

WORD-SHARE-PRAYER
For personal and small group study

Name _____
Date _____

READ: Matthew 7:24-27 (Obedience)

24] "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. 25] The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. 26] And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27] The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell--and great was its fall!" -NRSV-

REFLECT: Enjoy this wonderful passage. Ask God for new insights. What do you learn about the Christian life and ministry?

As you carefully read this famous passage, what is the key difference you observe between the wise man and the foolish man?

List some of the situations today in which groups of people "hear" the words of Jesus.

Do you think the difference between the wise and foolish today is any different than when Jesus first spoke these words?

RESPOND: How will you apply this text to your life and ministry?

What can you and your ministry team do to ensure that you are hearers *and* doers of the Word and not merely those who discuss and do not do?

REQUEST: Jot down prayer requests that you and others may have.

Word-Share-Prayer for Ministry Teams

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 committees and teams 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 team and 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 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.

For a ministry team/committee allow 7-7-7 minutes (plus or minus) format. If the group is larger than 12 to 14, you may find it easier to break into groups of four, at least for the sharing of prayer requests and praying for one another.

1. Give every person 5-7 minutes to work on it in silence (we don't have people do them as "homework" since many will fail to do so).
2. Spend another 7 minutes or so asking people to briefly share one insight. If the group is larger than 14, break into groups of 4 to save time.
3. Ask for one-sentence prayer requests. 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 but haven't the time for more sharing... unless we are willing. Teams are often willing to spend more time in this Bible study portion of the meeting simply because we will work to be more efficient in the rest of the meeting.

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.

With joy – Stan