

## **"Points of Light", a ministry of prayer**

*"The fervent effectual prayer of a righteous person does much". - James 5:16*

Points of Light is all about prayer. Each week at a set time, you gather at home for about 40 minutes to pray with others you've invited to join with you. Other groups gather likewise in their respective homes at the hour convenient to them. Prayer is very focused as you follow a one page Prayer Guide that has been prepared and distributed beforehand to all PoLs around the city or community. It is all about faithful consistency.

No food is prepared, no Bible study other than the brief devotional thought included in the Guide, and no chasing rabbits or gossiping. The idea is to watch and pray together, using the entire time without distractions. This allows everyone to easily sustain the weekly PoL prayer ministry indefinitely.

The Prayer Guides should be prepared by the pastor or a key leader who is very aware of the many needs in the local body of Christ. Always include prayers for immediate upcoming messages and events, and take time to read passages related to those messages or events. These passages and sermon teasers will serve as the basis for the devotion.

Everyone should be taught and encouraged to participate through prayer. Be creative. If enough are present, break off into smaller groups that will be responsible for portions of the Guide requests. Learn and practice what prayer has to do with such things as praise, confession, worship, intercession, healing, fasting, and learning. Occasionally, the devotion moment will relate some Bible truth or example concerning prayer that the participants are encouraged to apply to their own devotional lives.

Make color maps, and display them strategically around the worship center. Include the names, hours, and contact info for all of the Points of Light volunteers. Be sure to get the Prayer Guide into the hands of the PoL leaders before they are scheduled to meet. Keep everything accurate and up-to-date.

Points of Light is not about how many attend a given gathering. Some PoLs may never have many in attendance besides the host family. This is fine, because you are faithfully gathering to pray, not to conduct attendance contests. Of course, always be alert to invite others to pray with your PoL, but guard carefully against apathy and discouragement if others haven't yet joined with you.

Over the course of time, PoL participants should be given opportunity to report to the congregation what God is doing and teaching through the Points of Light ministry. Testimonies may be shared during worship and celebration hours or as part of mid-week gatherings. PoLs should be promoted at every opportunity as additional hosts and volunteers are sought and trained.

Imagine the impact of dozens of PoLs scattered all around the city or community praying fervently and regularly for specific needs at appointed times while worshiping and praising God! If we are unwilling to prioritize prayer and seek to imitate those great men and women of the New Testament church in regards to faith and obedience, then what can we really expect of the rest of our efforts and pursuits? Our personal relationship and communication with the Father determines our effectiveness in evangelism and genuine discipleship.