

# ***Building a “Pleromic” Prayer Ministry - Overview***

## **Facilitating Spiritual Conversations with the Lord.**

<sup>29</sup> *Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said.*

<sup>30</sup> *If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent.*

<sup>31</sup> *For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged,*

<sup>32</sup> *and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets.* <sup>33</sup> *For God is not a God of confusion but of peace.*

**1 Corinthians 14:29-33** ESV.

**Forward:** This is an exploration of principles and practices for exercising the gifts of the Spirit in the local church. It is offered to church leaders who wish to deepen the effectiveness of their church prayer ministries. Today, a growing number of churches are re-evaluating their “cessationist” position on Spiritual gifts. They are cautiously moving to embrace a “continuationist” position. Many questions will arise. The author has pastored four evangelical churches over the last fifty years. His last church pressed forward to integrate the best principles and practices of both Evangelicals and Charismatics in our prayer. There is a lot of ideas here. It could be overwhelming. So, consider taking it in small portions. And perhaps you will find it helpful to have a Christian friend walk with you through these pages. DN

### **1. Theological Stipulations:**

#### **Offering a Solution to the Evangelical/Charismatic Divide.**

The principles that will be shared in this monograph came together over a decade of trying, failing, laughing, crying, learning, and humbly trying again to bring together in a “listening prayer” ministry that would integrate the best practices of both evangelical and charismatic values. There are two stipulations that will make this effort meaningful for consideration by both evangelicals and charismatics:

- (1) The highest view of Scripture is essential in knowing the heart of God. It is essential in testing everything that purports to be a “word from the Lord;” and
- (2) The Holy Spirit, even today, opens to believers the “realm of the prophetic,” which, although not adding to canonical Scripture, enables mature believers to be guided into His will.

I have been an Evangelical pastor for a half-century. Over the years, I have had the passion to see a healing of the breach between Evangelicals and Charismatics. The charismatic renewal (circa 1960) was a fresh move of the Holy Spirit to empower the church for end-time ministry. I do not believe it was ever God’s intention that the Spirit’s fresh outpouring should divide Bible-centered and Spirit-led believers. God commands the blessing where brothers dwell together in unity (Psalm 133). God’s enemy knows this, and he uses division as a key strategy to rob the church of its anointing and power.

I believe it is time for the renewal of the renewal. I have written much that you can find elsewhere on *MoreofHisFullness.com* to give stress to this unifying principle: The **fullness of God** can only be experienced by the **fullness of the Word** (Evangelical emphasis) AND the **fullness of the Spirit** (Charismatic emphasis).

I have found it useful to coin a new term. In the pursuit of more of His fullness, I no longer refer to myself as an “Evangelical-Charismatic.” Wearied by the hyphen that holds in place the division in the church, I now advocate for the term “Pleromic.” Like the other two terms, which are descriptive adjectives derived from the Greek terms *euangelion* and *charisma*, I offer a new English descriptive adjective from the Greek term *pleroma*, meaning “fullness.” “Pleromic” allows removing the hyphen.

This monograph lays out in practical terms how the best principles and practices of both movements may be integrated effectively in the prayer room. Jesus wants and directs that every church is to be a “house of prayer.” Refer to [MoreofHisFullness.com/Tool Chest/ Drawer 3 – Prayer Center Training/](http://MoreofHisFullness.com/Tool Chest/ Drawer 3 – Prayer Center Training/) for more tools for developing the local church as a house of prayer.

A Pleromic church is one that holds a “continuationist” view of Spiritual gifts, rather than a “cessationist” view. All the biblically-defined gifts of the Spirit are available today as the Holy Spirit chooses to manifest Himself through each member to minister to the other members of the Body of Christ. To support this, enjoy **1 Corinthians 12:4-11** ESV with the emphases I have included:

4. *Now there are varieties of gifts, but **the same Spirit**;*
5. *and there are varieties of service, but **the same Lord**;*
6. *and there are varieties of activities, but it is **the same God** who empowers them all in everyone.*
7. *To each is given **the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.***
8. *To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit,*
9. *to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit,*
10. *to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.*
11. *All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who **apportions to each one individually as he wills.***

## 2. The Story of Our Progress toward a “Prayer Room Etiquette.”<sup>1</sup>

In my previous ministry, a foundational environment for learning prayer room etiquette was a weekly prayer meeting we called “A Healing Place.”<sup>2</sup> This listening prayer environment was open to the public in our Prayer Center, advertised by word of mouth, in church publications, and by a street sign that read “Need prayer? Come Tuesday Evening.” Thousands of commuters a day passed by that church sign. Hurting people came, two or three at a time -- scared, hungry, desperate, or simply curious.

These folks walked into a “safe” place. It was a comfortable setting, and they met friendly people who were welcoming without being pushing. Often, they would sign in with first name only. The facilitator would acknowledge them gladly. When the “seeker” expressed a willingness to tell the group why they had come, the facilitator would most often encourage them not to disclose anything yet. “The Lord already knows why He brought you here. Let’s just worship for a while and wait on the Lord for His guidance.”

After these simple introductions, the group was led into worship with carefully selection recorded music. The theme was peace, rest, and expectation of His presence and grace. Within about 10-12 minutes, the music volume was quieted down, while our silent waiting on the Lord continued.

At this point, let me describe our team. They were Bible-taught, Spirit filled, humble servants of Jesus. They had become skilled in “listening prayer.” (See monographs on the website) They trusted the Holy Spirit in their teammates, with whom they shared a godly love. These were “credentialed” by the pastoral team and facilitator as having a clear calling, gifting, and anointing. They functioned humbly and with maturity in the spiritual gifts in the realm of the “prophetic,” i.e., wisdom, knowledge, discernment, faith, teaching, etc. They were identified careful. We laid hands on no potential team member suddenly.

Other praying people were present to support, listen, and learn. They were encouraged to listen to the Lord, too, but to write down their impressions, to check them with the facilitator, and if confirmed, follow the direction of that leaders as to timing the release of their spiritual insight. The leader exercised mature discernment, perhaps delaying until he could consult with other elders or pastors. Options the facilitator could use: (1) he may hold the note to give to the seeker later, (2) he may give the “word” to the seeker himself, adding confirmatory Scripture, or (3) when he felt the “trainee” was ready, he may have allowed that trainee to share the word directly with the guest. All this was done quietly and without hurrying. The prayer team constantly looked to the Lord, the Scripture, and each other for confirmation.

Clearly, the meeting had two objectives: (1) to minister to hurting people in a Spirit-led way, and (2) to allow for less experienced “trainees” to have a place to explore the use of their prophetic spiritual gifting in the biblical way described by Paul in **1 Corinthians 14:24-25** NASB. <sup>24</sup> *But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all;* <sup>25</sup> *the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so he will fall on his face and worship God, declaring that God is certainly among you.*

Back to the session under way. As the Spirit prompted him, the facilitator would ask the prophetic listeners, “What is the Lord showing you? What Scriptures? What impressions? Anything that He is

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<sup>1</sup> “Etiquette” here means the accepted code of polite behavior in the context of prayer, how to be respectful and considerate.

<sup>2</sup> To clarify, “A Healing Place” was a name given by a prophetic word given to a former pastor when he was anticipating the construction on a new site. It was adopted it as a purposeful “nickname” for the church itself. The weekly prayer event described here was not focused on physical healing. It focused on spiritual wholeness. In this article, the name “Healing Place” refers to the context of “listening prayer” where we applied ourselves to deepen in Spirit-led prayer.

laying on your heart? You may offer it now. and release your heart impression to the Lord to do with it as He desires. Share it please.” Then he would wait, not pressing individuals to share.

When the Lord’s presence fills the room, everything sweetly changes. The awesome presence of God became tangible, even to the seekers. Nobody was in a hurry. But we sat, as it were, at His feet, sensing His pleasure. I have never found words adequate to describe the glorious impact of having the Lord manifest Himself in the midst of our little group who gathered in His name. **Matthew 18:19-20**.

Then most often there came a gentle word from a team member. It usually was a verse or portion of a Scripture. Sometimes, the team member would look at a seeker with gentle love, offering this to them without probing. Others often spoke a confirming word that God had revealed to their listening hearts. Awe, confirmation! The biblical support was plain. It was always in the purview of the facilitator to assure that these impressions were clearly supported and confirmed by the Word of God.

In addition to on-spot Scriptures, examples of other spiritual gifts that frequently came to be evident and useful were word of wisdom, words of knowledge, a revelation of God’s love in specific terms applicable to one of the seekers, etc. Discerning of spirits was many times evident, but not shared with the group without private consultation with the facilitator. (See “Rules of Engagement” on the website.)

“You’ve been reading my mail!” a seeker would often acknowledge (but not necessarily in those words). The Holy Spirit had prompted exactly the right, timely truth. It spoke directly to their situation or answered their heart question. They had not shared their issue before, but it was common to see the floodgate open, their talk and tears co-mingling. God had broken through their darkness with light. The missing piece in their questioning heart was supplied, resulting in their knowing that God was speaking directly to them. “God sees me! He cares about me!”

This is what I mean by our “. . . facilitating a conversation between God and the seeker.” It became evident that the Lord had desired to speak to the confused, broken, fearful heart of the particular seeker for a while. They may have been so emotionally bruised, confused, stubborn, or resentful that they had lost their objectivity. Their ears had become insensitive to what the Spirit was desiring to say to them.

But now He was drawing these hurting people into a prayer environment where He would use other Spirit-anointed people to hear and say what God wanted said to them. He would use the hearts and voices of His servants in the prayer room to break through the blockage, to pull down the stronghold, to speak truth to the embattled heart of the person struggling. Sometimes, God finds it useful to put His truth into the heart of skilled listeners who use their voices to, shall we say, “vibrate the physical eardrums” of the seeker and dramatically, unmistakably burst in on their hearts with His light and transforming truth. In addition to the revelation of liberating truth, the seekers would be overwhelmed with the sense of God’s closeness, His tangible love, and His care for them personally. They had come face-to-face with **Elroi**, “The God Who Sees” (**Genesis 16:13**).

What follows are the biblical and practical learnings we have come to call “lab notes” from the “Healing Place” (our listening prayer room). More broadly, these practical concepts of walking in the Spirit informed all the other integrated prayer ministries we had developed and stewarded. (Refer to the chart at the end of this monograph for the other prayer teams and environments.)

### 3. Prayer Room Etiquette:

#### Identifying Principles for Mature Prophetic Prayer Ministry.

Jesus was passionate about the temple being a “house of prayer” (**Luke 19:46**, quoting **Isaiah 56:7**). Paul calls the Corinthian Christians to understand that they as a gathered group were “God’s temple” (**1 Corinthians 3:16**). Each of us as pastors and leaders need to respond to the heart of Christ for His church by making mature prayer a priority – both personally and corporately.<sup>3</sup>

Again, in order to advance in Spirit-led prayer in my last church, the elders joined me in asking the Lord to help us become a sort of “laboratory” for exploring and applying what the Word of God reveals about mature prayer ministry.<sup>4</sup> We desired to learn practically how to operate in the realm of prophetic gifting in a mature way. “Listening prayer” involves a two-way conversation (**Revelation 3:20**). Some of the things we experienced and discovered we offer here as a kind of “etiquette” for praying people to function in humility, unity, and grace. **1 Timothy 3:15**

Here, then, are some learnings that shaped our Evangelical/Charismatic prayer environment. These “lab notes” help form a kind of “code” of spiritually mature behaviors and actions in ministering biblical truth prophetically to others:

1. We are way-preparers. Our job is to draw a seeker close to Jesus, to step back, and to let Him work.
2. We worship, then wait, then work. Suggestion: Please wait a little longer. God is not in a hurry.
3. We seek for, and wait for, confirmation. **2 Thessalonians 5:19-22**. We pray, “Lord, if you speak clearly, we will obey courageously.” We must not rush the first part. The primary testing of a prophetic word will be sought in the Bible. The Holy Spirit, who inspired the Bible, will never lead contrary to it. We “confer” with the Spirit before “conferring” with another. If practical, we consult with another discerning team member for confirmation and/or clarification.
4. We “offer and release” our prophetic word, rather than “impose and control.” Courtesy requires that we ask permission, present, release the outcome to the seeker and God, and then step back.
5. We trust the Holy Spirit in our team. We wait and pray for others to use their spiritual gifting, too.
6. We let God work at His pace, in His way, even though the impact may be unseen at the moment. The conversation may be private between the seeker and God. We respect them, and will not pry. We understand that tears are often just liquid prayer. We will not be awkward with what we observe.
7. Our leaders often quietly ask: “Lord, what do You want our team to know?” (I.e., a teaching moment?)
8. We support the seeker with sensitivity. That means, we need not – must not – push to “fix” them.
  - ✓ God may be speaking privately to their heart. Our best intentions might override His sweet voice.
  - ✓ We must take care NOT to insinuate ourselves between the Lover and His loved-one.
  - ✓ We let the seeker have space to breathe spiritually. We seek to decrease so Christ may increase.
  - ✓ We graciously step back and wait patiently, listening for deeper truth and biblical confirmation.

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<sup>3</sup> See the “Why Prayer?” monograph on the MoreofHisFullness.com website, under Tool Chest/Drawer One.

<sup>4</sup> **Disclaimer:** I do not mean to infer that our approach or learnings are unknown to other churches that are Christ-centered, Spirit-led, and totally committed to the Word of God in prayer ministry. Rather, I hope that what I share will affirm what you are learning and practicing also. And I am open to your ideas and constructive criticism. Please join me on this godly journey to heal the breach in Christ’s church. You are welcome to differ with me. Email your comments and correctives to davidniquette@gmail.com. I may not respond directly, but I will value your input greatly. DN

9. Be concise. Offer a Scripture, picture, vision, sense, question as the Spirit may prompt. Then STOP.
  - ✓ Say only what God provides. Limit your well-intended efforts to “massage” the truth deeper.
  - ✓ You need not always feel you must interpret everything for the seeker. Let God do that.
  - ✓ Leave plenty of room for God to speak and allow God to speak through other prayer partners.
10. Heart healing is a journey managed by God. Celebrate progress without demanding immediate results.
11. Follow-up should not involve probing. Take care when asking a seeker, “Does that make sense?” (i.e., Did I get that right.”) Resist seeking a response from the person to gain self-validation. Let the seeker soak silently. You might ask, “Any questions?” “What was on your heart that brought you here tonight? We welcome you to share whatever you would like.”
12. The “Healing Place” type of prayer environment is not a “counseling session.” The Wonderful Counselor is present and competent to touch deep in the needy heart of the seeker.
13. Caution in sharing personal testimonies: Make sure you as a team member are not provoked by the seeker’s issue and move to do a personal “cathartic dump.” Keep the focus on God and the seeker.
13. Issues might arise that indicate the need for professional counseling, like suicidal thoughts. Refer these to the Pastor to counsel them or to recommend a professional Christian counselor he trusts.
12. Caution: We seek to advance the seeker’s own conversation with the Father. Safeguard the process:
  - a. It is a common tendency to “profile” the seeker and miss the real issues. Prejudging based on appearance, gender, ethnicity, age, and even mood may misshape our open discernment.
  - b. In dealing with a hurting person, we may become “triggered” by our own past injuries. We must not inadvertently start exploring our own past “junk,” and calling it a “prophetic word.”
  - c. It is risky to offer prophetic words about “hatchings,” “matchings,” and “dispatchings.” Predicting births, marriages, and deaths, if not tested and accurate, can bring difficulty, even danger.
  - d. Remember: It’s not about “ME.” This ministry may bring us joy, but it is not about us getting our own personal “high.” Our focus must be to represent well the grace of God to the seeker.
13. Challenge: “The Healing Place” was our laboratory to learn how to walk in the prophetic gifts together. Today, people are often frustrated because they cannot see where their gifting is valued or can be developed and used. Mature vision on the part of church leaders is essential. Consider:
  - a. All manifestations of the Spirit (gifts) are welcome, when appropriate and offered in maturity.
  - b. Gifts are tools, not toys. The gifts are never to be pursued independently, separate from the Giver.
  - c. Again, prayer-care is about Him and them, not me. We serve to connect the seeker to the heart of God, and then we step back.
  - d. Facilitators are “gatekeepers” who watch, discern, guard. They are trustworthy, mature people.
  - e. We must “check our baggage at the door” – i.e., past experiences, good or hurtful. Whether we are Evangelical or Charismatic in background, we will not insist on recapturing the best of the experiences of the past, nor will we demand to avoid the painful, dysfunctional experiences of the past. We will simply follow the Spirit into maturity and ministry in present time.
  - f. Confidentiality is essential. The Healing Place must be a safe place to encounter God in brokenness and failure. We assure our seekers that they are loved and respected, and have the right to privacy.
14. Challenge: Today, people are often frustrated because they cannot see if their gifting is valued or how they can be developed. “The Healing Place” was our laboratory to allow our people to learn how to walk in their prophetic gifts together. Mature vision on the part of church leaders is essential.

## 4. Glossary of Prayer Room Terms:

Here is what we mean by the terms we use in prayer ministry. They are in logical order:

1. **Seeker** – Anyone coming to inquire of the Lord – whether desperate, broken, confused, and angry or hungry, thirsty, or inquirers after the will of God. “You will seek Me, and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.” **Jeremiah 29:13**
2. **Conversation**: God is the ultimate communicator, and for those who open the door to Jesus, He will come in and have a continuing dinner-table conversation with them. **Revelation 3:20**. We on the prayer team serve the Lord in advancing this private, on-going conversation between the seeker and Seeker. Prophetic words can break through the pain and confusion to restart, redirect, clarify, or deepen that conversation.
3. **Prayer Partner** – One who joins the team effort to listen to the Lord together on behalf of seekers.
4. **Prayer Team** – Trained, anointed, gifted, and experienced intercessors who function in unity.
5. **Prayer Facilitator** – One selected for evident gifting and anointing to function as a servant leader to steward and safeguard the process of ministering humbly to seeking hearts.
6. **Listening Team**: Gatekeepers who are trusted to watch, discern, open and protect. Usually two or three in number, coordinated by the ministry leader, elders, or pastors. These are well-placed in listening prayer environments and during the worship services as well.
7. **Prayer Covering** – Spiritual protection for prayer partners provided by biblically identified authority. **1 Thessalonians 5:12-14**, **Hebrews 13:17**, and **1 Peter 5:1-4**. The pastor and elders are to support this ministry. The context of prayer ministry requires a submission of the team members to the authority of the godly leadership of the church. And companion to this requirement is that godly leaders train, encourage, and released every believer to achieve his or her highest potential in Christ. And let’s determine this: There will be no “authority abuse” here!
8. **Confirmation**: **1 Thessalonians 5:20-21** requires us to test or prove a prophetic word and to hold that part which can be confirmed. Confirmation must always start with the Word of God, the Bible. Further confirmation comes from other discerning believers, from the “peace” which umpires in our hearts, and a number of unique ways God will confirm if we wait on Him with a listening ear.
9. **Timing**: Our attitude should be: “Lord, if God speaks clearly, I will obey courageously.” But we must not rush the first part of this. Confirmation may be required as to timing. ☐ “Lord, is this the right time to release this word?” An anointed ministry can be as much related to timing as it is to truth. Personally, I have learned this a hard way, by getting ahead of the Lord, or by delaying past the crucial, open moment.
10. **Prayer Laboratory** – a secondary, but valuable, dividend of the prayer room, which allows us all to build from practical experience under the guidance of pastors and mature prayer leaders.
11. **Intercessor** – One who obeys Ephesians 6:18 with Spirit-led passion and focus. God calls all of us to intercede. While “intercessor” is not an “office,” intercession is a valuable ministry, open to all.
12. **Intercession – a definition**: To plead or make a request in behalf of another or others. For example, to intercede with the authorities for the prisoner; to intervene for the purpose of producing agreement; mediate. Etymology: **intercedere** (between) + **cedere** (to go). Hence, to go between.  
  
Spiritually, then, we intercede when we reach out to God on behalf of others, and we reach out to others on behalf of God to bring them into the presence, and into agreement with God. We bring together the God of grace and power to touch the hurting, needy hearts of people.
13. **Pleromic Unity**: We choose to value and integrate both the **Word of the Lord** and “**a word from the Lord**.” Our Pleromic church seeks the fullness (Grk: **pleroma**) of Christ through the fullness of

**14. Discussion topics for Facilitator Fellowship:** We found it good to interact privately with fellow team members regularly. It proved to be one of our best “small groups.” This can take place at a separate meeting time and place, or on an evening where no seekers arrive, we took advantage of the opportunity to “debrief” our experiences together, both the effective ones and the “. . . could have been better” ones. Also, training modules from these developing material were often used to keep us thinking and growing together. As the team got together to debrief, here are the kind of things we have considered together:

- ☐ Godly fear is the beginning of wisdom. This is an essential response to God in humility. We listen to the Spirit of the Lord for our own spiritual maturity, calibrating ourselves to His highest standard of grace and truth found in Jesus Christ.
- ☐ “It’s not how high you jump, but how straight you walk.” That means spirituality trumps emotionality. How are we doing?
- ☐ Ministry is a blessing. However, we must not become addicted to the blessing of ministry and lose our focus.
- ☐ Assuming we desire to become more “mature,” we must intentionally “. . . put away childish things.” **I Corinthians 13:11** What are expressions of immaturity we must avoid?
- ☐ We operate in the realm of the prophetic, yet we humbly concede that today “we see through a glass darkly.” **I Corinthians 13:12** Are we trusting fully in the Lord to make things clear?
- ☐ We are building Christ’s Kingdom, not OUR own kingdom. What does this mean to the team?
- ☐ The Holy Spirit manages the spiritual “take-aways.” All that is not from Him can be allowed to “fall on the cutting room floor.” So, we created a safe place to try, to come up short, to laugh, and to learn with humility, and try again.
- ☐ The outcomes we seek are encounters with God that are genuine, deep, transformative, and eternal. What must our attitude be if we didn’t sense these objectives were reached?
- ☐ Failure is not final. We grow in grace. We celebrate our learnings. We thank God for His incredible grace. And we humble ourselves and move forward applying the lessons we learned through “failure.” And let’s write down some more “lab notes” for the future.



## 5. Thoughts for Primary Facilitators:

**Here are some training points that pastors can build into the primary facilitators:**

James summarized the spiritual consensus of the Jerusalem elders by stating, *“For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials:”* (**Acts 15:28**) This study guide is designed to make clear a few important elements of prayer room etiquette to hold us together in unity, humility, grace and effectiveness. I hope it provokes your heart and mind usefully:

Below are a few additional thoughts and guidelines for the leaders of prayer ministry. My reason for giving these guidelines is to ensure the ministry will grow into maturity. Healthy prayer ministry is not measured merely by the number of people that come for prayer, but also by the number of people that come to learn to use their giftings properly. These ideas informed not only Tuesday night “Healing Place Prayer,” but other settings such as Life Groups, Thursday “Refresh,” and post service Prayer/Care teams.

We tried to develop proper supervision and accountability to steward prayer effectively. This was so that God’s voice could be heard clearly, and not mixed with our own voice or the voice of “the stranger.” (John 10:5, 27) <sup>5</sup> Our effort is to create a healthy, mature climate of prayer that does not get sidetracked by some of the dysfunctional cultures of prayer known formerly in both charismatic and evangelical experience.

**Note:** A valuable supplemental monograph called “Rules of Engagement” is available to you, which gives a mature overview of spiritual warfare dynamics, and how we handle such matters within the Prayer Room setting. Find it at [MoreofHisFullness.com](http://MoreofHisFullness.com). Look in the Tool Chest, Drawer 3.

Here then are some values that can guide primary facilitators in a “Healing Place” type prayer meeting.

1. **Ask Permission:** We show respect to seekers when we do so. We must not presume too much.
2. **Sensitivity:** Let them know that if they are uncomfortable with anything being said just to raise a hand or say something. We should stop the ministry and quietly reassess what is needed in that moment.
3. **Redirection:** Primary team members are permitted to call a halt to whatever is happening if they feel so led by the Spirit. Consult privately with team members to gain clarity to the Spirit’s direction.
4. **Minister as a Team:** With the exception of the pastors, all ministry will occur inside the room, not in the hallway, so that it can be properly tested and affirmed by the other team members.
5. **Accountability:** ALL team members including team leaders must understand and be willing to be accountable if asked to “hold” their prompting, or not to share it at this time. Just write it down.
6. **Recording:** Only if the seeker requests, or insists. Never record without permission. (See below)
7. **Avoid Manipulation:** Do not put the seeker on the spot by asking, *“Do you receive this?”* Just offer and release your prompting. Trust the Holy Spirit to confirm the word in them in His own time.
8. **A Safe Place:** If a team member gets something like a rebuke, a correction, or disclosure of a sensitive matter, they should wait. Check with leadership for permission, timing, and setting for this word.
9. **Trainees:** As newer prayer partners come to learn how to walk in their gifting, leaders should direct them to refrain from sharing directly with the seeker while they are being shepherded in the use of their gifts. Encourage them to write down their impressions. Leaders will confirm their prompting and give permission to release it to the seeker. We take this confirmation seriously.

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<sup>5</sup> Spiritual warfare in the prayer room setting must be understood by facilitators. See the article “Rules of Engagement: Prayer as Warfare” for a full treatment. Go to [MoreofHisFullness.com](http://MoreofHisFullness.com) and look in Tool Box/Drawer Three.

## 6. Technical Learnings:

### Mid-course corrections we chose to strengthen the next prayer season:

At the close of a season of “Healing Place” prayer ministry, our team met to evaluate what went well, what proved difficult, and what we might suggest as improvements in the “Prayer Laboratory” in the following season of ministry. This verse sums up what we are attempting to do: *The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him who is weary. Morning by morning he awakens; he awakens my ear to hear as those who are taught.*” **Isaiah 50:4**.

Here are some of changes we chose to make to see if we could become more effective:

- ❑ **Managing Expectations:** We would offer a short handout that would help new people understand what we do and what to expect. This would be on the sign-up table. Seekers would continue to sign in for prayer as we have been doing, and now pick up one of these new handouts. Technically, this was not a form of release. Confidentiality was a “must” in this ministry. If they preferred, seekers were welcomed to give only their first name, without contact information.
- ❑ **Informal Seating:** We will now prefer to have seekers sit where they choose, where they are most comfortable, rather than designate a “hot seat” in the center of the room. Chairs would be set up in a large circle with the couches and people wanting prayer remaining where they have chosen to sit. Additional chairs were to be set up outside the circle for those coming to listen and learn, and for overflow. By the way, the meets generally involved no more than 10-15 people.
- ❑ **Discontinue Recording:** We will discontinue recording the session for the seeker. For those who wish to learn from our experience, here are the reasons. (1) Recording is an unnecessary layer of technical distraction, (2) the seeker may feel awkward or inhibited in making any of their heart disclosures, (3) many people are “mic-shy,” and some others might tend to play up to the mic in a way that is not natural, and (4) if mistakes are made in offering prophetic insight, these matters will not be preserved to distract or distort what God has really been disclosing to the seeker.
- ❑ **Familiarity Issues:** In the case of ministering to a person that is known to a team member, such as a family member, we asked that caution be exercised not to act on prior information regarding their life situation about which they are aware. It is preferable that they hold back and offer a different service to the seeker. They can be in the position of confirmation when the Lord reveals by His Spirit through other prayer partners. If you have something for them, write it down for addition to the seeker’s experience after the session.
- ❑ **Discontinue the Name Book:** In this new season, we agreed to eliminate the use of a book that defined the meaning of the seeker’s name. Using this tool was improperly based on an assumption that every person’s name was prophetically given to them by their parents within the will of God. It also tends to take time and focus away from the immediacy of divine promptings.
- ❑ **Vet Carefully Outside “Volunteers.”** We must exclude from vocal participation other Christians from the community who are not yet trained by our leadership. Since ministry in the prophetic is fulfilling, there are many wandering “prophets” who want to recapture the exhilaration they experienced in a previous prayer ministry – usually Charismatics. That is not the purpose of our ministry. It is not about us. It is about God and the seeker. As our facilitators stepped in to ask these folks to refrain from vocal participation, we usually lost them. They didn’t come back. That was a blessing. We must safeguard the prayer event from outside intruders – well-meaning as they may be. This was a hard lesson to learn. But this is of utmost importance to maintain integrity and build trust.

- ❑ **Avoid the Practice of “Cold Reading:”** We learned from experience with outside participants that there is a deceptive, counterfeit “prophetic word” that come from what is called “cold reading.” If you search this on the web, you will find instructions for performers on stage who pretend to know things about a random audience member, but are drawing from observable clues such as a wedding ring, a suntan, the answer to a vague question, etc., so that a statement can be made that evokes even more clues to be included in the charade of knowing by intuition. It’s a party game. But it also can be demonic. There is no substitute for the clear promptings of the Holy Spirit of truth. Caution here.
- ❑ **Never force a “Word from the Lord.”** We have learned not to allow ourselves to be put on the spot to come up with something for the seeker. There are times when no impressions are coming to our humble, listening hearts. That is okay. Put another way, God is saying something in this situation: He is saying -- nothing! Silence at times in Scripture was God’s response to people who were not ready to hear. God speaks in His time, for His purposes. He may wait until the seeker is intent on hearing and obeying God’s answer to their compelling question. We must wait, too, and encourage them to wait on the Lord with an open heart. But we must resist the awkwardness of a pressure to “perform.”

### Addendum:

In my previous pastoral ministry, we offered a range of contexts for listening prayer. Each was unique yet integrated. While the etiquette above is fashioned for “The Healing Place” type of prayer room environment, these principles applied broadly to other contexts of listening prayer as well.

For example, we carefully selected, trained, and monitored the post-service Prayer-Care Team.<sup>6</sup> Below is a chart of our other opportunities for exercising Spiritual gifts in prayer ministries:



<sup>6</sup> For our training material, check MoreofHisFullness.com, and look in Tool Chest/Drawer 3 – “Prayer Center Training.” Specifically, “Prayer-Care Team – Instructions.”