



PRAYER TRIPLETS

Introduction

This is your invitation to join thousands of students worldwide who have joined forces with two others to pray. Youth leaders are reporting with excitement what God is already doing through the prayers of young people. These tiny groups may seem insignificant, but even one life spent in prayer may start a revival that will sweep the world.

Are you ready to become part of what may well be the single most powerful tool God uses to change the world?

In order to accept this invitation, you must consider the following questions.

1. Are you aware of your responsibility to speak often with God about the world in which you live?
2. Are you convinced that prayer takes on special significance when it is done with other Christians?
3. Are you ready to learn how you can help others as well as yourself develop an effective prayer life?
4. Do you know at least two other people who would answer yes to the above questions?

If you answered **YES** to these questions, you are ready to get started in the adventure of your life in prayer!

What is a Prayer Triplet

A Prayer Triplet is a group of three young Christians, committed to praying together regularly. Every part of this definition is important.

Young Christians

There is a quality of freshness in the faith of those who have recently received Christ that is often sadly lacking in the lives of those who have been Christians for years. The faith of young Christians is marked by trust. They don't hesitate to ask God for anything and about whatever is on their mind! They simply depend on God.

Team of Three

A "team of three" is suggested because it is non-threatening. People are not so nervous about saying the wrong thing in a small group of friends who are learning to trust God and each other together. And Jesus made some specific promises to pairs and trios who pray. Find out for yourself in Matthew 18:19-20. Three is a good number because it is small enough to be an efficient team and big enough to be an effective team. In the words of Ecclesiastes 4:12, "Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."

Committed to Praying

The members of each Prayer Triplet are asked to make a specific agreement with each other. They hold each other to the promises made. They agree to meet for prayer. Their times together should be mostly devoted to prayer. Teams should be alert to the tendency to become distracted. Prayer Triplet times are not designed for stories, sharing or refreshments. The main purpose is to pray. At first, the commitment should be for a limited period, perhaps three months. After that, the commitment can be renewed.

Together Regularly

Ideally, a Prayer Triplet would meet at least once a week. Regular and frequent meetings help the team members grow and mature in their praying. The quantity and quality of those times together build trust. Out of that trust comes the freedom to pray in agreement Jesus spoke about in Matthew 18:19, "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven."

For Whom and What to Pray

The prayers of each Prayer Triplet should focus on three areas: spiritual growth for themselves and their churches, salvation of their friends, and the worldwide work of God. Beginning in worship, prayer will flow naturally to your needs, your friends' needs and finally to the world's. Study each of them below.

Spiritual renewal for Yourselves and Your churches

The goal is to pray that each member of your Prayer Triplet will know Jesus better and become more like Him. Members will pray for needs that they are experiencing. The group should pray for the churches where they attend. They can pray for each church to grow in worship, prayer, evangelism, and service. They can also pray for the renewal of the whole church in their city and nation.

Salvation of their friends

Each Prayer Triplet member should pray for three non-Christian friends. This means that the team will be praying, by name, for the salvation of nine people. These prayers will focus on asking God what He wants to do in the lives of their friends. It will mean expressing the desire to see God work in bringing friends to the point of receiving Christ.

Worldwide work of God

The Prayer Triplet members will pray for the worldwide work of God through Youth for Christ and the church. The team should carefully choose three countries or areas of the world on which to focus their prayers. The more they know about the countries, the more clearly they will be directed in their prayers for God's work there. Each Prayer Triplet will be asking God specifically to raise up believers to pray in those areas of the world.

20 Minutes in Prayer

1. Prayer as Worship

- Praise God for His greatness;
- Use a Psalm or song you know;
- Thank God for what He means to you;
- Thank God for the privilege of praying.

2. Prayer for one another

- That each person will become more like Jesus;
- That each person will see personal needs met;
- That your churches will grow.

3. Prayer for 9 (3 x 3) friends

- That each friend will become more open to God;
- That each friend will become a follower of Jesus;
- That God would use you to reach your friends.

4. Prayer for 3 nations

- That the Gospel of Jesus will spread in those nations;
- That the prayer movement will grow there;
- That peace and justice might rule there;
- That the Christian churches further His Kingdom.

Organize a Prayer Triplet

You are committed to being part of this youth prayer movement. You know at least two others who could join you and you may want to do even more and encourage several Prayer Triplet groups to get started. As you read the following guidelines for putting a Prayer Triplet into action, remember that the goal is not to merely start the race, but to run and complete it. Your friends will need to know what to expect when you ask them to join Prayer Triplet. Here are important points you should mention:

Frequency

Your Prayer Triplet should meet at least once a week. The schedule for your prayer time may vary depending on your schedules. Team members whose schedules don't match will find many barriers to regular meetings. Your invitation should include how often you plan to meet and for what length of time, such as: three months, six months, or one year. Having a set commitment will help members take their involvement seriously.

Goals

You must make it very clear that you are inviting them to a regular prayer time with you. Much can happen around and beyond the Prayer Triplet time, but the primary purpose of the group itself is to pray. If that is not understood from the start, you may find people are disappointed that there aren't other components to the times together. One way to do this is to give a Prayer Triplet booklet to each of your friends that explains in detail the purpose of the prayer time.

Length

If your Prayer Triplet follows the agenda explained on the preceding page, each of those areas will require at least 5 minutes to cover adequately. Add to that about five minutes of prayer time to focus attention on God. So the minimum Prayer Triplet time would be 20 minutes spent in prayer; therefore, the team should plan on spending about 30 minutes together. If members are pressed for time, find out if anyone has to leave at a certain point beyond the minimum. Knowing the schedule will help everyone concentrate on prayer.

Timing

The time of day that the Prayer Triplet meets will depend on the members' schedules. But there are also other factors to keep in mind. Meeting times should also meet these criteria:

- a time when members are fresh, not tired
- a time that encourages total commitment from everyone
- a time when there will be few interruptions

The Original Prayer Triplet

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had much more in common than unusual names. They were friends who prayed. They also had a friend and leader named Daniel, but these three lived as a prayer team. And this team trusted God with their very lives. They were the original Prayer Triplet. Their story is told in Daniel 3:1-30.

Taken from their homeland as young men, Daniel and his Prayer Triplet made an immediate impact on their new environment. They cooperated as long as they weren't asked to betray their allegiance to God. But they respectfully refused to compromise their convictions (Daniel 1: 8-20). At one point, when Daniel was under great pressure (Daniel 2:17-18), he turned to his friends for help. He didn't need their advice or encouragement. Rather, he asked them to pray. Praying together was a central part of their lives.

Later, their loyalty to God was directly challenged. A law was passed that required people to worship the king. Although Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were loyal subjects, they knew they could not worship him. That level of allegiance was reserved for God. Needless to say, the king was not pleased. Earthly kingdoms dislike even gentle reminders that their authority is limited.

Though faced with a furnace of punishment, this Prayer Triplet remained true. They made it clear to the king that obeying God was even more important than being rescued from the flames. Their example teaches that God also wants us to obey. Your Prayer Triplet may not

face the same level of pressure to disobey God, but pressure will come. It may be as subtle as time pressure or peer pressure. Remember the strength of being on a team is this:

The Importance of Prayer

Perhaps you felt challenged, but hesitant after reading the first part of this handbook. The purpose was to introduce the team aspect of a Prayer Triplet. But you may have many questions about your own experiences with prayer. Praying alone or in a group may still seem strange to you.

In this section, we will look at prayer itself. The purpose will be to explain the importance of prayer in the life of a Christian and the role of each praying person in a Prayer Triplet.

The effectiveness of Prayer Triplet will depend on prayer and the people who pray. Each Prayer Triplet will need at least one key player. You can be that key player. How much have you thought about prayer? Maybe you are at the same point the disciples of Jesus found themselves one day while they were standing around waiting for Him to finish having a private conversation with His heavenly Father. When He was done, they asked, "Master, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples" (Luke 11:1). Without knowing it, by making the request they had taken a big step in learning to pray. The question itself was a prayer. In fact, every conversation the disciples had with Jesus was prayer. The same can be true for you today.

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Stop reading for a moment and ask God to ***teach you to pray***.

Leading a Prayer Triplet

In a world class track race, someone almost always serves as the pacesetter. This athlete leads the pack during most of the race. He or she establishes a speed which forces most of the runners to do their best. Pacesetters seldom win. The energy used to pull the others along isn't available for the final burst of speed. But real pacesetters don't set out to win. They are people who decide to help others succeed. That makes them key players.

Similarly, an orchestra has a concert master who provides the correct pitch for the other musicians. He or she may also lead a section. But these leaders do not necessarily play the solo parts. They help the rest of the orchestra to play their parts correctly. That makes them key players.

The same principle works with prayer. God allows individual Christians to serve here and there as pacesetters for prayer. They pray and encourage others to pray. They are the quiet organizers behind a Prayer Triplet and other prayer movements. On a prayer team, they are key players.

When God works in the world, He is given glory. Often, the human tools He uses also get attention. But those who pray must be prepared to have their efforts go unnoticed. And those who set the pace for prayer will often be unseen. Just remember that we pray expecting God to respond. The fact that God notices is most important.

Characteristics of pacesetters for prayer:

1. They don't consider themselves great prayers, but they are determined to pray.
2. They have a growing awareness that God wants them to pray and to learn more about prayer.
3. They understand that God expects their active involvement in the church and the world.
4. They realize that prayer is not a monologue but two-way communication.
5. They want to see others realize God's greatness.

Which of these characteristics are true of you?

What is a Prayer Concert?

Hopefully, what you have read so far has been challenging and encouraging. But you may still be finding it difficult to see it from God's perspective. There are loud messages today that prayer doesn't work. In fact, you may be surrounded by people who seem to live as if

depending on God is a waste of time. And it may seem at times that they are right. You may feel discouraged from even attempting to develop a vital prayer life. If so, God gives the same answer he gave to one of our forefathers in the faith, Elijah. His story is found in 1 Kings 19:1-18.

Elijah had just seen God answer prayer with awesome power. The incineration of the soaked sacrifice, the soggy firewood, and the stone altar must have had about the same visual effect as the ignition of a space rocket among people who were still getting used to the idea of fire. And yet, within hours, Elijah was depressed and lonely. Worse, he was feeling sorry for himself. God's answer was simple and direct. He pointed out that Elijah was wrong. He may have felt lonely, but he was definitely not alone. There were at least 7,000 others who had not bowed to a strange god, but had remained faithful to the true God.

God could be asking you today to become a pacesetter. You may have an opportunity to mobilize one or several Prayer Triplet groups. You may even be instrumental in seeing the rise of Prayer Concerts where you live.

The title "Concert of Prayer" has been used by Christians for more than 300 years. It describes the idea of a united gathering for extraordinary prayer. Participants bring their relationships with God like musicians bring their instruments to a musical concert. The Holy Spirit becomes the conductor in this setting. He provides the spiritual "score" and "tempo." A more specific description of Concerts of Prayer would be: Young Christians joining in unity as a larger group for regular times of prayer. As we did with our definition of a Prayer Triplet, we will look at each phrase separately.

As in a Prayer Triplet meeting, a Prayer Concert begins by drawing attention to God, the One to Whom we pray. Following that time of worship, two main concerns make up the prayer agenda:

The Church

It is clear that God's great desire is that the world-wide Body of Christ would experience and know Him better. The Church is a living organism and therefore must grow. Growth can happen in maturity, numbers, service, and many other areas.

Because this is God's purpose, we agree with Him in prayer. A Concert of Prayer becomes a time to pray for ourselves, for our churches, and for the Body of Christ in our town, in our

nation, and throughout the world. We can rejoice in prayer for what God is doing. We can also repent in prayer for our failures and ask God to once again send a renewing Spirit among His people.

We can pray for a movement of prayer among young people all around the world, that God would encourage existing prayer groups and that new Prayer Triplet groups would be formed.

The World

It is also clear that God wants all people to respond to His love for them through Jesus Christ. His plan is that Christ's name will be preached to the ends of the earth. So, a Prayer Concert lifts up the concerns of evangelism, peace, and justice before God. We begin with prayer about the effectiveness of our personal witness to neighbors and friends. To these are added prayers for the evangelistic efforts directed to those in our city, our country, and the unreached people groups where entire cultures presently are cut off from the gospel by language or location. The needs of the whole world become the subjects of our prayers: for peace, for food, for salvation.

We should also pray for other young people around the world, their problems, pressure points, parents, and other concerns.

Don't try to make a Prayer Concert an evangelistic outreach. If you have been praying for the salvation of your non-Christian friends and there is no organization that can sponsor a program, consider joining other Prayer Triplet groups to plan an appropriate outreach event or program.

Prayer Concert Outline Suggestion

Part One: Preparation

- Praise songs, report of answered prayers, and prayer focusing on the greatness of God (10 minutes).
- Encouragement through the use of a Biblical or historical example of a prayer movement (5 minutes).

Part Two: Prayer for Renewal in the Church

- Personal renewal-pairs (3 minutes).
- Local churches-groups of 6 (6 minutes).
- Global church-whole group (6 minutes).
- Silent listening (2 minutes).
- Singing a chorus about spiritual growth.

Part Three: Encouragement

- Sharing of testimonies about Prayer Triplet experiences in mixed small groups (5 minutes).

Part Four: Prayer for World Evangelization

- About personal witness-pairs (3 minutes).
- About local outreach-groups of 6 (6 minutes).
- About global outreach-entire group (6 minutes).
- Silent listening (2 minutes).
- Sing a chorus about God's glory and the spread of the Gospel (3 minutes)
- Closing prayers (3 minutes).