

INTERCESSORY PRAYER -- A SIMPLE PROCESS

You can make intercessory prayer an essential aspect of small groups. “Small groups” can be Bible studies, regular board and committee meetings, task forces, fellowship groups—any “small” group. The process below helps most anyone become comfortable in praying out loud for their neighbor. It goes like this:

This process facilitates a deeper level of fellowship in a safe environment. It's easier for people to share needs and joys in terms of prayer requests. It's impactful when a brother or sister in Christ offers a petition to God for you. This can also turn business meetings and social gathers into “mutual consolation of the brethren.”

1) A leader asks participants to share personal prayer requests. For initial attempts, the leader may suggest each share one thing they are each thankful for and one request. Use only first names or no names for those being prayed for. (It is helpful to make a statement about confidentiality in beginning the process.)

2) On a half sheet of paper, each member makes simple notes of each person's prayer request. At the bottom of the form is printed (or have the group write), “Lord in Your mercy.” (Ending prayers is hard for 1st timers.)

3) A leader will oversee the beginning and ending of the prayer, and will ask each person to pray for the participant on their left (or right). Key: When it is one's turn he/she simply repeats the request of the person next to them and says, “Lord in Your mercy.” Everyone responds, “Hear our prayer.” As intercessors get more comfortable they can modestly elaborate if they choose. However, petitions should always be brief and fervent. (This format helps nervous newbies and curbs verbose performers.)

4) Members are encouraged to pocket or purse their sheets to revisit prayers during the week.