

"When we pray 'through Christ' more is involved than merely asking God in heaven make some kind of intervention. The community too, and we ourselves, must be involved not just in the Petition but also in trying to bring about what the Petition Pleads for."

- Ronald Rolheiser

PRAYER WALKING

By Adele Calhoun

SOME PEOPLE DO THEIR BEST PRAYING WHILE THEY ARE MOVING. Prayer walking can be a wonderful gift for those who like to get up and move around. This type of intercession intentionally invites people to go to the site of their concern: the office, the conference room, the dining room, the kitchen, the school, the hospital, the government buildings. The immediacy of context can fuel prayer and offer a way for listening more deeply to God, to what his concerns for this place might be.

Prayer walking is a way of saturating a particular place and people with prayer. This discipline draws us out of prayers that are limited to our immediate concerns and into a larger circle of God's loving attention. Sometimes prayer walking precedes a particular mission endeavor. A team of people go beforehand to walk through the neighborhood, country or project in order to pray. The actual mission team follows. Often this type of prayer is intentionally organized rather than happening spontaneously. It can be a one-time event or part of an ongoing prayer ministry.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to you that God is in every place? How does this affect how you pray?
2. How does moving or being still affect the way you pray?
3. What most helps you concentrate on God? Is what helps you concentrate on God part of your regular prayer practice?
4. What is it like for you to pray, listening for what God's heart for a particular request might be?

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

1. Walk through your home or church in the company of Jesus. Pray for each room and what happens there. • How would recognizing Jesus' presence there reorient your interaction?
2. Spend some time walking with other believers through Your workplace. Pray for your colleagues, the custodial help, the customers, the delivery people. the kitchen staff offer yourself to be Jesus hands and heart in this place.
3. Visit the playground and school near you. Walk through it in the company of Jesus. Pray for those who work, play and study there. • How do you see the heart of God for this place?
4. When you are on vacation or in a natural setting, allow God to draw you into for this particular place. Let your interaction with the created world lead you into prayer. Pray that the exquisite beauty of the world will not be snuffed out,
5. Before a neighborhood picnic or school event, join other believers who will prayer walk for the crowds and people they know who will attend. Ask the Lord to give you his heart for them. Pray for the Holy Spirit to work even in this event.

DESIRE	To align myself, while walking in particular places, with Christ and his intercession for the kingdom to
DEFINITION	Prayer walking is a way of physically walking with Jesus through places (hospitals, homes, businesses, churches schools, play-grounds, housing pro service agencies, counties, countries, etc.) that you are concerned about. From the vantage point of proximity, prayers for the kingdom to come are offered to God.
SCRIPTURE	"Everything in the world is about to be wrapped up, so take nothing for granted. Stay wide-awake in prayer." (1 Peter 4:7 The Message) "I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone--for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior." (1 Timothy 2:1-3)
PRACTICE INCLUDES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • slowly and deliberately walking through places for the purpose of intentional and listening prayer • walking through your church, school grounds or job site, giving to God the people and activities that go on there • walking through housing projects and government facilities, in places of need, fear, conflict, and decision making, blessing the rooms and praying for the activities and people that gather there • walking through neighborhoods and bringing each household to God one by one • taking a group of children or adults on a prayer walk; talking to them about what it is like for them
GOD-GIVEN FRUIT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seeing places through Jesus' eyes • becoming quiet and listening to God's prayer for a particular place • allowing the visual nature of this journey to prompt prayers • gaining a perspective on the larger activity of God • holding a place or person before the Lord when you don't know how to pray for them; growing in awareness that the Spirit is praying for him or her—and you are with the Spirit in his prayer • becoming aware of people and places that you ignore, don't care about or have hard feelings toward; repenting • praying with others in environments of shared concern • exploring God's vision for places and people who gather there

SOURCE:

Calhoun, Adele Ahlberg. *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us*. Revised Edition. Downers Grove: IVP Books, 2015.