



*Prayer
Laboratory Guide
& Experiments*

Camps Farthest Out

GLENN CLARK...

CFO's founder offered **Prayer Laboratories** in the early camps. The Dictionary defines a laboratory as... a place For scientific experimentation or research, A place where theories, techniques, and Methods are tested, analyzed, demonstrated.



With that in mind, we propose this definition of a CFO Prayer Laboratory...

A time and place to gather as believers to experience the presence of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit and to experiment with a variety of forms of prayer



- In a Prayer Laboratory **YOU** are an active ingredient.
- If you **participate** you will experience the results.
(If you do not, you might not)
- A Prayer Laboratory is a place of **action** and **discovery**.

The Prayer Laboratory is meant to expand One's present prayer relationship with God, not To be a substitute for it.



WORKING WITH GOD IN THE PRAYER LABORATORY

SEEK DIVINE GUIDANCE

To many people, *praying* implies "talking to God." This is a good half answer. Talking does not give us the divine guidance that comes through *listening* to God.



The airwaves where you gather are as full of divine messages as they are of television and radio waves. But like those electronic waves, without a receiver no message is communicated. We must be *turned on* and *tuned in* to God. We want to *receive* God's messages to us as well as send our messages to God.



CFO Laboratories offer the opportunity to *practice* tuning in and listening to God in creative ways. We want our *bodies/minds/spirits* to be tuned-in to God.

Our part in guidance is to be...

- in a receptive posture, open to God.
- willing to surrender our will to God's will.
- believing that God will give guidance.
- listening to God rather than telling God our wants.



*"Call to Me, and I will answer you,
and show you great and mighty things,
which you do not know."*

Jer. 33.3

LABORATORY SKILLS FOR GROUPS

GOING DEEPER AS A GROUP

A good way to begin is by helping group members get to know each other and feel comfortable together. Arrange chairs close so members can hear each other. The leader should always be on time and welcome people as they arrive.



BECOMING RELAXED IN BODY

To be a tuned-in receiver, it is important to be relaxed in body, mind and soul. Relaxation exercises can help relieve physical tension and have a unifying effect on the group.



BECOMING RELAXED IN MIND

A group will go deeper if members are mentally relaxed. This may mean answering any questions members may have and giving the group an overview of what to expect on a given day such as explaining the use of silence and reminding them of what a laboratory is, etc.



*"This is the true richness of a prayer laboratory:
that is, a place where I can release my inhibitions
and let the Spirit flow and be loved enough that
I can make a mistake and know that
He will redeem my mess."*

Stan Carter

EXPERIMENTS



GETTING ACQUAINTED

Some questions that can be used.

- What is your favorite name for God?
- What is your favorite hymn or inspirational song?
- When did you first become aware of God?
- Talk about your childhood idea of God.

(Questions of this nature seem to bring people closer together. Questions about family, career, or accomplishments sometimes may cause people to feel separate).

RELAXING THE BODY

- **Deep Breathing.** Taking deep breaths with the diaphragm muscle can focus our attention, cleanse our system, relieve tension, and rejuvenate our spirit.
- **Relax.** Focusing on one part of the body (arms, legs, neck, etc.) at a time helps us to be conscious of where we carry our tension and teaches us that we can consciously let it go.
- **Stretching.** Invite members to stretch their muscles. A song may help lessen self consciousness (Deep & Wide, Hokey Pokey, etc.)



RELAXING THE MIND

- **Visualize** being in the most peaceful place you can imagine. Notice the colors, smells, and other things in the environment. Dwell there and let a feeling of peace envelop you.
- Recall the story of Jesus calming the storm. Ask Jesus to calm any storms in your mind and observe what Jesus does. As Jesus brings calmness into the scene, receive His peace.
- If your mind is busy with thoughts, imagine that your thoughts are birds flying through the open windows of your "temple." Don't resist them or entertain them. Let them go.

FINE TUNING OUR 'GUIDANCE SYSTEMS' IN THE PRAYER LABORATORY

ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS:

- Does this idea conform to the principles of Scripture?
- Is the idea in accord with our common sense, our soul's sincere desire?
- Does the idea strike us strongly as an inward impression of the Holy Spirit on our minds?
- Does it appear to be a reasonable challenge to our faith?
- Does the idea fit in with surrounding circumstances as they change and develop?



When these five harmonize, you may feel assured that you may accept the idea as guidance and step out on it in faith. But keep examining the idea in light of changing circumstances and in renewed prayer and silence.

When someone suggests an idea which came in guidance, discuss it in light of the 5 tests given above and then in silence see if all members feel in harmony with the idea and are willing to do their part in carrying it out.

"Where else can we learn to apply the principles we are learning but in a "hands on" setting? Where else can we develop the gifts of knowledge, wisdom, discernment, prophecy, healing, etc., if we don't develop them by application – bringing the conceptual into the experiential?"

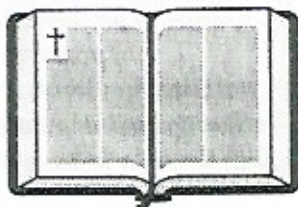
Stan Carter, 1998



LISTENING FOR GUIDANCE

GOD SPEAKS IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS

Invite members to recall ways God spoke to people in the Bible. Share them. Move into a time of silence, listening and looking for how God may speak to you. After 2-3 minutes let those who wish, share what came to them in the silence. Marvel at the many ways God communicates. (You may want to provide pencil & paper so things can be jotted down).



SYMBOLS, METAPHOR, AND PARABLES

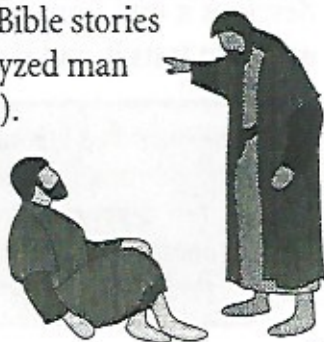
While listening in the silence, pay attention to the images that come into your mind. One may come as an impression. Study it. Another may unfold like a motion picture. Follow what you see. Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you its meaning. Risk sharing what has come to you whether or not you understand it. It may be for someone else.

INTERCEDING FOR ANOTHER

Listen in silence for whom to pray. When a name comes, ask God how you might bring that person into His presence for a healing touch or blessing. Listen. Pay attention to Bible stories that the Holy Spirit brings to mind. (paralyzed man on the mat, blind man along the road, etc.).

Bring that person to Jesus in the way that comes to you. Share what you saw/sensed with the group when the time is up.

Notice the variety of ways people are inspired to pray.



GOING FARTHER OUT IN PRAYER

It helps to take time to debrief after periods of silence. Some will say "nothing happened." If encouraged to share even the "nothing," we will often discover that others will notice things in our experience that we did not. As a group we see more clearly what God is trying to reveal.

"There is nothing more thrilling than for a group to come together in a laboratory of the Spirit and there discover for themselves that a dream, if properly dreamed, nearly always comes through and a prayer when prayed in accordance with the laws laid down by Jesus, is remarkably fulfilled."

Glenn Clark, "A Man's Reach"

When one has become aware of an inspired idea or solution,

TEST IT.

Just as a scientist receives an idea, develops it into a precise theory and then tests it, and if valid uses it, so must we with guidance.



Remember: In a laboratory experiment, every ingredient is important. Encourage everyone to share what happened during your experiment together. Listen respectfully to one another without judgment. Marvel at what God is doing through this unique combination of individuals.

EXPERIMENTS



ENGAGING THE IMAGINATION

Focus on someone in the group who needs prayer. In silence, ask Jesus what gift he would like to give him/her. Be still. Look and listen within. When the silence is complete, present the gift to the person, speaking the words you believe Jesus would use and expressing any gestures you experienced Jesus doing.

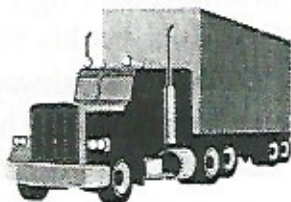


LISTENING FOR A NEW DEFINITION

The leader chooses a word upon which the group will meditate for 3-5 minutes (such as Love, Peace, Reconciliation/ Harmony, etc.). In the silence, listen for a fresh definition. Ask yourself, *What does it feel like? smell like? or look like? or How might it be expressed?* When time is called, let members share what came to them.

WHEN FACED WITH A CHALLENGE

Ask the Lord to bring an image of what a challenging situation looks like. (We often make analogies e.g. I'm down in the dumps, out on a limb, I feel like I've been hit by a truck, etc.). When an image comes, invite Jesus into the scene. Spend time in silence observing Jesus and being amazed at his redemptive work. Rest in what has taken place. Offer prayers of thanksgiving and praise. Let those who are willing, share their experience.



A LABORATORY LOOK AT YOUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

WE ARE EACH ON A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Invite members to call out as many modes of transportation as they can think of.

(Example: car, bus, truck, airplane, cruise ship.)

Stimulate creativity by suggesting ways such as a trapeze, roller coaster, flying saucer, hot air balloon, rickshaw, etc. After 12-15 have been mentioned, have folks close their eyes and reflect on their personal spiritual life and choose a mode of transportation that matches the way they are currently experiencing that journey. After a period of silence, ask if anyone needs more time. When all are ready, invite each person to share for a minute or two.



WALKING IN SOMEONE ELSE'S SHOES

Have everyone turn their chairs so the backs of the chairs are toward the center of a circle. With everyone now facing outward, ask them to remove their right shoe and pass it to the person on the right. Have them do this 3 or 4 times, stopping when the shoes have traveled about halfway around the circle. Invite members to meditate on the shoe they are holding and ask God how to pray for the person who has walked in that shoe. Be in prayer for several minutes. Listen. Let one person at a time then rise and find the owner of the shoe he/she is holding. While gently putting the shoe on the owner's foot, say a brief prayer of blessing. Continue around the circle until everyone has had his/her shoe replaced and has been blessed.

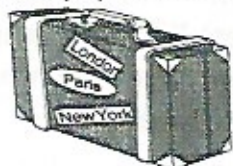


EXPERIMENTS

YOU'RE TAKING A TRIP WHAT WILL YOU PACK?

Provide pencil and paper for each person.

Imagine you have arrived at a way-station on your spiritual journey. Picture a lovely, relaxing place where you can become spiritually refreshed. See yourself resting there with Jesus. Let His peace fill you. (pause) When the time comes to continue the journey, everyone ponders these questions. 1) What do I need to pack for the rest of my journey? (Allow time for people to ponder and write down their answer 2) What shall I leave behind? (pause & write) 3) What do I need to acquire so I can complete my journey?

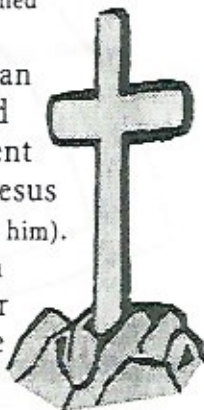


After a time of silence, check to see if anyone needs more time. Let each person share his/her answer to all three questions. It seems best if no one discusses what is shared.



TAKE A WALK ~ FIND A ROCK

Become still and think about the things you have been worrying about. (If you have no worries, think of concerns.) Which of your worries is your biggest worry? After all have chosen something, send the group outside for a walk with the instruction to find a rock to represent their worry. (The time you allow may be determined by how far people have to go to find a special rock.) While all are out of the room or area, set up an altar. This can be a table, a log, a box or bench. Perhaps you could place a cross or large rock in the center to represent Jesus. When all have returned, remind them that Jesus wants us to give him our burdens (cast our cares upon him). Invite members (one at a time) to place their rock on the altar, explaining why they chose that particular rock. Let them know it's okay to stack them. Close the time with prayer -asking Jesus to carry our burdens and pray that we will leave them with Him.



CONTINUING THE JOURNEY

AS YOU TRAVEL THE ROAD OF LIFE

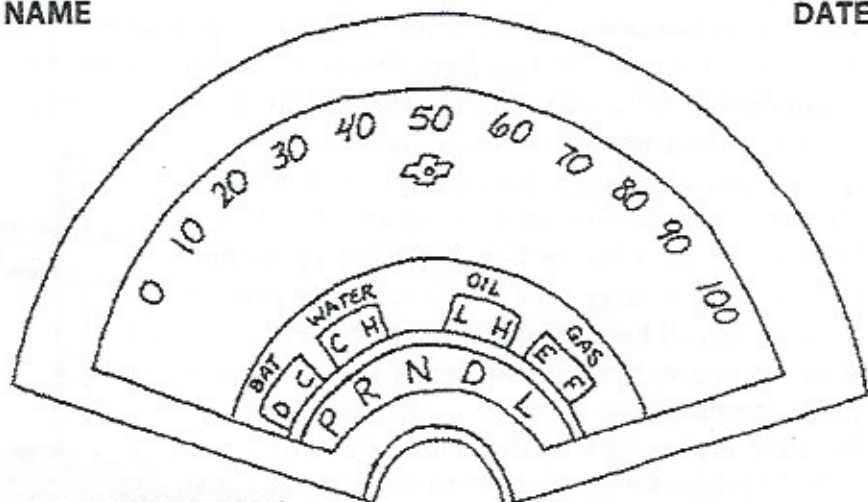
Doug Bolin, Council of Leaders Chair, led CFO Leaders in this creative exercise at the 1998 North American Annual Meeting. Doug remembered getting behind the wheel of a '55 or '56 Chevy car to drive for the very first time. He was compelled to watch all the gauges on the dashboard while being attentive to the laws and aware of the road conditions. Recalling this time inspired Doug to use the same attention and awareness as he travels on his spiritual road of life.

Make copies of the illustration on p.18 for everyone in your group and provide pencils. Invite participants to become silent and reflect on how they are currently experiencing their life. Ask these questions, pausing in between questions. What gear are you in? Are you speeding? How is the fuel supply? the battery? Are you overheating? Are there sharp curves? Notice the road conditions and anything else that is affecting your journey. (longer pauses). When you sense that the group is ready, invite them to indicate on their paper what their gauges look like by drawing arrows or circles. Suggest that they jot down something about the road conditions, also. When everyone has had enough time, invite them to share.

Master Copy found on p.18

NAME _____

DATE _____



ROAD CONDITIONS _____

EXPERIMENTS



FOR LETTING GO OF NEGATIVES



The use of dramatization can be helpful. For example, in prayer, invite members to bring to mind something they want to release (a habit, negative feeling, grudge, prejudice, etc.) Suggest they imagine God's vacuum cleaner taking it away (or a garbage disposal, hot air balloon or a flowing river) Let people share what they saw or felt or sensed afterward.

A TIME OF CONFESSION

With heads bowed and eyes closed, invite members to raise their hands if they are bothered by selfishness, pride, envy, fear, resentments, etc. Ask God to cleanse them with a shower of forgiveness. Allow silence for members to experience the cleansing. (This is an informal and impersonal means of active confession).

LIFTING A LOVED ONE TO GOD

In your minds eye, see the person of concern. With extended hands, imagine holding the person. Raising your hands, pray for God's love and forgiveness to bless and heal. Hold them in the light of God's love for several minutes.

THE HEALING POOL

With eyes closed, imagine a lovely healing pool in the center of the circle. See Jesus there. Invite members to call out the names of loved ones and to see them going to Jesus in the healing pool. Allow silence so there is time to observe how Jesus ministers to those sent to him. Offer prayers of thanks. Share.

EXPERIMENTS



ONE OF GLENN CLARK'S LETTING GO EXERCISES

(From "Under the Shelter of His Wings") With scissors, cut out 12 paper eggs. Write the name of a person or problem you want to pray for on each egg. Open your family Bible to Psalm 91 or Luke 13 and lay the entire setting of "prayer eggs" between pages. Place the Bible back upon the shelf and leave it there for twenty-one days (the number of days it takes for a hen to hatch her chicks). Put as much trust in God as you do in a hen. Check them on the 21st day.



*"He shall cover you with His feathers,
And under His wings you shall take refuge."*

Ps. 91.4

TO RELEASE HANDICAPS AND BLOCKS IN ONE'S LIFE

Become aware of any fears, jealousies, sins, mistakes, or anything that may be blocking the flow of God's love. Imagine tying them together as a bundle of sticks and placing them on the altar to be burned. When the negative things have been reduced to ashes, let your soul's sincere desires be raised up with the smoke. The very incense rising from our sins and failures will now carry these prayers to the throne of heaven. Invite God to fill the space with His desires and love. (You may want to use actual sticks & fire)



EXPERIMENTS



PRAYING A BIBLE STORY

After hearing a Biblical account read aloud from one of the Gospels, enter into the story. Become one of the characters. Imagine being there (feel the sand, smell the smells, hear the sounds, notice the other people in the story). Move through the story, experiencing and noticing as many details as you can. Especially notice Jesus. What feelings do you have? Does Jesus speak to you? Are there any surprises? After a period of silence, let members share who they became and what they experienced and learned.



PRAYER ACROSTICS ARE FUN!

Give each person a 3x5 card. Choose a word (Love, Peace, Grace, Jesus, etc.) and ask your group to meditate on it, jotting down words that begin with the letters in the word.

P	R	A	Y	E	R
r	e	d	e	t	e
a	c	o	a	e	d
i	o	r	r	r	e
s	n	a	n	n	m
e	c	t	i	a	p
	i	i	n	l	t
	l	o	g		i
	e	n			v
					e

Invite members to share.

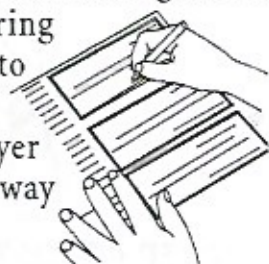
EXPERIMENTS



WHATSOEVER CHECKS ON THE BANK OF GOD

(From Glenn Clark's *I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes*) Remembering that every promise of God is backed by the golden reserves of the Great Bank of Heaven, create blank checks to give to prayer group members. At the top, put Mark 11:24, "*Whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.*" Leave a blank line after the words, Pay to the order of _____.

(Members will write their own names there) Create another blank for them to write their requests. At the bottom, for the signature, write **In the Name of Jesus Christ**. After sharing some of God's promises, invite members to fill in their check(s) with the date, their name and their request. Go to God in prayer and ask God to redeem them, in His own way and in His own time.



PRAISING GOD FROM A TO Z

Praise and adoration is offered to God for WHO God is and for WHAT God is to us. Invite members to speak words of praise that begin with the letters of the alphabet. The leader begins by saying (for example) O God, you are Almighty! and waits for 3 or 4 responses by others (such as, Lord, You are Awesome or You are my Abba) The leader moves to "B" words, etc. You need not use all the letters in one day.

GIVING THANKS

In silence, think of what God has given you and make a list of the things for which you are thankful. (Some people are more apt to participate if they've made a list) After the silence, begin to offer thanksgiving to God for those things. Then meditate on something for which you are NOT thankful. Ask God how you might use this thing (situation/affliction, etc.) for the Glory of God. Listen. When time is called, share what God has revealed to you.

EXPERIMENTS



EXPERIENCING GOD'S HANDS



Your hands are God's hands. Close your eyes and gently place your hands on your cheeks. Imagine that these are Jesus' hands. Experience His love for you. Slowly turn your hands until your lips touch the backs of His hands. Love Him with all your love. Let those who are willing, share their experience.

BECOMING AN INSTRUMENT FOR JESUS

- Ask each person to imagine or choose a musical instrument he/she would like to play or be. Guide them into silence to hear the sound of that instrument. Ask the group to breathe out the sound of their instruments (all together).
- Guide the group back into silence – listen for the sounds of that instrument if it were being "played for the Lord". Breathe out that sound.
- Move back into the silence – let go of all previous sounds, thoughts and feelings. Listen for and choose to become the instrument. Ask the Lord to play through you as you let that sound come forth.

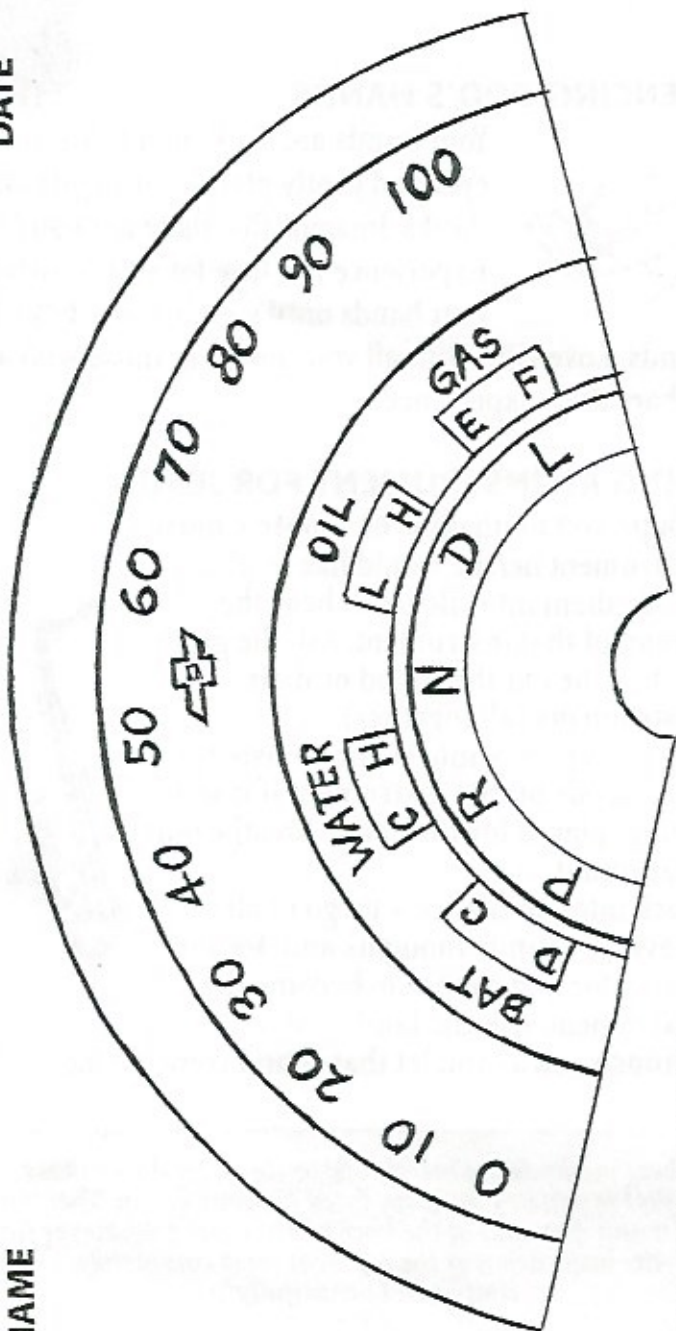


"These methods are merely suggestions. Jot down those that appeal to you or that seem fitted for your group. Then forget the list and draw out of the back of your mind whatever fits the inspiration of the moment most completely, simply and beautifully".

Glenn Clark, Two or Three Gathered Together

ILLUSTRATION FOR EXPERIMENT, p.12

DATE



NAME

ROAD CONDITIONS

The ideas in this booklet have come through many sources. Many were reworded or combined to fit into this format. It is in no means, complete... Please use the blank pages to add your *prayer experiments*.

Contributors

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"Prayer is governed by the same laws that control the flow of a stream, the art of a game, the life of a bee. A man who learns and practices these laws correctly should be able to do business better, love better, serve better; for to learn how to pray is to learn how to live."

GLENN CLARK



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