the moment or manufacture an emotional response.
- After they receive, celebrate with them and point them toward ongoing life in the Spirit.

Personal tips:

1. Explain that when God speaks through them, it will be their own personal language. They will not sound like someone near them.
2. Individuals begin to cry. This is their response to the spirit of God.
3. You notice they keep asking for the Holy Ghost. Turn their attention to thanking God for filling them.
4. If they are quiet, encourage them to begin praising the Lord. This often allows them to start relaxing and freeing themselves in order to receive.
5. Stammering lips. Explain to them that scripture says “with stammering lips and another tongue” He will speak. Encourage them to relax and allow God to take over their tongue.

Sample Prayer:

"Lord, I thank You for _____ (name) and for their hunger to receive everything You have for them. Your Word says this promise is for all who You call -- and You have called _____. Right now I ask You to fill them with Your Holy Spirit. Let the rivers of living water flow from within them just as Your Word promises. We receive this gift with open hands and open hearts. In Jesus name, amen." -- Then encourage them to continue praising God and to let go of any inhibition as the Spirit leads them.

Key Point: *You are not the one who baptizes someone with the Holy Spirit. God is. Your role is to be a vessel of faith, a creator of atmosphere, and a gentle guide. Step back and let God be God.*

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR PRAYING WITH PEOPLE

1. Ask before you assume.

Not everyone who looks like they need prayer wants someone to pray with them out loud. A simple 'Would it be okay if I prayed with you?' is always the right first step.

2. Do not make it about you.

Resist the urge to tell your own story, give advice, or preach while you are praying. This is the person's moment before God. Keep the focus there.

3. Pray with your eyes open sometimes.

In certain settings -- a hospital room, a crisis situation, a public place -- praying with eyes open allows you to stay present, read the room, and respond to what God is doing in the person you are praying with.

4. Short prayers are often the most powerful.

A 30-second prayer that is specific, personal, and faith-filled will stay with someone far longer than a five-minute prayer that covers every possible need.

5. Follow up.

Pray with someone today and send them a text tomorrow. 'I am still praying for your situation' is ministry that extends beyond the moment.

6. Let the Spirit lead.

There will be moments when you start praying for one thing and feel led somewhere else entirely. Follow that. The Holy Spirit knows what the person needs better than either of you does.

In closing, I encourage you to pray boldly and with purpose. Remember that you are not praying amiss but praying on the authority of God's word and His promises. You carry the Holy Spirit with you! Pray like it and see God work!
