

Why & How to Use *Word-Share-Prayer Practice* ***"Be the people of God before doing the work of the people of God."***

Word-Share-Prayer (Read-Reflect-Respond-Request) is for use with small groups, committees, ministry teams, and boards. The texts are deliberately a bit short so that groups, Ministry teams, and committees with limited time can still ***"be the people of God before doing the work of the people of God."*** For small group meetings, a longer section of text may be used or just more time spent discussing each segment.

For many briefer ministry team/committee meetings, we follow a 7-7-7 format - 7 minutes for individual Bible Study, 7 minutes to share one insight per person and 7 minutes to pray for one another. If we use these sheets for a regular one, one and one-half hour Bible study, then the biblical passage could be a bit longer and our schedule would be the ***Word***-30 minutes, ***Share (sharing)*** of lives (blessings and prayer requests)-45 minutes and ***Prayer***-15 minutes might be a breakdown.

For a ministry team/committee allow a minimum of 7-7-7 minutes (plus or minus) format.

1. Give every person 5-7 minutes to read and meditate on passage, then questions in *silence* (we don't have people do them as "homework" since many will fail to do so).
2. Spend another at least 7 minutes or so asking people to briefly share one scriptural insight. If the group is larger than 8-10, break into groups of 3, *max* 4, to ensure *each* person can speak/contribute, be listened to, prayed for. Saves time. Many will never speak, especially a personal request, in a large group.
3. Ask for one-sentence *personal* prayer requests. Ensure each person is heard. Spend more time on this if someone in the group is in real distress about something. Otherwise, just a sentence or so per person as we want to lift one another up specifically but haven't the time for more sharing... unless we are willing and time allows. After doing this a few times, most teams experience and understand it's transformative power. They are often willing to spend more time in this Bible study & prayer portion of the meeting simply because we discover work to be more focused on core priorities, more efficient and more in keeping with the mind of Christ (Phil 2, Rom. 12:1,2) more Christ-like in the rest of the meeting, with genuine community.

Pray for one another out loud by name, giving everyone the complete freedom to pray in silence if they prefer.

Hope this is useful for you... praying for you and your congregation to experience the transforming presence of our Lord in new ways as so many of us have.

With joy – Stan

Link to free copies of sample Word-Share-Prayer resources for your session, committee, group, team on a variety of scriptures

<http://www.vitalchurchesinstitute.com/pages/word-share-prayer>

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