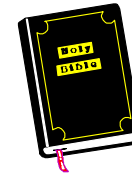


# WEST COLUMBIA CHURCH OF CHRIST



“every disciple that is perfect shall be as his master.” Luke 6:40b

## How To Lead Prayer—Encouragement and Tips for the Beginner

A note to all of you men that are experienced in leading worship: You should know that the young men and new converts are in awe of you. They don't know how you can be asked at a moment's notice and be ready to lead a prayer. All they know is that if THEY are asked they will melt into a pool of fright. They think that you must have a special talent from God. And they KNOW that they don't have it.

I've been on both sides. I've been the scared-to-death, cotton-in-the-mouth, jelly-legged, brain-blocked young man trying to utter a prayer that made sense and now I'm one of those who can be asked on a moment's notice and not break into a cold sweat. I'm not saying that the congregation says, “Wow” when I'm done, but I can do a credible job. Do I have a special talent from God? No, I'm afraid not. My history doesn't bear that out. Did I have special training? No, it was all on the job training.

I don't have a clear memory of the first time I led a prayer, just impressions. Those impressions are of fear, failure and shame. I was baptized when I was fifteen or so and I was big for my age (near six feet and over 200 pounds). This is all just to say, I know what you're going through, I've been there; felt the dread, the sweaty palms, all of it.

What can I say to help you get through it? There are things you need to understand before you stand to lead a congregation in prayer.

No one expects you to be a Bible scholar at this point. Are you afraid you'll say something wrong? You will say something wrong at some point. If not, you do have a gift from God. Just keep the prayer simple and from the heart and if someone comes and points out a misunderstanding you may have that was revealed in your prayer, thank them for pointing it out and go on. You won't be the first nor will you be the last.

The congregation is grateful that you have the courage to lead. This is most sharply felt in very small congregations. Picture a Wednesday night when five women and one man make it to Bible study. If the preacher was one that didn't make it (it's happened to me) then the service is led by someone who may not be proficient at all (or any) of the things that need to be done. I've heard sincere gratitude expressed to the man who put duty before his personal comfort. He led the prayers, and the songs, and he did some Bible readings, maybe for the first time. Even if he did some things badly the ladies made him think he prayed like Elijah, sang like David, and read like Ezra. The idea is that the congregation isn't waiting for you to slip up so they can titter at you. They are grateful that you stood when called upon. - **Continued on page 3**

**Let Your Light Shine in 2009!**

## VOLUME 35, NUMBER 02 January 11, 2009

### RECORDS 1/4/2009

Sun 10 AM Bible Study: 48  
Sun 11 AM Assembly: 71  
Sun 6 PM Assembly: 62  
Weds 7 PM Bible Study: 52  
CONTRIBUTION: \$2066

### SERMONS 1/11/2009

AM: Jerry Manning  
**ENLIGHTENED EYES**  
PM: Jerry Manning  
**THE MUSIC OF THE CHURCH**

**“And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:  
Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together ...” - Hebrews 10:24,25**

*A Warm Welcome awaits you at all our services. Come see!*  
[www.WestColumbiaChurchOfChrist.org](http://www.WestColumbiaChurchOfChrist.org)

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### *SERVICES*

Sunday 10 AM Bible Study  
Sunday 11 AM, 6 PM Assembly  
Wednesday 7 PM Bible Study  
Office Phone (803) 794-5320  
*Nursery provided*  
*Bible Classes for all ages*

**LADIES CLASS**  
2nd Tuesday of month 7-9 PM

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## **“PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER” - James 5:16**

- **REMEMBER IN PRAYER:** Beryl Parks, Nina Ruth Meadows (Marcella Klieves' mother), Jack and Elma Berrier, Lynn Drago (Jerry's sister) and Phyllis Johnson.
- Prayers are requested for **Beryl Parks** who has had some serious nose bleeds and is now fighting a subsequent infection.
- **Wallace Beasley**, who preached for many years at the Windsor Lake church has suffered an apparent serious heart attack. Pray for him and the family.
- Jones Gamble's father had a pacemaker installed.
- **Margaret Herring** hasn't been well, and is fighting chronic pain.
- **Katie Kennedy** drove up to Chicago Wed. but had to stop in Louisville due to ice. Remember her in your prayers as she works up there the next several months.
- Prayers are requested for **John Garrot** of the Conway church who has cancer.
- **Lamar Reeves** is home, still fighting complications of Crohn's disease.
- **Marilyn Brooks** has been confined to bed on doctor's orders for her foot.
- **Ron Banks** had back surgery 12/31/2008 and is home now recovering.
- **Carolyn Stidham** is recovering from knee replacement surgery.
- **Betty Mathis** is back at Oakleaf Village, Rm 209, 800 N. Lake Drive, Lexington, 29072, her phone is 358-2732 and doing well from all reports.
- **Ruth Raine** is in Minnesota for eye surgery.
- **Jeanette Reeves** continues to struggle with sin. Pray for her repentance.
- Remember all these, our new brothers and sisters in Christ, and brother **Manning** and those he studies the Bible with, in your prayers.

“... when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;” - Heb. 5:7

## **“AND THEY CONTINUED STEADFASTLY” - Acts 2:42**

- **Pantry Items needed!** We regularly give quite a bit away to those in need. Pop top lids are good, as are things that don't need cooking or preparation, such as Lance cracker/cookie packs, canned fruit, Vienna sausages, beanie-weenies, etc.
- **SINGING! SAVE THE DATE!** At the Twin City church in Batesburg Leesville, last Sunday in January (25th) 2-4 pm
- Our thanks to the men, young—and not so young, that are getting up and giving short devotionals and invitations on Wednesday nights. It's encouraging to all. May God bless your efforts

“For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.” - Hebrews 6:10

**WORK TEAM SCHEDULE: 1/11—A 1/18—B 1/25—C**

Read the book, and use it, in order to ...  
**Let Your Light Shine in 2009!**

## **How To Lead Prayer—Encouragement - Continued from page 1**

No one expects you to lead a prayer like an elder or a preacher. Elders and preachers have led hundreds, maybe thousands of prayers. Don't try to sound like someone else and don't worry that your prayer is not long enough. Try not to frame thy prayer in the language of King James unless thou art truly acquainted with it. In the future, if you become acquainted with it, and you truly feel that using it is the most reverent way to approach God then by all means do so. Just don't feel that it is a requirement to be heard by God. Simple and modern is just fine.

The following are some recommendations I give to men who express to me that they don't feel prepared when it comes to public prayer:

Pray at home. In order to train to pray publicly you'll need to stop saying quiet prayers within your mind. You'll need to verbalize. This forces thoughts to become words. When you pray privately at home, verbalize. When you pray alone in your car, verbalize. When you pray at the dinner table, verbalize. Use words and be careful with your diction.

If you're in a small Bible class let the teacher know that you could use opportunities before a smaller group.

Study prayer to know what God would have us to be concerned with in prayer. Too many men learn to lead prayer solely by the examples of those whom they have heard pray. You should go to the source. You should ask what God would have us pray about. God has specific concerns for which we should pray. These include the spread of the kingdom, the holiness of Christians, the forgiveness of sins, praising God, thanking God and making petition for personal needs. Get out a Bible concordance and look up the words “pray,” “prayer,” “prayed,” “praying,” etc. and you'll begin to get a good idea of what God's concerns are. Pray about those.

Pray for those things appropriate at the moment. When you lead prayer, don't feel obligated to include everything that might be God's concern in every opportunity for prayer. An opening prayer should include things that a closing prayer does not and vice versa. Prayers at the beginning of a Bible class should not be just like a prayer before a meal. Prayers at the Lord's table should be about the element about to be served.

Forget about making yourself look good or sound good. Conversely, forget about not making yourself look like an idiot (which is what beginners usually fret about). Put your mind on God, on His love, His grace, His mercy, His holiness.

It's a privilege to lead the Lord's people in prayer. It is humbling and faith-building. More men should prepare themselves to do it. More men should accept the responsibility. Zero men become preachers who don't lead public prayer. Zero men become deacons who don't lead public prayer. Zero men become elders who don't lead public prayer. As a Christian man it is a necessary step in your Christian development. You can do it.

- G. E. Watkins, Southwest church of Christ, Texas

“... be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” - 1 Timothy 4:12