

# Prayer Walking

## What is Prayer Walking?

Prayer walking is a type of intercessory prayer that involves walking to or near a particular place while praying. The C.S. Lewis Institute says, “As you prayer walk, your prayers extend beyond your own concerns, focusing directly on the needs of others and opening yourself to see them with God’s eyes and heart.”

Oftentimes, when you pray for the needs of the world from your own familiar places, your knowledge and understanding of the needs remain vague. When your senses experience the sounds, sights, smells, and feel of a particular place, you understand better how to pray for the people in that location. You see the faces of people, hear the words they speak to one another, and smell the food from their kitchens. You might see signs, graffiti, buildings, or groups of people that indicate significant needs or dynamics for which to pray.

Prayer walks are a means of asking God to give you a heart for your neighborhood, city and land. It gives you a concrete means of doing something for the well-being of your city as you ask the Holy Spirit to pray through you as you observe the world around you.

## What are the Steps?

- **Find a team.** While it is okay to prayer walk on your own, prayer walking tends to work best with a small group of 2-3 people. This number can keep you focused while remaining low-profile as you walk. If you have a larger group, split into smaller groups and assign particular streets, areas, or times.
- **Decide on an area.** Will it be a small part of your own neighborhood, a potential place of ministry, a popular park, or an unengaged part of your town? Ask God to guide your prayer focus.
- **Prepare as a group.** Before going out to walk, gather and decide as a group if you will be following a topic, a scripture, or simply praying based on what you observe. Pray that God will grant you awareness of your environment, sensitivity to his Holy Spirit, and protection from danger. It can also be helpful to research the community to understand assets and challenges. Census data, community reports and needs assessments are great sources of information.
- **Walk and pray.** There is no one method for this, but here are a few practical tips:
  - Keep your eyes open and be observant. Ask for God’s eyes and agenda for this place.
  - Be low-profile. Your goal is not to make a scene or draw attention to yourself.
  - Pray aloud as a conversation with God and your team. Verbalizing your prayers helps you focus.
  - You can also pray silently at times.
  - Walk slowly to allow time to observe and cover the community in prayer.



*“I am giving you every square inch of the land you set your foot on.”*  
*Joshua 1:3*

- **Discuss** what you observed and experienced with your group.
  - *What did you observe or learn?*
  - *Where did you see God at work?*
  - *Did you experience any spiritual challenges?*
  - *What do you feel God saying?*
  - *Is God calling you to do something or be a part of the answer to these prayers in a specific way?*
- **Do it again!** Make this a consistent part of your group's experience and missions engagement. The more you pray, the more committed you will become to God's work in this area.

## Prayer Framework

Decide where you want to walk. *On the Journey* suggests using this acronym to structure your time.

**W** **Worship.** As you set off walking, begin with your eyes on Jesus: Say the name of Jesus, read or recite a Psalm, hum a worship song, or list off reasons that you love Him.

**A** **Ask.** Flowing from your worship, begin to ask God to bless the streets you are walking on, and the homes and people you pass. Pray for the Holy Spirit to inhabit where you are walking. Pray specifically for situations of the neighborhood you know about or are involved in.

**L** **Listen.** As you worship and ask, leave space to listen to what God might want to say to you as you walk. He may bring specific people to your mind to pray for. You may get a specific feeling or impression as you walk about something to bring to Him. Maybe a Scripture will come to mind. Listen to these thoughts, and pray them back to God.

**K** **Know your land and your neighbors.** Get (and keep) yourself informed around the area you are prayer walking. Research history or ongoing problems in your immediate area so you can pray for those issues. Get to know your neighbors so that you can pray specifically for their situations.

### Other ideas:

- Be sensitive to everything going on around you, and be inspired by what you observe and experience. You might hear children playing and ask God to make himself known to the children of the neighborhood. Anything that you observe (or research beforehand) can lead to prayers of worship, blessing, or intercession.
- Pray for people, marriages, families, businesses, government leaders, civic leaders, children, senior adults, churches, spiritual awakening, God's Word to spread, and people to know and accept Jesus as their Savior.
- Pray for needs such as hunger, mental health, physical health, poverty, addiction, community violence, education, crime, prisoners and reentry etc.

Sources: *On the Journey*, *Life Way Church*, *C.S. Lewis Institute*, and *Navigators*.