

# Why Am I Afraid to Pray in Front of Others?

Lesson 03 of 05 in the series: "Prayer 30"

## A. Three reasons I may be afraid to pray out loud in front of others:

1. I may feel unsure of what to say.
2. I may be afraid of what others will think of me.
3. I may feel insecure because I compare myself to others.

**Good News!** The Holy Spirit gives us the power to overcome our fears.

"God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." 2 Timothy 1:7 (NKJV)

"God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him." Philippians 2:13 (NLT)

## B. Three reasons why praying with others out loud is an important part of the Christian life:

1. Praying out loud is the best way to teach others to pray.

"Jesus looked up to heaven and said, 'Father, thank you for hearing me. You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me.'"

John 11:41-42 (NLT)

"Once Jesus was in a certain place praying. As he finished, one of his disciples came to him and said, 'Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.' Jesus said, 'This is how you should pray: Father, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. Give us each day the food we need, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And don't let us yield to temptation.'" Luke 11:1-4 (NLT)

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you."

Matthew 28:19-20 (NLT)

2. Praying out loud with others is powerful.

"As soon as they were freed, Peter and John returned to the other believers and told them what the leading priests and elders had said. When they heard the report, all the believers lifted their voices together in prayer to God: 'O Sovereign Lord, Creator of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them... Herod Antipas, Pontius Pilate the governor, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were all united against Jesus, your holy servant, whom you anointed. But everything they did was determined beforehand according to your will. And now, O Lord, hear their threats, and give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word. Stretch out your hand with healing power; may miraculous signs and wonders be done through the name of your holy servant Jesus.' After this prayer, the meeting place shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Then they preached the word of God with boldness."

Acts 4:23-31 (NLT)

3. Jesus instructed us to agree with other believers in prayer. In order to do this, we need to pray out loud.

"I tell you the truth, whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven. I also tell you this: *If two of you agree* here on earth concerning anything you ask, my Father in heaven will do it for you. For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them." Matthew 18:18-20 (NLT)

"Amen" = "I agree" NOT "Goodbye"

## C. Five things we can do to overcome our fear of praying in front of others:

1. Practice praying short, heartfelt prayers out loud alone at home.

"...when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private... When you pray, don't babble on and on... your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him!" Matthew 6:7-8 (NLT)

2. Pray out loud together with several family members or close friends.

“Make this your common practice: Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you can live together whole and healed. The prayer of a person living right with God is something powerful to be reckoned with.” James 5:16 (MSG)

3. Volunteer to pray before meals or during your Connect Group.
4. Encourage others while they are praying out loud by letting them know you agree with what they are praying. (Say things like “amen”, “I agree”, or “yes, Lord”)
5. Participate in a prayer service.

“All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer.” Acts 2:42 (NLT)

John Schmidt • 02-16-2020 • [john@centeringlives.com](mailto:john@centeringlives.com)

### **Connect Group Questions:**

1. Discuss the following reasons many people give for being afraid to pray out loud in front of others:
  - I feel unsure of what to say.
  - I’m afraid of what others will think of me.
  - I feel insecure because I compare myself to others.

Which of these reasons can you relate to most? Why?

2. Read 2 Timothy 1:7 & Romans 8:26-27. How can the Holy Spirit help us pray alone or with others?
3. Discuss the following ideas to help us overcome our fear of praying in front of others:

- Practice praying short, heartfelt prayers out loud alone at home. (Matthew 6:7-8)
- Pray out loud together with several family members or close friends. (James 5:16)
- Volunteer to pray before meals or during Connect Group.
- Encourage others while they are praying out loud by letting them know you agree with what they are praying. (Say things like “amen”, “I agree”, or “yes, Lord”)
- Participate in a prayer service like the Night of Prayer on March 1<sup>st</sup>. (Acts 2:42, 4:23-31)

Which of these ideas would be a stretch goal for you? What would help you pray more confidently?

4. Read Matthew 18:18-20. What does it look like when believers agree in prayer?
5. Spend some time as a group praying out loud for our church.
  - Ask God to help everyone involved with Centerpoint feel comfortable praying alone and with others. Ask Him to make us a church of prayer.
  - Ask God to guide our church and give us fully surrendered hearts.
  - Ask God to move powerfully in the lives of our people restoring marriages, helping people overcome addictions, giving us boldness in our faith, healing broken hearts, etc.
  - Praise God and celebrate His goodness, forgiveness, provision, protection, and love.
  - Thank God for His many blessings.
  - Pray for specific needs of people in your group.