

# HOW CAN I PRAY FOR THE CHURCH?

Excerpt from John Maxwell's book, *Partners in Prayer*

You can transform your church and help it reach its potential through prayer. Here are some ways for you to get started.

## 1. Pray Continually

Paul's advice to the church in Thessalonica is also good advice for us today. He said, "Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (I Thess. 5:16-18). If we want the church to reach its potential and accomplish its purpose, we need to pray for it all the time.

Over the years, the people who've prayed for me and the church have come up with some creative ways to remind themselves to pray continually. One prayer partner used to set his alarm to go off every hour one day (and night) a month. And another prayer partner, Mike Mullert, used to put a quarter in his shoe. Every time he felt it, he'd pray for the church and me. There's really no limit to the things you can do to remind yourself to pray.

## 2. Pray Strategically

Begin praying for the people and activities of the church. Pray for anointing for the pastor, for the people to come to Christ at each service, for newcomers to be drawn to special events, for relationships to grow, for power as people pray at Wednesday night prayer meeting, for children to be saved in Sunday school. Be aware of all the events and activities occurring in your church; then pray for them to succeed.

## 3. Pray Geographically

I believe there is great value in physically moving to the places where ministry takes place in the church and praying for the people who will be ministered to there. When I was still in the pastorate, some days I used to walk around the church, asking the Lord to just cover each area. For example, many times I went into the nursery and spent some time laying hands on the cribs and baby beds, praying for God to raise up some giants for the kingdom from the children in the church. Maybe the next Billy Graham would be playing in one of those cribs the next week. And each Sunday before the services, my prayer partners used to lay their hands on all the pews in the church, asking God to do something special for the people who would be sitting there that day. God honors prayer whether or not we pray geographically. But I think it helps us when we do because we gain a better understanding of what to pray for and how to pray.

## 4. Pray Powerfully

If you want to pray effectively for your church, pray with power. There are two ways to do that. First, be filled with the Holy Spirit so that you have the power of God within you. Second, pray according to God's Word. When you pray for the church, use Jesus' prayer as the model and pray the following:

### **PRAY FOR BELIEVERS TO EXPERIENCE TRUE WORSHIP.**

- Pray for an outpouring of God's glory in His church as people acknowledge Him, not only with their lips but with their lives.
- Ask God for a spirit of worship to manifest itself in your church.
- Pray for revival in the church across our nation and the world.

## **PRAY THAT BELIEVERS WILL KNOW, ACCEPT, AND OBEY THE WORD OF GOD.**

- Pray that God's Word be preached continually in the church.
- Pray for spiritual understanding and discernment among the people.
- Ask God to make the people obedient to His Word.

## **PRAY FOR UNITY IN THE CHURCH.**

- Pray for humility among the church's leaders and body of believers.
- Pray that humility and repentance will rise up among all believers.
- Ask God to break down all racial, cultural, and denominational walls.

## **PRAY FOR SOULS TO BE WON TO CHRIST.**

- Ask God to give your church leaders a vision for reaching the lost.
- Pray for workers for the harvest-for believers who will consistently share their faith.
- Pray that local churches across the country would reach out to the lost in their communities.

## **PRAY FOR JOY IN THE HEARTS AND LIVES OF BELIEVERS.**

- Ask God to reveal your church's potential to your leaders and the people.
- Ask God to bring joy to your leaders and the people of the church.

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