

DISCOVERY CHURCH ALTAR PRAYER TEAM TRAINING

The seminal goal of prayer is partnering with the Holy Spirit to usher in the will of God in any situation. “Your kingdom (rule/authority) come; Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.” A Spirit-led, prepared prayer ministry team member is able to impart God’s love, help a person encounter God, bring encouragement, and give hope.

When someone comes to the front for prayer, keep in mind this team of prayer warriors falls under an overarching purpose:

*Discovery’s Vision: A place where each person is loved,
transformed and equipped.*

LOVE

At a minimum, no matter what the request or the outcome after prayer, each person should walk away feeling loved by God and loved by you as a representative of the Body of Christ and Discovery. We are not seeking to pray “band aid” prayers. We are looking to break through the influence of darkness and bring light (i.e. physical healing, emotional peace and healing, imparting hope, exposing the enemy) by partnering with the Holy Spirit to pray according to God’s will. When we do this in a caring, personal way, the recipient will encounter the love of God.

TRANSFORM

The most effective and lasting transformation when a person hears from God directly about their situation. We cannot bring transformation. The Spirit can. We can be a catalyst for the process. Always try to lead them to hear from the Spirit and then share with you what they heard so you can confirm and/or guide them.

EQUIP

Equip the individual to move one step closer in their relationship to the Father and in freedom in this one encounter. This opportunity is rich with potential! You can model what it looks like to pray, listen, receive and take action.

Prayer time is not counseling. Avoid giving advice based on “your experience.” Instead, give one or two simple steps to follow up on what the Spirit said in the encounter.

1. Based on what you sense the Spirit saying, challenge the person with a next step - write down what happened today, tell someone, look for scripture on the issue to meditate on ...
2. End with verbally blessing them in whatever the spiritual need is for their request (i.e. courage, faith, trust, healing, reconciliation, provision, etc.)
3. When applicable, pray that the Spirit will help identify lies believed and bring truth in its place with the Word of God.

ALTAR MINISTRY

1. When the recipient approaches, say, "Hi, my name is _____. What is your name? How can we pray for you today?" Get a brief explanation of the need. Listen with your spirit ears.
2. Ask the Holy Spirit what He might have to say to the situation.
3. You may hear a word or see a picture or get a sense. The individual may hear something or get a picture or sense of something. Before you share what you have, ask if they heard God say anything, then if you feel it's appropriate, you can share what you sensed.
4. Pray, confirming and receiving what the Lord has said in that moment.
5. If no one sensed anything specific, *pray scripture* over the situation.

Specifics for physical healing:

1. Once the request is communicated to you, ask what affects it has in this moment (pain or limitations on a scale from 1-10).
2. Ask if you can place your hand on that area if appropriate.
3. Thank God for hearing prayer and for the authority in Jesus name to bring healing.
4. Command the root cause and symptoms to get out in Jesus' name.
5. Listen for any specific direction from the Spirit on how to pray.
6. Ask the person if they can feel/see/sense any change.
7. Pray again if necessary. (If Jesus prayed for the blind man twice, we can follow the same example.)
8. Speak God's love and blessing over them.

Specifics for deliverance:

A person is in need of deliverance when they exhibit the inability to be free from mental, emotional, physical, or spiritual bondage associated with demonic works of the flesh. When in-depth deliverance is required, those ministry sessions should be in a private setting to eliminate distractions and protect the dignity of the recipient. Initial encounters may happen at the altar, so prayer team members should be ready to respond well.

1. As you pray, if you sense or see resistance or demonic manifestation, remember that you have been given authority over the enemy because of the victory and authority of Jesus. (Acts 10:38)
2. Take the time to ask the recipient about their salvation to determine if they are a Christian. With that information you can determine which approach to take. (demonic possession vs oppression) Repentance and renouncing the agreement/open door to the enemy will be required of the recipient. Lead in repentance.
3. Verbally take authority over any spirit that Jesus reveals. Our weapon is the Word of God (Eph. 6:12). Have the recipient command the spirit to leave.
4. Have the recipient ask the Holy Spirit to fill them - body and soul.
5. Remain calm, orderly and under the direction of the Holy Spirit.
6. If an in-depth session is needed, make a connection between the recipient and a pastor or the Prayer Team Director.

Regardless of the nature of the prayer request, prayer ministers will prioritize to two central thoughts in every situation without deviation:

1. We will pray the Word of God in the name of Jesus.
2. We will pray with the Father's love and will in mind.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

The Focus of the encounter is always God's loving presence. The Holy Spirit is the Healer and Guide in this encounter. You are the assistant to the process.

Take your time (as much as possible) with the listening portion of the request. While you are listening to them, be listening for what the Spirit is saying in the situation.

Praying in teams of two is recommended when you feel the need, but not required. If you are not sure how to pray for a situation, or feel uncomfortable in any way, call another available prayer team member or pastor over to assist. This is especially important with sexual issues, abuse, demonic influences, etc.

Ask appropriate questions that might draw out the "root" issue. Instead of treating symptoms, we can bring the root to the surface and let the Spirit address that. Then the symptoms will fall in line with transformation of thought.

Ask permission before taking someone's hand or laying hands on them. Make sure you have permission to put your hand on their shoulder or any appropriate area that needs physical healing. *Pray with your eyes open!* Be alert and stay focused on the person.

If there is a waiting line for prayer needs and the situation is complicated, or needs additional time and attention, ask the person if they would mind talking with you afterward. This will allow you to spend additional time listening to the Spirit with them for the solutions they need.

Speak the truth of God's word with the authority Jesus has given you over the situation. This is not matter of how big your faith or understanding is, but how submitted you are under the authority of Christ to usher in Kingdom realities.

Lead them in a moment of waiting/listening. Guide with a prayer to invite Jesus to speak to the situation. Then ask the person receiving ministry, "What do you hear or see Him saying to you?"

Emergency or crisis situation (self-harm/suicide, harming others, criminal activity or abusive situations) should be immediately reported to a pastor on staff. They will ask for your help in completing the proper steps for informing the proper people and referrals to help. Ask the person to be seated on the front row and wait for a pastor to help.

QUALIFICATIONS OF PRAYER MINISTERS

- Live a godly life that represents Jesus as Savior
- Be a member/covenant partner with Discovery Church
- Attend worship services at Discovery on a consistent basis
- Attend at least two corporate prayer services at month at Discovery
- Have a heart for altar ministry
- Be willing to serve within a team concept
- Be willing to attend scheduled training sessions for instruction and community building
- Be willing to read books/materials recommended by the Leadership Team
- Make the consistent personal preparations to be able to minister to others in health and purity

PERSONAL HEALTH AND WHOLENESS OF ALTAR TEAM

"FREE PEOPLE, FREE PEOPLE."

We minister to others out of the fullness of our personal relationship with God, and within the limits of our own level of wholeness and emotional health:

1. We ask Altar Ministers to maintain personal intimacy with the Father.
2. We ask Altar Ministers to faithfully pursue spiritual-emotional health and

wellness.

How does personal health and wholeness apply to loving people?

1. In wholeness, you function as your most authentic self. You are never more anointed than when being yourself. In authenticity, we are able to minister by faith from a place of rest and security.
2. LACK of personal health leads to prayers that are under-girded by insecurity, hurt, or fear. When we minister from wounds – we wound others!
3. While we are here to support and guide you, the only person who can truly guard your heart is the Holy Spirit. Please read “Maintaining Integrity of Heart” from *Living the Spirit Formed Life*, Dr. Jack Hayford.

EXTENDING YOUR COMFORT ZONE - pray for boldness
(discover confidence in praying for people outside the walls of the church)

If prayer is based on God's acts, then prayer is ultimately a response to the prior activity of God. In Christian prayer, the primary divine act is God's new revelation of Jesus....a sequel in a relationship that begins in the relationship between God the Father and Jesus, His Son. We are invoking the delegated authority to claim the promises of God that have already been secured by Jesus.

Nothing we can do or say can impact a person more than the presence of God. There are situations that demand our respectful silence. Use discernment to watch and wait.

Recommended Resources:

Turning Little Faith into Big Faith - Dan McCollum

https://youtu.be/iAk6RyyVfvs?si=Ij5jl3p_Emrf4sn4

Gifts of the Spirit for a New Generation by Dr. Kerry Wood

Living the Spirit Formed Life by Dr. Jack Hayford

Fasting for Breakthrough and Deliverance by John Eckhardt

*updated August 2024