

How You Can Feel Confident While Leading People in Prayer

They say that one of the greatest fears people have is speaking in public. It might be even higher if we were to ask Christians about leading in prayer.

I teach pastors that leading in prayer is one of the main reasons people don't come to prayer meetings. I have even heard of someone who left a church because she was called on to lead in prayer.

I was doing a seminar at a church and after the seminar a lady came up to me and asked for some pointers on praying better in public. She loved praying when she was alone, but she never felt comfortable leading others in prayer. I don't think she is the only one.

But leading in prayer does not need to be a terrifying situation. It can actually be a great opportunity to make a difference for the kingdom. With a few tips and tricks you, will be raising your hand to volunteer to be the person to pray in public.

1. Realize that it is not about being impressive. Pretty words do not impress God or engage the hearts of people that you are leading in prayer. Actually using the language you use everyday is more likely to get people praying with you than something that makes people go "Wow!" The Bible is filled with simple, straightforward prayers that God answered.

2. Keep it short. Elijah prayed what was probably a 60-second prayer and fire fell from heaven. Revivalist Charles Finney actually encourages short prayers in the prayer meeting. If you are a leader trying to engage new people in praying in

public I would even recommend having a bunch of people pray one-sentence prayers.

3. Engage your emotions. Leading others in prayer is often about connecting the people you are leading with the request and then bringing that request to God. Emotion is a great way to do that. If you are praying for a prayer request, think about the feeling of those connected to the request. This is not about emotionalism but connecting to the emotion.

4. Connect to Scripture. The people you lead have more faith in prayer when it is connected to the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). Even if you don't feel like a Bible scholar there maybe a story that comes to mind that will give you the content for your prayer. If you are praying for a big challenge someone is facing you might think of David and Goliath or a person who is alone may remind you that "the Lord is our shepherd."

5. Practice. Somehow we think that since praying in public is a "spiritual" activity we should automatically feel comfortable with doing it. Maybe a better way to think about it is a skill like cooking. The more you practice, using the recipe above the more comfortable you will become. So my encouragement would be to volunteer to pray whenever you get a chance. Whether it is at your small group or as a family, the more you pray in public, the more confident you will become.

Do these things and before you realize it, praying in public will be a skill that you are not terrified to do. But something even more important will happen. You will now be able to help people touch heaven and see God's kingdom advance. Let's be a people who pray together! {eo}

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