

No More Prayer Blahs

I am an avid baseball fan, and my favorite team is the Boston Red Sox. Last season I was in pain where baseball was concerned. Why? Because uncharacteristically, the Red Sox were one of the worst teams in the America league. They had awful pitching, and their hitters, who normally are among the best in baseball, had season-long slumps.

They likely struggled due to the way the Coronavirus changed the routine of the game. Because they had to social distance, there was a huge lack of comradery on the team. The seasoned players who normally could rally the team to do better, could not interact with the team as a whole to fire them up. The Red Sox were really the poster child for an underachieving team that just had the blahs and could not shake out of them.

I wonder, though, how many of us prayer leaders are experiencing something similar to that right now? We want to see prayer grow in our church. We want to see people fired up and disciplined in prayer. But everything is stacked against us. Our church is either still not meeting at all yet, or when we meet, we cannot interact the same with people. Perhaps even times of personal prayer in services are not allowed. Small groups aren't meeting in the same way they did before. Whatever it is, we feel held back from doing anything because of the circumstances of the virus.

Prayer leader, it is time to shake off those blahs and do something!

If you are giving in to the inactivity that Covid has brought about, you are missing a prime opportunity to move your people forward in prayer.

Why do I say that?

Because now, more than any recent time period, a majority of

your people are trying to pray. People pray the most when they are desperate. And with Covid, the political situation, riots in the streets of America, racial issues, people are out of sorts, confused, and seeking answers. They are desperate!

With encouragement and practical help, they will pray!

Start Offering Help

As a prayer leader, why not begin seeking God for creative ways to fuel your people's prayers. Find ways to encourage them. Find ways to supply prayers and prayer tips, prayer guides to them. Perhaps hold small prayer groups or prayer studies online (Zoom is a great way to do this). Develop and tweak prayer chains to make them more effective and active. Or send daily emails with prayer points and Scriptures to pray.

Get people praying for their community. Their neighbors. The nation. For truth to be revealed in all the political and health-related confusion. Do an all-church prayer initiative.

The point is, use the opportunity of desperate hearts to engage them in prayer. Don't sit back and wait for all this to be over before you lead in prayer again in your church.

Some Recommend Resources:

Prayer Initiatives:

Praying God's Word Over Your City

Prayer the Word for Your Church

Desperate for Change: 40 Days of Prayer for America.

Love to Pray

Make Us One: A 31-Day Prayer Journey Toward Racial Healing

Prayer Guides:

Targeted Prayers for Your Church

Praying for First Responders

Studies:

Prayer Connect Issues 1-19 and 26-36 have within them a Bible Study that goes along with the theme articles. If you are a subscriber to *Prayer Connect* (or a CPLN member) you can access the PDF of a given issue online at prayerleader.com/magazine. During this time of crisis, we give you permission to download and email the PDF of the issue to those in your study. If you are not a subscriber, subscribe today and have instant access to all back issues. Or you can go to prayershop.org, click on PRAYER CONNECT and Small Groups, and purchase copies of any issue to put in the hands of your people.

Power Praying—an intense 8-week study on the Lord's Prayer

Pray Like the King—an 8-week study that looks at the prayers of Israel's kings.

Prayer and the Word of God and *Knowing the God You Pray To* are two 6-week studies that teach powerful prayer principles.

The Devil Goes to Church—a 6-week study on spiritual warfare and how Satan attacks a church.

My own home church in Brazil, Indiana, launched a nightly prayer meeting on Zoom last October, prior to the election to pray for our nation. We assumed it would stop after the election, but with all the mess after the election, it kept going. Now, 5 months later, 10-15 people still meet via Zoom each night for prayer!

Take advantage of this new interest in prayer among your people!

—Jonathan Graf is the president of the Church Prayer Leaders Network.