

PRAYER

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*“Come now, and let us
reason together,” says the Lord.
“Though your sins are like scarlet,
they shall be as white as snow;
though they are red like crimson,
they shall be as wool.”
Isaiah 1:18*

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WHY PRAY?

WHY PRAY?

Prayer is simply talking to God. It is simple, yet most of us struggle fiercely to keep with it. The goal of this booklet is to help us grow into people who not only pray but also enjoy praying.

Why does God want us to pray?

1. To connect with His heart and build a relationship with Him. He knows that if we engage with Him in the honest dialogue of prayer then our relationship with Him will grow strong over time.

God is a Father. He is relational and He's really into family. He wants us to be real, transparent, open and honest with Him so He can prove His love and commitment to us. He's overjoyed with us. We are what He's into. He cares intensely about each and every one of us. This puts prayer in a whole different light.

— Ron Tucker

2. To release His power and wisdom to and through us. God has ideas about relationships, business, justice, parenting, etc. He has it all and wants to share it all.

Prayer is the key that unlocks all the storehouses of God's infinite grace and power. All that God is, and all that God has, is at the disposal of prayer.

— R.A. Torrey

WHY PRAY?

3. To fuel the Great Commission of telling others about Jesus and making disciples.

Over time we love who and what we pray for. We end up being a better witness to our neighbors and co-workers as we pray for them. We gain God's heart and perspective for their lives.

4. To impact the spiritual realm that prepares the way for God's purposes. More is happening than meets the natural eye because of prayer.

↻ Creating a Lifestyle of Prayer

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where He prayed. Mark 1:35

Prayer is most effective when it isn't something we do every now and then, but when it's a lifestyle we cultivate. To understand how to have a lifestyle of prayer, we can look at the example Jesus gave during His life on earth.

↻ Have a Certain Time

Jesus got up early in the morning to spend time with His Heavenly Father. Make an appointment with God — whether it's first thing in the morning, at lunch, or in the evening — and set your heart to faithfully keep it. If you get off track, simply recommit to start again.

↻ Have a Certain Place

Jesus had a specific place He went to pray. Having a designated place to pray helps us remove distractions and frees us to worship and pray out loud.

WHY PRAY?

↻ Have a Certain Plan

When Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, He gave them a prayer outline. We call it “The Lord’s Prayer.” This outline, along with several other tools, is available in this booklet. As we pray every day, our plans for our prayer time can vary, maybe including worship music, Bible reading and quiet time to listen to God. It doesn’t have to look the same; it just helps when we have a plan for connecting regularly with God.

THE BIBLICAL MODEL OF PRAYER

THE BIBLICAL MODEL OF PRAYER

A Clear Focus on the Father

The prayers recorded in the New Testament teach us to directly talk to our Father in heaven as opposed to Satan. All the prayers of Jesus that are recorded in the Bible were directed to the Father (John 14:16; 17:5,11,15,25). Jesus specifically taught His disciples to direct their prayers to the Father (Matthew 18:19; Luke 11:2,13).

"In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven..." Matthew 6:9

*...that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.
Ephesians 1:17*

For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He (Father) would grant you... Ephesians 3:14-16

Positive Prayer vs. Negative Prayer

The New Testament prayers are positive prayers asking God for the impartation of positive things instead of the removal of negative things.

- ▶ Paul prayed for love to abound instead of asking for the removal of hatred (Philippians 1:9).
- ▶ He prayed for the impartation of unity instead of praying against division (Romans 15:5).
- ▶ He asked for peace to increase instead of fear to be removed (Romans 15:13).
- ▶ Even Paul's requests to be delivered from evil men are positive, focusing on the deliverance of God's people rather than on

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exposing or bringing down the evil men persecuting them (2 Thessalonians 3:2).

Positive prayers facilitate unity, impact our emotions and build our faith. The Father is the “Great Psychologist.” He designed these prayers to help our hearts flow well and work together in unity with a spirit of encouragement and faith.

– Mike Bickle

The positive focus that comes from using the New Testament prayers can also help us to operate in faith for the future of the church. The New Testament prayers provide us with good theology for a victorious church. A man once asked me, “Why do you believe the church will be victorious?” I told him to look at the prayers of Jesus and the apostles for the church. My theology on a victorious church and revival was formed partially by praying the New Testament prayers. These prayers were given by the Spirit, so we know they will be fully answered. The church will walk in great power, purity and unity.

– Mike Bickle

Prayer Focused on the Church

The vast majority of the New Testament prayers are focused on strengthening the Church in a given region. Why? Because God’s primary plan to reach the lost or to impact society is by

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strengthening His Church with power and love. When we pray for the whole Church in a city to be revived in love and power, the answer to those prayers will have an immense impact on the lost and secular society.

We do well to pray for an increase of the Spirit's power on the Church, knowing that a harvest will surely result. No power can prevent the lost from coming to Jesus in great numbers when the Church is revived and operating together in the power of the Spirit.

There are nearly 4,000 congregations in the St. Louis area, a population of nearly 3 million people. The Lord loves the whole Church—every denomination and congregation that proclaims Jesus in our city.

Three New Testament Prayer Themes

There are three general prayer themes found in the New Testament prayers:

1. The Gifts of the Spirit

Praying for the gifts of the Spirit involves praying for the release of God's power, including His favor, provision and protection.

Now, Lord...grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus. Acts 4:29-30

Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you, and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith. 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2

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2. The Fruit of the Spirit

Praying for the fruit of the Spirit refers to asking for God's character to be formed in us. We ask that the fullness of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23 (God's love, joy, peace, patience, etc.) be firmly established.

For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and long-suffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father... Colossians 1:9-10

For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Ephesians 3:15-19

...may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you, so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints. 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

May the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another...that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:5-6, 13

THE BIBLICAL MODEL OF PRAYER

3. The Wisdom of the Spirit

Praying for the wisdom of the Spirit is asking for an increase of understanding and insight into God's plans, will and Word.

...that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe. Ephesians 1:17-19

I pray that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness... Philippians 1:9-11

SALVATION

SALVATION

PRAYER

“God, I’m not just a good person who needs a little help; I recognize I’m a sinner who is helpless to change on my own. I’m guilty of sin and deserving of the punishment it causes. Have mercy on me and forgive me. I believe that Jesus died on a cross, taking the punishment of my sin and then rose back to life. Jesus, You are the only way to God and I acknowledge You alone have the power to forgive sins and give eternal life. From this day on I submit to Your leadership over my life and commit to trust You. Fill me with Your love and lead me by Your Word and Holy Spirit. Amen.”

THE LORD'S PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Jesus provided this model as an outline to teach us how to pray in a way that connects us to God and empowers us to accomplish great things through Him.

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When He finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray..." (Luke 1:11)

"Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be Your Name.

*Your Kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we
forgive our debtors.*

*And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.
For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."
Matthew 6:9-13*

Connect With God Relationally

"Our Father in Heaven..."

In the time of Jesus, the Jewish people saw God as a transcendent creator and King. They trembled before His great power. Jesus taught them that God their creator was also their Father. "In heaven" points to the Father's powerful transcendence. Jesus combined these two ideas about God—He is both powerful and personal. He associated God's fatherly love with His heavenly power, His transcendence with His tenderness and His exalted place in glory with bowing down so low to be approachable.

God desires a relationship with us. God has adopted us as His children and loves for us to call Him our Father. Starting our

THE LORD'S PRAYER

prayer time acknowledging our relationship with God is powerful for us and delights Him as well.

You have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when He adopted you as His own children. Now we call Him, "Abba, Father." Romans 8:15

PRAYER

"Father, I come to You today thankful that I am Your child. You have forgiven me and adopted me as Your own and I am so grateful to call you my Father. Thank you for loving me. I love you."

Worship His Name

"...hallowed be Your name."

Hallowed simply means sacred. We ask God to break in with power to cause more people to acknowledge the truth about Him. We pray that the Father receive the highest place in our life, heart and worship. The very thought of His name stirs awe and holy fear in all who understand who He really is. God-centered Christianity prays "hallowed be Your name," or "Help us to honor Your name."

Here is a list of some of His names to help us worship Him specifically and personally:

- ▶ God is Righteousness – He makes us clean.
- ▶ God is Sanctifier – He has called us and set us apart.
- ▶ God is Healer – He heals all our diseases.
- ▶ God is Banner of Victory – He defeated our enemies.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

- ▶ God is Shepherd — He speaks to us and leads us.
- ▶ God is Peace — He is our peace in every storm.
- ▶ God is Provider — He supplies all of our needs.

The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe. Proverbs 18:10

PRAYER

“God, I am in awe of You. Help me to see and think of You rightly. Give me a holy imagination, that my thoughts would be high and holy concerning what You are like. Your Name is a strong tower, a place of protection and safety for me. I praise You as my Healer, my Shepherd and my Banner of Victory. You are my Peace, my Provider, my Righteousness and my Sanctifier. Your Name is great, and I worship You.”

Pray His Agenda First

“Your Kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.”

Part of being a child of God is caring about what He cares about. We know His will is perfect, and we acknowledge His wisdom and sovereignty when we pray His agenda first.

“He will always give you all you need from day to day if you will make the Kingdom of God your primary concern.” Luke 12:31

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Spend time focusing on what God is focused on. His priorities include:

- ▶ Saving the lost
- ▶ Wisdom and guidance for those in authority (parental, spiritual, governmental, work-related)
- ▶ Accomplishing His purpose in our lives

PRAYER

"God, I recognize there is no better plan on earth than Yours, and I pray for Your will to be done in my life (name the areas of your life where you need more of God's presence today) and in our world. This world is lost and needs You desperately, and I pray for every person to know You as their personal Lord and Savior.

I pray for the leaders in my life (pray specifically over parents, spiritual leaders, government leaders, employers and any other leaders in your life), that You would give them supernatural wisdom and discernment as they lead. Give them a revelation of Your will and Your purpose for them. And I give my life to You again today; have Your way in my life! Help me to do anything You want to do. I ask today for wisdom and clarity as You show me my next steps."

Depend on Him for Everything

"Give us this day our daily bread."

THE LORD'S PRAYER

God promises to supply all our needs, and He wants us to come to Him with our problems, needs and desires and to trust Him to provide.

I look up to the mountains—does my help come from there? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth! Psalm 121:1-2

Ask God for what you need today. It may help to write down the concerns weighing on your mind or the desires of your heart. You can bring them to God and trust Him enough to hand them over to Him fully.

PRAYER

“Father, I acknowledge that everything I need today will come from You. You made the heavens and the earth. You are more than capable of handling any situation I’m dealing with, so I give it to You completely (specifically talk to God about what is on your mind and heart right now and give it to Him). I look to You to help me, sustain me and give me Your peace. Remind me of Your hope and power today.”

Forgive and Be Forgiven

“Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.”

God has offered us complete forgiveness, and we can receive it at any time. When we turn away from our sins and receive His forgiveness, our hearts are more prepared to forgive others as well.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Ask God to check your heart and life and show you areas where you need to ask for forgiveness. Then, it is your turn to forgive those who have offended you. Ask God to forgive you and to help you forgive others.

PRAYER

“God, thank You so much for offering me the gift of forgiveness. Show me any areas in my life that I need to bring before You in order to receive forgiveness and healing. I confess that I have been struggling with sin (talk to God about any areas of sin in your life), and I know that You want me to be clean again. Please forgive me for my sin. Thank You for showing me unfailing grace. As You have so freely forgiven me, I also want to freely forgive others. Please help me let go of all of my offenses. I release to You those who have hurt me, and I trust You to handle those situations according to Your perfect will.”

Realize There's an Enemy

“And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”

The Bible makes it very clear that we have an enemy who is trying to steal from us, kill us and destroy us. As we pray, we take our stand against the enemy and fight from a place of victory through Jesus as we're empowered by His Holy Spirit. There is power in God's Word, and every lie the enemy has told us can be replaced with God's truth. Jesus answered every temptation by quoting scripture (Matthew 4).

THE LORD'S PRAYER

*For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.
Ephesians 6:12*

By recognizing that the enemy wants to destroy you, you can shed light on his lies and claim God's truth over your life. Ask God to show you any lies you're believing or areas of attack happening in your life. Ask Him to expose the enemy and to help you understand and receive His truth. The Bible tells us in James 4:7 that if we resist the devil, he will flee from us. Through prayer and confession of His Word we can resist him and walk forward in freedom.

PRAYER

"God, I recognize that my struggles today aren't against the people or circumstances around me, but against the enemy. Please help me to see how the enemy is lying to me. Help me to recognize his lies, take them captive and make all of my thoughts obedient to the truth of Your Word (list out any specific areas God shows you where you have believed a lie that needs to be replaced with His truth). While the enemy wants to destroy me, I know that You came to give me life to the fullest. I speak the name of Jesus over my life and declare that no weapon formed against me will prosper. I don't have to fear the enemy because the One who is in me is greater than the one who is in the world."

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Express Faith in God's Ability

"For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever."

God is more than able to move in every situation. By ending our prayer time claiming His authority and power, we focus our minds on the truth and hope of who He is and what He can do.

*Ah, Sovereign LORD, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for You.
Jeremiah 32:17*

Remind yourself of God's limitless power and then return to praising Him and declaring your faith in Him:

"Yours is the kingdom" — All authority belongs to You.

"Yours is the power" — All might flows from You.

"Yours is the glory" — Your victory will be complete.

PRAYER

"Father God, nothing is too hard for You! Through Your great power, all things are possible. All authority is Yours, all might is Yours and I know that Your victory will be complete. You are amazing, and I worship You. I praise You for Your power and presence in my life. You are my God, and You are worthy of all praise."

TRUST PRAYERS

TRUST PRAYERS

Use the TRUST Prayers while focusing on God's gift of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

PRAYER

Thank You Holy Spirit. I thank You for coming to live in me. Thank You for always being with me. I can't do anything without You.

Release Revelation Holy Spirit, reveal God's heart to me. Open the eyes of my understanding as I read Your Word.

Use Me Holy Spirit, use me to help others today. Use Your gifts and power through me to communicate God's love for them.

Strengthen Me Holy Spirit, rise up in me and strengthen my mind, will and emotions. Help me to draw from Your love, joy and peace.

Teach Me Holy Spirit, teach me in every area of my life. Show me how to live in ways that please You and that keep me in Your will and blessing for my life.

FELLOWSHIP PRAYERS

FELLOWSHIP PRAYERS

Use the Fellowship Prayers to focus on spiritual growth.

PRAYER

Fear of God: Father, I ask that you release the spirit of the fear of the Lord in my heart (Jeremiah 32:40). Unite my heart to Your heart and Word and cause me to delight in the fear of God. (Psalm 86:11; Isaiah 11:3) I want to be fascinated by Your holy presence and honor You rightly in all I do and say.

Endurance: Father, strengthen my heart with all the patience and endurance I need to do Your will. Give me grace that I might not quit pursuing You (Colossians 1:9-11). Strengthen me to display godliness and walk in the endurance that comes from Christ (2 Thessalonians 3:5).

Love: Father, pour out Your love into my heart so that I would overflow with love for You and others (Romans 5:5) Impart Your love for Jesus into my heart (John 17:26). I ask for grace to love You with all my heart, soul, mind and strength today (Mark 12:30).

Light of Glory: Father, let me see the light of Your beauty and glory. Grant me Holy Spirit encounters (dreams, visions, angelic visitations) like You gave to Moses, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Paul and John (Exodus 33-34; Isaiah 6; Ezekiel 1; 2 Corinthians 12:2; Revelation 1).

FELLOWSHIP PRAYERS

One Thing: Father, I commit as David did to be a person of one thing; that my primary focus in life would be You (Psalm 27:4). Help me to sit at Your feet consistently and spend time in Your Word (Luke 10:39-42). When I lose hunger for Your Word get my attention, speak to me as You did to those in the early church (Revelation 2:4, 5; 3:1-3, 15-20).

Worthy: Father, strengthen me so I can walk in faith and obedience and live a life worthy of Jesus (1 Thessalonians 3:13; Colossians 1:10). Help me to live and walk blamelessly before You and be able to stand victorious in full obedience in every area of my life (1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Thessalonians 1:11).

Speech: Father, set a guard over my lips and help me to speak words that are grace-giving and pleasing to You (Psalm 141:3; Ephesians 4:29; Psalm 19:14). I commit to repent if I speak out any other way. Free me from defensive, angry and foolish speech (Ephesians 5:4).

Humility: Father teach me how to walk in Your ways of humility, and lowliness of mind (Matthew 11:29) Give me wisdom on how to carry my heart in humility (Philippians 2:3-5). I commit to repent quickly when I am prideful.

Insight Into Wisdom: Father, give me wisdom on how to live before You that I may walk in union with You. Give me insight into Your Word, Your will and Your ways (Ephesians 1:17). Teach me how to follow Your leadership. I long to walk in the fullness of Your will in every area of my life (Colossians 1:9)

Peace and Joy: Father, strengthen my heart with supernatural peace and joy in areas where I feel rejected, anxious and afraid. Strengthen my mind that I may overcome all turmoil, confusion and indecision. Help me to restfully trust in You (Philippians 4:7; Romans 15:13; 2 Thessalonians 3:16).

PRAYER FOR PROTECTION

PROTECTION PRAYER

We often worry about our safety and protection. When we feel this way, we can immediately come to God in prayer.

But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. 2 Thessalonians 3:3

Share your thoughts and concerns with God. Ask Him for His supernatural protection. He says He will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways (Psalm 91:11). Remember this promise and lay everything down before Him trusting His good plans and His power to protect you and those you love.

PRAYER

"God, I bow in worship to praise You. Thank You for making a way for me through Your Son, Jesus. I surrender myself completely in every area of my life to You. I submit myself to the true and living God and refuse any involvement of the enemy in my life. I choose to be transformed by the renewing of my mind. I reject every thought that tries to compete against the knowledge of Christ. I pray and thank You for a sound mind, the mind of Christ.

Today and every day I ask for protection over my family and loved ones; all immediate family members, relatives, friends, acquaintances and myself. I ask for protection during all of our travels. I ask You to watch over our financial security, possessions, health and safety (be as specific here as you like). All that I have is Yours, God, and I declare that Satan cannot touch me or anything You have given me. I rebuke the enemy and tell him to bow to the name of Jesus that covers me and my family. He will not take what You have given us and we are protected and provided for by You, God, and You alone."

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

CONFESSION PRAYER

Based on Romans 10:10; James 5:16; I John 1:7-9, 3:8

Our sin separates us from God, but Jesus made a way for us to be reunited with God by covering our sin by dying on the cross. When we accept the gift of salvation we confess our sin. Then as Christians we continue to confess and repent of sin. By coming clean and repenting before God, we invite Him to work in our lives and transform us to be more like Him.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9

Assume a posture of humility and, without fear of condemnation or punishment, come sincerely to God confessing your sin on a regular basis. Whether your sin feels big or small to you, your sin is still sin and affects your relationship with God. You get His attention when you tell Him your sin and turn from that sin to follow Him. After you confess, remind yourself and claim the power of the blood of Jesus in your life to wash you clean and make you new.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

PRAYER

“Lord Jesus, I confess all of my sins to You. I repent and turn away from them. I’m sorry for the wrong I have done. I confess the times I should have stepped up to do right and did nothing instead. I lay it all down at Your feet. I submit my thoughts, words, actions and inactions to You. Thank You, God, for forgiving and making a way for me through Your Son, Jesus.

Lord Jesus, I believe that You are the Son of God. You died on the cross for my sins and rose to life again on the third day. I confess all my sins and repent. I receive Your forgiveness and ask You to cleanse me from all sin. Thank You for redeeming me, setting me free, making me holy and giving my life purpose.”

PRAYER FOR HEALING

HEALING PRAYER

Based on 1 Peter 2:24; Psalm 103:2-5; Luke 1:37

Our God is a God of miracles. Just as we read about in the Bible, we still see Him perform miraculous healing today. He is our healer, and we can confidently approach Him to ask for healing for ourselves or someone we know.

Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget not all His benefits—who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. Psalm 103:2-5

In faith, ask God for healing. Proclaim His power and goodness, believing and trusting Him to take care of you or those you're praying to be healed.

PRAYER

"Father, in the Name of Jesus, I come before You asking for healing (name yourself or someone you are praying to experience healing). My hope is in You as our healer. I believe You are able to do this. Your name is Jehovah Rapha, the God who heals, and I believe every knee will bow to You, including (the name of the disease or disorder). Thank You, Jesus, for dying on the cross so that we can receive healing. You say that You forgive our sins and heal our diseases, and I praise You for this. I thank You that the Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead lives in us. I stand in faith believing for healing for (yourself or someone you're praying for). Nothing is impossible for You, God! Give us peace and direction as You work in our lives. In Jesus' name, Amen."

PRAYER FOR MARRIAGE

MARRIAGE PRAYER

Based on Ephesians 5:25-30

God created marriage, and His design for it is good. In marriage, just as in any human relationship, we have to work to love well. We can't do this successfully in our own power. We need God, who is love Himself, to give us His Holy Spirit and to guide us in our marriage. Marriage is a picture of Jesus Christ and His bride, the Church. As Christian husbands and wives, we have the high honor to represent the love and commitment Christ has for the Church through our love and commitment to each other.

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her, that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the Word, so that He might present the church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church. Ephesians 5:25-30

Thank God for your marriage. Start by asking Him to help you be the best spouse you can be. Ask Him to help you love well and to see your spouse as He sees them.

Then, pray for your marriage, asking God to use your marriage to impact the world for Him. Ask Him for protection physically, spiritually and emotionally. Pray for unity in your marriage and wisdom from Him about how to live your lives as one. Bring to Him anything in your marriage that concerns you and trust Him to work on your behalf.

PRAYER FOR MARRIAGE

PRAYER

“Thank You, God, for loving us and for creating marriage to be an illustration of Your love for us here on earth. Help me, God, to love my spouse (call them by name) the way You love me. Help me to listen to my spouse, give honor and put my spouse before myself. Protect us physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. We ask You to build greater unity between us, make us stronger as a couple, more devoted to one another and to You. Use us, God, build us up to be an example of what Godly marriage can look like. Use us together to do more than we could ever do apart. We ask for greater influence and more impact on the people around us. We ask you to work through us in the lives of our friends, family and even those far away. Fill us with Your Holy Spirit and move through us to bring those far from You closer, so that they can have an encounter with the Living God, who seeks and saves the lost and who sets us free and gives us purpose. We choose as a couple to love You first, God. We put our relationship with You before anything and everything else. We confess our need for You. Thank You for bringing us together. We choose to love one another today and every day. Thank You for our marriage. We ask You to bless it, build it and be present in it always.”

PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO NEED GOD

PRAYING FOR THOSE WHO NEED GOD

God desires everyone to know Him. He says in His Word that He would leave the 99 to go after the one who doesn't know Him. As followers of Christ, we are called to partner with Him in praying for those who don't know Him to come to know Him.

Ask the Father to Draw Them to Jesus

God draws people to Him. It's not something we can make happen out of our own efforts, so we need to be faithful in praying that the Father would draw those He's placed on our hearts to Jesus.

*No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them...
John 6:44*

Think about the people you know who are far from God. Let your heart be open to God and anyone He may bring to your mind. It may help to write down their names as you focus on praying for them.

PRAYER

"Father, I pray for the people around me (list specific names), that You would supernaturally draw their hearts to you. Send Your Holy Spirit to them and give them the desire to give their lives to You. Help them to recognize their longing for more in life as a spiritual thirst only You can quench. Open their ears to hear Your voice."

PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO NEED GOD

Pray Their Spiritual Eyes and Ears Would Open

The truth can be right in front of some people, and they still can't see it because something is in the way, blocking their view of God.

The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 2 Corinthians 4:4

PRAYER

"Father, in the name of Jesus, I pray that they would be able to see clearly, to recognize who You are, and to give their hearts to You. Remove all hindrances the enemy would use to distract them from Your truth. Open their eyes, Lord, that they might see Jesus and open their ears that they might hear the truth of the gospel."

Pray That They Have a Personal Relationship With God

Many people think Christianity is just another religion. They only see God through the lens of the organization and institution of the church. They may even feel frustrated, angry or betrayed by people in churches they have encountered or by religious legalists and their hypocrisy. But God didn't come to build an organization. He came to have a relationship with His children.

The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by Him we cry, "Abba, Father." Romans 8:15

PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO NEED GOD

God wants His beloved sons and daughters to come home. Praying for people to have personal encounters with the living God makes a huge difference.

PRAYER

“Father, I pray that they will understand how much You love them. Let them experience the spirit of adoption so that they come into a meaningful relationship with You. Stir in their hearts a longing to come home, to hear Your voice, and to see You welcoming them with open arms. Let them know You are always running to meet them and hold them close.”

Pray for Believers to Cross Their Paths

This is twofold: we can pray for other Christians to influence the people around them positively, and we can also look for opportunities to influence others positively ourselves. God’s plan to reach people is worked through those who already know and love Him. Jesus asked us to pray for people to go into the world to be salt and light. He came to bring the good news of the Gospel to all people, and His desire is that everyone would know and love Him.

Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field. Matthew 9:38

PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO NEED GOD

As His “spiritual farmers,” we should be attuned to opportunities to plant spiritual seeds in the lives of the people we encounter each day. We may have no idea who has already been praying for them and the culminating impact our kind word, compassionate act or loving attitude can have to draw someone to Christ.

PRAYER

“Father, I pray for the lost around me to meet believers who will influence them in a positive way. Lord, let my life shine in such a way that people want to know the God I serve. Allow others to see my genuine love and concern for them in all that I say and do. Let me be Your hands and feet to serve them and let them know just how much You love them.”

PRAYER FOR GOVERNMENT

PRAYING FOR GOVERNMENT LEADERS

Open the heart of our president (or any leader in any office) to hear and respond to the gospel of Christ if they do not know You.

Help them to accept wise counsel that You approve of.

(Proverbs 11:14, 15:22)

Teach them to trust in You and not their own wisdom.

(Psalm 21:7)

Protect them from evil. (2 Thessalonians 3:3)

Enable them to carry out their duties with humility toward You and toward others. (1 Peter 5:5)

Give them courage do the right thing under pressure.

(Proverbs 2:11-15)

Give them a tender compassion towards those they lead and serve. (Colossians 3:12)

PRAYER FOR ISRAEL

PRAYING FOR ISRAEL

I have set watchmen on your walls O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention of the Lord, do not keep silent and give Him no rest till He establishes and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth. Isaiah 62:6

God calls those “who make mention of the Lord” to “not keep silent” until God establishes Jerusalem in righteousness and glory in all the earth. It is in God’s heart to establish the city of Jerusalem and the nation of Israel as a lamp that burns (Isaiah 62:1). A lamp gives direction and brings clarity. From Israel God’s rule and order will go forth with great clarity giving life to the whole world (Jeremiah 3:17).

We “don’t keep silent” by praying for Israel, teaching God’s purposes for Israel and doing works of justice for the Jewish people in times of need and persecution. This doesn’t mean that we give them a pass for transgression. Jesus referred to Jerusalem as His city, calling it the city of the great King. With great zeal, Jesus chose Jerusalem as His dwelling place forever (Psalm 132:13-14; Jeremiah 3:17; Zechariah 1:14; 8:2-3).

...Jerusalem for it is the city of the great King. Matthew 5:35

For the LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place: “This is My resting place forever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it.” Psalm 132:13-14

“I am zealous for Zion with great zeal; with great fervor I am zealous for her.” Thus says the LORD: “I will return to Zion and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth... Mountain of the LORD of hosts, the Holy Mountain.” Zechariah 8:2-3

PRAYER FOR ISRAEL

At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem. Jeremiah 3:17

Understanding God's Plan Concerning Israel

Paul felt urgency about the Church understanding God's plan for Israel's salvation (Romans 11:25). God's mystery refers to His plan that He hid through the ages until He revealed it to the apostles (Ephesians 3:5, 9).

I do not desire...that you should be ignorant of this mystery...that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved. Romans 11:25-26

In Romans 11, Paul highlighted four parts of God's plan to bring the gospel (knowledge of God) to the nations.

1. The Jewish people have a temporary spiritual blindness on them (v. 25).
2. The fullness of the Gentiles (v. 25) will provoke Israel to seek Jesus for salvation (v. 11).
3. All Israel will be saved (v. 26).
4. The fullness of Israel (v. 12) will lead to God's glory filling the earth (v. 15).

Have they stumbled that they should fall [permanently losing their calling]? Certainly not! But through their fall [stumbling], to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles. Now if their fall [stumbling] is riches for the world and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness... For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? Romans 11:11-12, 15

PRAYER FOR ISRAEL

...that you should be ignorant of this mystery...that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved. Romans 11:25-26

The important point Paul is making is that Israel has not fallen (v. 11) in the sense of permanently losing her leadership calling. For the last 2,000 years, the Gentile Church has had the primary leadership role in bringing a witness of the gospel to all nations (Matthew 24:14, 28:19).

All Israel Will Be Saved

And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer [Jesus] will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob [Israel]." Romans 11:26

Isaiah confirms Paul's teaching that all Israel will be saved (Isaiah 45:17, 25; 59:20; 60:21). Israel will be the first nation that is totally saved and living righteously (Isaiah 60:21).

Today, there are more Jewish people being saved than at any time in history, with 250,000 Jewish believers worldwide—over 125,000 in the USA, 60,000 in Russia and Ukraine and over 10,000 in the nation of Israel.

What do we do?

We pray for Israel and pray for our understanding of God's heart and purpose for Israel to grow. We study God's heart and plan for Israel in the Bible.

We commit to boldly proclaim God's heart and purpose for Israel.

PRAYER FOR ISRAEL

We prepare to stand with Israel in the time of trouble that is coming. We prepare to do works of justice for them (mercy deeds of providing food, shelter).

PRAYER

“Father, help me to grow in my understanding of Your purposes for Jerusalem, Israel and the Jewish people. I want to see what You see concerning this. I pray for peace in Jerusalem, ultimately that more and more people will come to know Your Son Jesus, both Jew and Arab. Father I ask You to strengthen the believers in that region and that the Church, both Jew and Arab, would be united and filled with a passion for Jesus.”

PRAYER FOR MISSIONS

PRAYING FOR MISSIONS & MINISTRIES

PRAYER

“Thank You, Lord, for sending these people to share the good news. Please protect them and open doors for Your Word to be heard and received forever. And add to their number. Send more laborers into the fields here and abroad.”

- Barbara Stoltzfus – Guatemala & Belize
- Bethany Christian Services – 13 Countries
- Camp Penuel – Ironton
- Campus Crusade for Christ – Webster Univ & WashU
- Campus Outreach Ministries – Memphis
- CASA – St. Louis
- Community Helping Ministry– Pattonville Fire District
- Crisis Aid International – Ethiopia & St. Louis
- Dan & Emily Okall, Dala Development – Kenya
- FirstLight – St. Louis
- Focus on the Family – Colorado Springs
- Friederich & Nancy Lueckhof, Christian Frontier Ministries – Cebu, Philippines
- Gateway House of Prayer – St. Louis
- International House of Prayer – Kansas City
- InterVarsity – 687 Campuses in U.S.
- Loaves and Fishes – Maryland Heights
- Mission 1:11 – Haiti & Philippines
- New Creation Fellowship Food Pantry – Granite City
- New Life Evangelistic Center – MO, IL, AK
- One Heart Ministries
- Rod & Ellie Hein, Afrika wa Yesu – Mozambique
- Roland & Carolyn Ashby, Strategic Alliance – Mexico
- Safe Families for Children – Midwest USA
- Samaritan’s Purse – Global
- Sarah Haas, Pioneers International – Amazon Jungle, Peru
- Sunshine Ministries – St. Louis
- Teen Challenge – High Ridge
- The Covering House – St. Louis
- ThriVe St. Louis – St. Louis & St. Charles
- Trevor Downham, Genesis Trust – Port Shepstone, S. Africa
- Two Tunics – KwaZulu-Natal, S. Africa
- Wycliffe Bible Translators – Worldwide

FASTING

FASTING

The Bible explains fasting as “humbling” or “afflicting” one’s soul (Isaiah 58:3,5). An expression of humility and hunger that draws us closer to God. We are humbled because of the difficulty, pain and rawness of fasting.

Fasting is an invitation. God does not require us to fast but rewards those who choose to fast.

...when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. Matthew 6:17-18

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Hebrews 11:6

Fasting is a paradox. Our bodies and minds become weak when fasting, but our hearts become tender towards God over time. We sometimes feel “raw” before God. We become more aware of our brokenness, which is humbling. This posture of humility is like a powerful magnet to God.

Fasting is a grace. God gives us the grace to fast. We can start by simply asking for grace to do it. The fear of fasting is worse than the actual fast itself.

FASTING

Biblical Fasts for Different Purposes

- ▶ Fasts to experience a greater measure of power to minister to others

*"...this kind (demon) does not go out except by prayer and fasting."
Matthew 17:21*

- ▶ Fasts to seek direction. Paul's first missionary trip was the result of the early church fasting together while seeking God.

As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then, having fasted and prayed and laid hands on them, they sent them away. Acts 13:2-3

- ▶ Fasts to stop a national crisis

"Now therefore," says the Lord, "Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping and with mourning." So rend your heart and not your garments; return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness; and He relents from doing harm. Joel 2:12-13

- ▶ Fasts to grow in greater intimacy with God. When we fast to experience greater intimacy with Jesus we are fasting for our heart to move towards God. His heart is already moved towards us.

*Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?" Jesus said to them, "Can the friends of the Bridegroom mourn as long as the Bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the Bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast."
Matthew 9:14-15*

It is wrong to let any pleasure such as food, recreation or our social lives become more important to us than God. He is to be

FASTING

the supreme desire of our hearts. When we overindulge in natural things, our spirit man becomes weak and lethargic—we lose spiritual hunger, we lose the ache in our heart for God.

The greatest enemy of hunger for God is not poison but apple pie. It is not the banquet of the wicked that dulls our appetite for heaven, but endless nibbling at the table of the world.

— John Piper

In Our Weakness God Gives Strength

And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong [strong in spirit, supernatural strength]. 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

Paul understood the principle of voluntarily embracing the weakness of prayer and fasting. He tasted the spiritual fruit of it. He pursued the weakness of fasting often (2 Corinthians. 11:27). He took Jesus’ words seriously; that Jesus would perfect power within Paul as Paul voluntarily embraced weakness.

Fasting is not about rules pertaining to food. It’s about the weakness and humility that it causes.

FASTING

God has ordered His kingdom in such a way that some things that seem weak to men are actually powerful before God.

– Mike Bickle

Different Types of Fasting From Food

- ▶ A regular fast is going without food and drinking only water or liquids with no calories.
- ▶ A liquid fast is going without solid food and drinking only light liquids (like fruit juices).
- ▶ A partial fast, or Daniel fast, abstains from tasty foods, eating only vegetables, nuts, etc.
- ▶ A Benedict fast established by Saint Benedict (525 AD) consists of eating one meal a day.
- ▶ An absolute fast, or Esther fast, is abstaining from food and water (Esther 4:16). Exercise caution!
- ▶ Fasts of various lengths: one-day fast (Leviticus 16), three-day fast (Acts 9), seven-day fast (2 Samuel 12), twenty-one day fast (Daniel 10), forty-day fast (Exodus 24, 34, Deuteronomy 9,18, 1 Kings 19, Matthew 4)

Beginning to Fast

Start where you can. Begin by asking God for the desire to fast and for the grace to do it. The key is to not quit but keep trying.



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