

## Guidelines for Small-Group Prayer

A while back, I was filled with an intense desire to start a small-group prayer ministry in my church. But when I approached my pastor, I could tell he was less than thrilled. I was puzzled by his response. Shouldn't a pastor be excited about people praying?

Then I realized that his lack of enthusiasm might have stemmed from negative experiences with "prayer" (also known as gossip) groups in the past.

In order to dispel his fears, I devised a set of guidelines to govern the proposed prayer group. After I submitted the following guidelines to him in writing, he immediately gave me the go-ahead. The guidelines might help you and your own pastor as you propose a church prayer ministry.

### What a Small-Group Prayer Ministry Is:

1. A time to pray that the vision God has given our pastor for the church will be accomplished. (Note: If you don't know your pastor's vision for the church, ask!)
2. Prayer for the pastor and any needs he has expressed.
3. Prayer for the Sunday service.
4. Prayer for the different ministries and workers within the church.
5. Prayer for needs you're aware of within the congregation.
6. Prayer for other things God lays on your heart during the prayer time.

### What a Small-Group Prayer Ministry Is Not:

1. An attempt to control or manipulate the pastor or any aspect of the church.
2. A time for expressing opinions, thoughts, or feelings regarding the pastor, his family, others within the church, or the church itself.
3. A gripe session or an opportunity to change things in the church we don't like—either through discussion or "prayer."
4. A place to develop a spiritual "clique."

Having these guidelines typed up and ready to distribute to people interested in joining the prayer group will help eliminate problems before they have a chance to develop.

\*A Prayer Guide is available to help pray for your pastor, pastor's spouse, pastor's family, local church, church ministries, leadership and revival. To order, visit [here](#).

*Pray! Magazine Issue 7 Jul/Aug 1998*