

# Prayer Walks

## Prayer-Walking-What Is It?

Prayer-walking is praying "on-site" for specific areas around you, and covering these areas with God's presence as you walk.

## Why Do People Go Prayer-Walking?

Walking allows you to be physically integrated in a particular place, it gives you time to be sensitized to all the sights and smells; you begin to pray with your whole body, not just your mind.

By physically placing yourself in a place, you are likely to become more aware of the specific things that you should be praying for. Issues that probably would never have occurred to you if you'd been sitting at home with your eyes closed! Walking is an act of confidence in God's power over a particular situation. You are acting out everything that you hoped, believed, prayed and petitioned for in that place. You yourself may feel small and useless, but your physical presence in that situation displays the exact opposite.

One of the most important effects of your presence in a place is its demonstration of your concern to a variety of people involved in that specific situation, you are an important witness to anyone passing by or working in the buildings you are praying over. Whether or not they understand exactly what you are doing, few can fail to be affected by the simple fact that you not only have noticed them, but also that you care for them - this is equally important, whether they are on the giving or receiving end of the injustice you are praying about!

By spending a substantial length of time slowly passing through an area, whilst remaining in God's presence, you begin to see it through His eyes. You will develop a greater understanding of the place - what its real needs are and what God could do in that situation.

Not only does it develop understanding, but the whole activity of prayer-walking motivates people to become much more involved in the issues that God has guided them towards. It is a great example of God changing people, putting them in a much more powerful position to be able to change things themselves.

Finally, the action of prayer-walking inevitably stretches your faith, encouraging you to be more confident and aware of God's leading. Not only this, but many people who go prayer-walking describe powerful examples of God's love in action as they learn how to pray more effectively by actually doing it, strengthening their faith even further.

## **Practicalities of Prayer-Walking**

### ***Begin with worship***

Dedicate yourself and the next few hours to God and concentrate on Him. Read a passage from the Bible, to focus your attention on what you are about to do and remind yourself why you are doing it. Be quiet before God for a while and listen to Him just before you go out in order to tune yourself in to His voice.

### ***Relationships within the team of prayer-walkers***

Make sure everyone in your team gets to know each other properly before you begin, so that you are all familiar and comfortable with each other. Most importantly, make sure effective prayer is not being compromised by disagreements and annoyances between members of the team.

### ***Organizing the walk***

Divide into groups of 2 or 3, so there are enough in a group to support each other (remember that prayer is fortified by agreement), but not too many so that some people are unable to hear or participate properly. Make sure that confident or experienced prayer-walkers are split up between the groups. Decide on a route that will cover all the areas that you feel need prayer, for whatever reason.

Different groups can walk in different directions and may take longer over certain parts than others. Give enough structure that groups do not get lost, but not so much that excessive time is taken over figuring out directions. Decide how much spontaneity you want to allow groups to have, dependant on how well they know the area.

How long are you going to spend? Make sure that all the groups know when they should return but be flexible in the timing. One or two hours are usually what are recommended initially.

What specifically are you praying about? Most prayer walks combine a balance of three elements, whatever the specific issue. These are worship; spiritual warfare and creating a welcome for Christ. Many walks concentrate on an issue e.g. praying for world debt around the Japanese embassy (as Jubilee 2000 has done); or praying for God's presence in a particular area, such as a university campus. Some people take out a small Bible and read out passages as they feel relevant to a particular situation.

Most importantly, make sure that you take time to define the purpose of the prayer walk beforehand. What is it you want God to achieve in that place?

Potential Problems

Be careful that the prayer-walking itself does not distract you from Jesus. The essence of doing this is to walk, wanting Christ to come into the area you are walking in.

### **Spiritual warfare.**

Most prayer-walkers recognize that the evil that exists in their environment will resist our prayer as we take them out. However natural communication with God should be it may become harder, requiring persistence and patience.

Although many people soon find this is something that comes naturally, at first, the idea of walking along, talking to God in small groups may be very strange and difficult. But the most amazing thing about prayer is that we learn to pray actually by praying, and so it will become easier with persistence

## **Prayer Walk Steps**

### **Gather**

Gather to meet and give instructions (including Scripture about prayer), concluding with a time of prayer, asking God for spiritual insights and for a powerful impact on the people we meet and in the areas we go.

### **Go**

Go in groups of 2-3 (no more than 4 or 5), praying both silently and out loud in response to what we see, experience and sense.

### **Return & Debrief**

Return to share experiences and insights gained, as well as what each person sensed in the areas in which they prayed.

### **Pray**

Pray, thanking God for going before you, asking Him to direct someone to specific people or places of potential ministry.