



## How to Pray With or For Someone

### Things to Remember:

1. You are expressing God's love through listening and praying with this person. It is our desire that they feel supported by us and loved and cared for by God. It is not a counseling session designed to give advice or 'fix' anything.
2. Be willing to go first and to welcome the person you're going to speak with. Introduce yourself. Ask the person their name. Find out what prompted them to ask for prayer. Here are a few examples of how to start a conversation:
  - Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I'm so glad you're here. What's your name? Nice to meet you \_\_\_\_\_. What's on your mind today?
  - Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I'm so glad you're here. What's your name? Nice to meet you \_\_\_\_\_. What prompted you to come to the ask for prayer today?
  - Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I'm so glad you're here. What's your name? Nice to meet you \_\_\_\_\_. What can I pray for you about today?
3. As you listen to the person, also listen to the Holy Spirit and what He may be telling you. Restate the basics of what they have said and ask questions needed for further clarification without being intrusive. If you do not understand their prayer needs, ask again, "How can I pray for you today?" This same statement is always a great one to use to bring a rambling conversation to a close and redirect. Here are some tips to remember as you listen:
  - Give the person as long as it takes to say what's on his/her heart.
  - Silence is a great tool to help someone keep talking. If a person explains what brought them to ask for prayer, you'll be able to help him/her take the best next step.

- Look the person in the eyes. Build trust and show you care for that person by focusing your attention on him/her.
  - Don't interrupt. A person will be more willing to receive your help in finding the best next step when he/she feels understood and accepted.
  - Ask open-ended questions. An open-ended question is any question that can't be answered with a yes or no. It allows them to express what they are thinking and feeling.
  - Here is a great question to help discern someone's next step: How is your relationship with Jesus now? How a person answers this reveals more of the current state of his/her life and if he/she has been listening to Jesus and doing what He says.
4. If it seems appropriate, ask if they are comfortable with you putting your hand on their shoulder or arm as you pray for them.
  5. After praying for someone, you may want to suggest scripture for him or her to read, refer them to the Following God book or another care pamphlet.
    - The most practical piece of the conversation is pointing to a next step. Remember, a person's next step might not be an event or require a sign-up. It could be to forgive someone who hurt them, to start reading the Bible, or just to keep coming back to church.
    - Everyone belongs in community. Doing life with other Christians helps us listen to Jesus and take our next steps with Him.
    - Share any resources that might be helpful. We have free books, Bible reading plans, and topical care cards to help people take their next step. Give examples of what these are and how to use them.
  6. For difficult or ongoing problems, encourage them to come again for prayer and let you know how they are doing.