

P R A Y E R - W A L K

R

A

Y

E

An Orientation Guide: Part One

R

J

By Dan R. Crawford

O

U

R

Prepared for the International Board, Ltd., China Office

Copyright pending, 1998

N

E

Y

INTRODUCTION

You are nearing a journey that will alter your prayer-life forever. Beyond your prayer-life, this journey may well change your entire life. The purpose of the manual is to help prepare you for this incredible journey.

A Prayer Journey is going somewhere - around the corner or around the world - for the *primary* purpose of intercessory prayer on location.

Prayer-walking is a method of intercessory prayer that involves walking while praying at the location of the Prayer Journey. Prayer-walking may also include riding, jogging, boating, biking, flying, riding a train, or any other means of transportation.

Many of you have been practicing prayer-walking for years without knowing what to call it. In 1993, Creation House Books of Orlando, Florida released a book co-authored by Steve Hawthorne and Graham Kendrick entitled, *Prayer-walking: Praying On Site With Insight*. This was the first book devoted exclusively to the method of prayer-walking. While the book has some problems with biblical interpretation, it does offer creative prayer strategies and a name for what you may have been doing.

A valuable insight into the purpose of prayer-walking was offered by a missionary couple serving among an unreached people group in east Asia. They said, "We would like to see a spiritual harvest, but we are seeing none. We would like to say that we are busy watering seed that has been planted, but neither are we doing that. We'd like to tell you that we are faithfully planting seed for a future harvest, but this has not yet been our ministry. We wish we could share with you that we spend our time breaking up the soil for the planting of seeds. Not so. Quite honestly, ours is a ministry of rock moving."

"Rock moving" is the job of intercessors. A Prayer Journey allows you the privilege of walking and praying among the rocks.

So, a definition is in order. *Prayer-walking is intercession on location, with information, in cooperation, against opposition, for glorification.* This definition will also serve as the orientation outline.

While not covered in this manual, it is strongly encouraged that the prayer-walker be in right relationship with God before beginning such a strategic assignment. Walking with the Lord should always be a prerequisite to walking and talking with the Lord. You may need to pause right now and update your relationship with God. Then ask God to give you an open mind and a receptive spirit so that you might be a more effective prayer-walker during your prayer journey.

PRAYER-WALKING IS *INTERCESSION*

Intercessory prayer is a biblical priority. Paul instructed young Timothy as follows: “I exhort *first of all* that supplications, prayers, *intercessions*, and giving of thanks be made for all men.” (1 Tim.2:1)*

The Bible mentions many kinds of prayer, such as supplications, petitions, thanksgivings as well as intercessions. Intercession is that type of prayer that focuses on the needs and concerns of others. During your prayer-walking, God may reveal some personal need to you for which you must offer petition, but primarily, prayer-walking is offering prayers of intercession.

T. W. Hunt, long time prayer leader among Southern Baptist, calculated that among the prayers of the Bible where we know the answer given, 78% are prayers of intercession.

While the term, “prayer-walking” does not appear in the Bible, nor does the Bible describe any person as actually practicing “prayer-walking” as we know it, it is a method that God is using today. It is a method of the biblical priority of intercession.

An early warning is in order: Refrain from worshipping the method. Rather, use a method that God is currently blessing while worshipping the God of the method.

Prayers of intercession are offered...

...to the Father. Prayer-walking is primarily talking to God about the people rather than talking to the people about God. God said to Jeremiah, “Call to Me and I will answer you and tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know” (Jeremiah 33:3). Note the instructions in Matthew 6:6; Matthew 18:19-20; John 16:23.

...to and in the Name of the Son. Prayer-walking is done in the authority of Jesus Christ rather than in your own authority. Note the experience of the disciples in Luke 10:1-20. See also John 14:13-14; John 15:16; Romans 10:12; Romans 8:34; II Corinthians 12:8.

...in and with the Holy Spirit. Prayer-walking is done in harmony with God’s agenda, rather than your own agenda. Note Paul’s experience in Acts. 16:6-10. See also Romans 8:26; Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20.

As you walk and pray you will be a person of secret influence, interceding to the Father, in the Name of the Son, with the Holy Spirit to the One who works where no man can work, who accomplishes tasks beyond man’s ability to accomplish, and who gains glory where man sees no glory. God will respond to your intercessions, not because He has too, but because He has chosen to do so.

*Unless otherwise noted, all scripture is from *The Holy Bible, New King James Version*.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR INTERCESSORY PRAYER-WALKING

1. Be spiritually prepared - Daily Bible reading, devotion and private prayer.
2. Wear comfortable, culturally-acceptable clothing.
3. Wear walking-shoes that are already “broken-in”.
4. A light-weight back-pack or a “fanny-pack” may be useful in long walks.
5. Carrying a camera should be cleared with your local host prior to the walk.
6. Teams of three seem to be best, four is OK, five is too large.
7. Pray together as a team prior to the beginning of the walk.
8. Pray with your eyes open, sensitive to that which might prompt prayer.
9. Reinforce prayers of other team members before changing the subject of prayer.
10. Stop for more intense prayer as the occasion calls for it.
11. Forget phrases like “lead, guide and direct” and talk with God in a conversational manner.
12. Use scripture in your prayer - either direct quotes or paraphrases.
13. Don’t be afraid of silence. It is OK to walk and pray silently for a time.
14. Smile and be pleasant to people you meet. God may be working in their life. Pray for them.
15. It is OK if prayer-walking feels awkward the first few times. It will feel more comfortable.
16. Singing is often an effective way to pray and praise.
17. When praying becomes difficult, admit it to your team and ask them to pray for you.
18. Be flexible as the Holy Spirit leads.
19. Conclude your walk on time especially if a share time is planned with others.
20. Pray together as a team at the conclusion of the walk.
21. Keep a daily journal at the conclusion of each day.
22. When the prayer journey is over don’t worship the journey; get on to other ministries.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

An excellent guide for planning a prayer walk is *PrayerWalk Organizer Guide* by Steve Hawthorne, published in 1996 by Prayer Walk USA. Also a little booklet, *Prompts for Prayerwalkers* by Steve Hawthorne may be helpful. Contact: WayMakers; Box 203131; Austin, Texas, 78720.

PRAYER-WALKING IS INTERCESSION *ON LOCATION*

“Why could I not just as well stay at home and intercede?” This is the oft asked question related to participation on a prayer journey.

The answer is, “You can.” And God will as surely hear and respond to your prayer as He will to the prayers of those who go.

While “location” may or may not be important to everyone, it is of utmost value to the prayer-walker. To pray while seeing, feeling, touching, and hearing is to pray with more intensity. After the prayer journey is over, you will never pray the same way again for the location of your walk and the people you met there.

While “prayer-walking” is not mentioned as such in the Bible, praying on location most clearly is mentioned. When Jesus received the message of the illness of Lazarus, he could have prayed for healing in his present location, and may well have done so for he stayed there “two more days” before announcing to the disciples, “Lazarus is dead.” There may be other reasons why Jesus chose to go then to Bethany, but on arrival, he prayed before calling out, “Lazarus, come forth!” (John 11:1-44). This was intercession on location. There are other biblical examples of such location-praying. Perhaps you will want to study some of them before your prayer journey.

An additional value of location-praying has to do with presence. Since Jesus lives within you and the Holy Spirit works through you, there is a sense in which your prayer-walking provides light in dark places and salt in unsavory places (Matthew 5:13-16). If your body really is a “temple of God” (I Corinthians 3:16) then where you go, you represent His presence.

Often the location of your prayer-walking will be in enemy territory. One writer says, “Christians have lost the home-field advantage.” This is true in most, if not all of the world. The enemy and his influence will be obvious to you as you walk. In times like these you need to remember that the battle has already been assured. “Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, ‘Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony...’” (Revelation 12:10-11). Walk, not in fear, but in assured victory.

Some locations where you may want to prayer-walk (or stop for prayer) include:

1. Government buildings, especially those that effect missionary presence and work
2. Churches or locations for possible new-church starts
3. High places, such as mountains or tall buildings where you can get a perspective of the area
4. Neighborhoods or areas where there is no evangelical work
5. Schools
6. Hospitals
7. Business areas
8. Sites of other religions, false religions, sect groups or cults

Use this page to record some of the research done on the location of your prayer journey

PRAYER-WALKING IS INTERCESSION ON LOCATION *WITH INFORMATION*

When we go to a new location, especially if it is outside of our comfort zone and/or across a cultural barrier, our senses provide us with new information. As in days of old, you will experience, “things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him.” (I Corinthians 2:9)

It will be helpful if you will do some research on the location of your prayer-journey before you go. If you have access to the internet, you will find numerous web pages related to geographical locations and people groups. Magazines and newsletters from mission-sending agencies, not to mention secular magazines such as *National Geographic* will also provide valuable information. Correspondence with your hosts at the location (as well as references they may give) will provide yet another source of information

A better understanding of the location through acquiring new information prior to the journey will allow for more informed praying as well as less time spent in adjustment to the place and people.

The sensing of new information will lead you to pray in phrases you likely would not have used prior to the journey. Prayer-walkers have been heard to pray for the following:

1. Learning of a breach in an ancient city wall where the enemy came through to conquer, one prayed for a breach in the wall of darkness, so that God’s light might shine through.
2. Standing on a high place and seeing power lines between himself and the city below, one prayed that the Holy Spirit would empower those who ministered in that city.
3. Waiting at a traffic light in a crowded city, one prayed with the changing of the lights that non-believers would exercise *caution* in their decisions, *stop* their sinful ways and *go* toward Jesus.
4. Deafened by the noise of a city street, one prayed that those who lived in that noisy city would be able to hear the still, small voice of God.
5. Seeing a welder at his work, one began to sing, “It only takes a spark to get a fire going...” then prayed for that spark.
6. Hearing a siren, one prayed for safety until these people could hear and respond to the Gospel and another prayed for those who offer physical and spiritual care in the city.

Information that may prove helpful for informed praying include:

1. Demographic information of racial and ethnic population as well as socio-economic needs
2. Religious presence, as well as needs, in the area
3. Names (if available) of those who minister in the area
4. Major physical and material needs of the people
5. Possibilities of future ministry
6. What spiritual activity is already underway as well as opposition to it

Use this page to record specific orientation information given to you by personnel on the field of your prayer journey

PRAYER-WALKING IS INTERCESSION ON LOCATION WITH INFORMATION *IN COOPERATION*

Matthew 18: 19-20 is a scripture that speaks of cooperation. “I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven. For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst.”

The word *agree* is the Greek word *sumphoneo* used for musical instruments that harmonize even though they are not the same. A prayer journey involves praying in *concert*.

You must pray in concert with other members of your team. Team harmony is an absolute must in the midst of a prayer journey. Amos quoted God asking, “Can two walk together unless they are agreed?” (Amos 3:3). Note how the disciples prayed together for Peter in Acts 12:5-17.

You must pray in concert with your non-present prayer partners. Surely you will want to recruit a few faithful intercessors to cover you with prayer while you are prayer-walking through enemy territory. Perhaps each prayer partner could take a period of time so you will be covered throughout the day and night.

You must pray in concert with those who minister on the field of your prayer journey. Remember, they were there before you arrived and they will be there after you are gone. Your cooperation with them is of utmost importance, even when you may not understand everything.

You must pray in concert with God. Obedience to God’s will is a key to the success of a prayer journey. Many times believers forget this portion of the passage. It is not enough to agree with each other and with other prayer partners and fellow-workers. “It shall be done” is dependent on agreement with the “I am.”

Get the signatures of prayer-partners who will covenant to pray for you on specific days.

Journey Day One _____

Journey Day Two _____

Journey Day Three _____

Journey Day Four _____

Journey Day Five _____

Journey Day Six _____

Journey Day Seven _____

Use back of page for Journeys of more than seven days.

PRAYER-WALKING IS INTERCESSION ON LOCATION WITH INFORMATION IN COOPERATION *AGAINST OPPOSITION*

The very existence of Satan suggest opposition. The most common biblical name used for this enemy, *Satan*, means adversary or opposer. Not only is he an opposer, Satan gets extremely angry when you are involved in any activity, like intercessory prayer, that may eventually cause people to transfer their membership from his kingdom to the Kingdom of God. He has “blinded the minds of the unbelieving” (II Corinthians 4:4) and does not appreciate your attempts to have them enlightened. At some point in your prayer journey you will likely be able to say with Paul, “Satan hindered us” (I Thessalonians 2:18).

Prior to your journey Satan will use any means possible to convince you that you are wasting your time and money. He will plant thoughts in your mind that this journey will not be good for your health, your job, your family or your future. You may expect added stress as you prepare for your journey

During the prayer journey Satan will try to convince you that prayer-walking is not for you, that it does no good, that there is no visible result, that your team members are not as committed as you, that you are using your time foolishly. He will try to disrupt team unity and bring in outside adversity. As a master of distraction he will try to distort your focus and defeat your spirit.

A review of your weapons prior to the encounter will be of value. Paul reminded us, “Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.” (II Corinthians 10:3-4). The key phrase is not “the destruction of fortresses” but “divinely powerful.” You cannot war with Satan in your own strength and you certainly can’t single-handedly destroy his fortresses. James instructs believers to, “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” (James 4:7).

You are not to command Satan, you are to resist him. Why would you want to talk to Satan, demanding that he refrain from some activity or remove himself from some place, when you have access to One infinitely more powerful and authoritative than Satan? So, don’t talk to Satan, talk to God about Satan. Don’t look for a demon behind every bush. Look for the evidences of God all around you. Don’t press the enemy, praise the victor.

In preparation for opposition you may want to pray about (or pray-on) your armor, “that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and. . . stand firm” (Ephesians 6:13). Again, you may note that five of the six pieces of armor are defensive while only the Word of God is for offense. Pray on truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, and the Word of God (Ephesians 6:14-17) and “with prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit...” (Ephesians 6:18).

Above all remember, “Do not fear or be dismayed. . . for the battle is not yours but God’s” (II Chronicles 20:15).

Use this page to record attributes of God, verses of scripture, hymns and choruses that enhance the praise of God in the face of enemy opposition

PRAYER-WALKING IS INTERCESSION ON LOCATION
WITH INFORMATION IN COOPERATION
AGAINST OPPOSITION *FOR GLORIFICATION*

If you are participating in this prayer journey for any reason other than God being glorified, it is time to re-evaluate your motives. Your prayer from beginning to end must echo that of the Psalmist, “Be exalted, O God, above the heavens, and Your glory above all the earth” (Psalm 108:5).

If you have doubts as to your ability to glorify God through this prayer journey, listen to what God told the Psalmist, “Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth” (Psalm 46:10). Your very response in faithful obedience to God’s open door, is an act that brings glory to God. Not only will people be blessed by your presence, God will be exalted through your intercessions.

So prepare yourself. As God’s people in an earlier day prepared themselves to cross into the promise land, Joshua said to them words that might well be said to you, “Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you” (Joshua 3:5).

Fear not. As God told Israel, God tells you, “I am the Lord your God, who upholds your right hand, who says to you, ‘Do not fear, I will help you’” (Isaiah 41:13).

Trust God to do the work even when it seems your prayers are futile. Of a rebellious people, perhaps of your people, God said, “I permitted Myself to be sought by those who did not ask for Me; I permitted Myself to be found by those who did not seek Me. I said, ‘Here am I, here am I,’ to a nation which did not call on My name” (Isaiah 65:1).

Stand back and be amazed. God told Habakkuk in response to his cry, “Look among the nations! Observe! Be astonished! Wonder! Because I am doing something in your days - you would not believe if you were told” (Habakkuk 1:5).

Remember, you are an ambassador for Christ (II Corinthians 5:20) - one who represents a King in another kingdom. The old Royal Ambassador hymn said it this way:

I am a stranger here, within a foreign land.
My home is far away, upon a golden strand.
Ambassador to be, to realms beyond the sea,
I’m here on business for my King.

May God be glorified, against your opposition, in the midst of your cooperation, with your new information, on your location, through your intercession.

Use this page to reflect on your Prayer Journey

What new lessons did you learn about intercessory prayer on your prayer-walk?

What did you discover about your location that will cause you to continue to intercede?

What new information do you have as a result of this prayer-walk?

What did this prayer-walk teach you about praying in cooperation?

What did you discern about the opposition while participating in this prayer-walk?

How was God glorified during your prayer-walk?

Dr. Dan R. Crawford is Professor of Evangelism & Spiritual Formation and occupies the Chair of Prayer at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; P.O. Box 22,298; Fort Worth, Texas, 76122. This Orientation Guide was completed while serving as Visiting Prayer Scholar with the International Board, Ltd., China Office, Hong Kong, China.

Part Two: Orientation Information Provided by Personnel
From the Location of the Prayer-Walk