

How to Overcome Self-Consciousness in Prayer

Many of us were not raised in homes or churches where extemporaneous prayer was a way of life. That can make it especially difficult for us to feel comfortable praying with others—which means we miss out on one of the greatest blessings to be found among God’s people. There is no joy to equal that of hearing someone speak to God on our behalf. If we allow self-consciousness to keep us from praying aloud with and for friends and family, they miss the blessing of hearing us pray on their behalf.

So how can we overcome self-consciousness?

1. We pray about it! We ask God to help us get beyond it, with the faith that not only will He provide the courage and opportunity to learn, but we’ll only have to go through the learning curve once. It’s like riding a bicycle; we’ll always have the hang of it, once we learn.
2. Praying aloud when we are alone with God, even if only in a soft whisper, can be a big help. Praying audibly helps us to grow accustomed to the sound of our voice in prayer.
3. Asking God to help us find a prayer partner can be a great help as well, someone in our circle of friends who might pray with us periodically. We should ask God to bring the right person, and be open with him or her about our lack of experience. It may be someone who would love to learn with us, or someone who will really respond to helping us become more comfortable. The only way we’ll really learn is to do it, and the secret to that is finding someone we can be comfortable with—it may be with people we don’t even know when given the opportunity to pray at church.
4. Bottom line—it will help us all to remember our prayers are for God to hear. He’s the One who knows what’s on our hearts.