

Pray for One Another

Constantly pray for one another's needs, including perseverance and constant steadfastness in the faith.

**Matt 6:9-13; John 17:1-26; 2 Cor 1:8-11;
Eph 6:18; Col 4:12; 1 Thess 1:2-3; James 5:16**

Let me talk to you about expanding your praying for others in such ways that will enhance your life in heaven forever. The goal here will be for you to grow in the depth that you care for others, especially those with whom you are closest. Going to heaven with a bigger heart for others will increase your caring for others there. Caring for others in heaven is a very large part of living there. You want to grow your spirit to care for others more than just the basics for which we usually pray.

Praying is an important part of your personal relationship with God. You are not “wishing”. You are acting on the fact that your belief in Jesus Christ brought you into God’s family where you can talk things over with Him.

In light of this always available access to God the Father through Jesus the Son with the help of the third person of the One God, the Holy Spirit, we need to ask, “Do we talk with God on one another’s behalf for enough things?”

We need one another’s prayer for more than just troublesome situations like sickness and job loss. Praying should be expanded to support our purpose as Christians to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. That covers a lot of ground, so there is much room for expanding prayer.

It is for believers in your Christian Inner Circle that more specific and extensive praying must be done at a deeper level. It is with Christian friends and relatives who are in your life more personally and regularly that you can discover the good things that need your prayers for God’s intervention.

For example, you can pray that everyone in your church bear with one another’s irritations and bad attitudes. But, in praying for a friend, you can pray that he or she be able to put up with a hostile relative. Certainly both of these prayers for bearing with one another are valuable, but the more specific prayer requires deeper concern and sincere love on your part, plus a lot more thought and time.

As with this example of the Together to Bear with One Another, you can pray every Together for each person in your Christian Inner Circle. Over time, if you apply each of the Togethers to prayer, you will be praying for significant growth in the spirits of all those Christians important to you. This deeper prayer will produce believers who are more Christlike, worship God more in their daily lives, battle more effectively against evil and the enemy Satan, and prepare more dramatically for life in heaven.

You know the specific situations of those in your Christian Inner Circle and need to pray. This is usually not for food these days, but includes things like an older car’s reliability, safety on the roads, money for kids’ college education, protection from criminal acts, and extreme weather. We should get to know those who are nearest and dearest to us and find out specific needs such as who, for instance, is afraid to drive in the snow so that we can pray for his or her confidence and safety.

Sometimes it is wise to include others in deciding what to pray for when going to the Lord on behalf of Christian friends and family members. Your assumption of what would be good for someone might be

incorrect, yet it can be validated or negated with communication with other Christians. In most cases you can ask the persons themselves if your conclusion is correct. For example, you can ask, “Am I correct in thinking that you do not like your job?” Sometimes the assumption will be dead wrong, but more often it will be just a little off the mark and clarification can help the accuracy of your prayer.

There is an important promise to remember from the lips of Jesus. He said, “*Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.*” So, bring others into prayer, especially for the really big requests for your loved ones. They have to match what God would want. God cannot act against His own will.

Now, let me list for you the various ways to pray more than just simple prayers.

You can use the 65 Togethers to bring to mind very significant things to pray for those in your Christian Inner Circle. Using just four of them, does the person you are about to pray for need to forgive anyone? Live less in the present world of pleasures and discover the superior pleasures of living in the kingdom of God? Let God have His way more in his or her life? Need hope restored? And the list goes on for 61 other aspects of living for God.

Two prayers of Jesus recorded in the Bible can guide our prayers. The first is what we call “The Lord’s Prayer” and the second is His long prayer in John, Chapter 17.

Let’s look at the Lord’s Prayer in Matthew, Chapter 6. When it says, “*Our Father in heaven, hallowed by your name*”, meaning may God’s name always be kept holy, this reminds us to pray for one another that our thoughts, feelings and actions are done to the glory of God. There may be those in our Christian Inner Circles who are not truly glorifying God in the way they are living and desperately need your prayers.

When the Lord’s Prayer says, “*your kingdom come, your will be done*”, this covers just about anything we think, feel and do. If the Holy Spirit brings to your mind any thoughts, emotions or actions unacceptable in heaven of the person you are praying for, pray for change. Since all the Togethers are just Scripture, sometimes re-phrased, they are all the ways of God’s kingdom. Praying the Togethers for those in your Christian Inner Circle is praying that God’s will be done here and now.

When the Lord’s Prayer speaks of forgiveness, it will remind you that each of us has to ask God for our own forgiveness. So, you can pray for friends and family members to have the Holy Spirit’s help to ask God for their own forgiveness. You know who has trouble accepting his or her own faults. Pray that they better understand that Jesus has paid the penalty so they can easily admit their own sin and ask God for forgiveness.

You also know who in your Christian Inner Circle must deal with chronic dysfunctional relationships. You have the privilege to pray that they would know how to deal with the hurt as well as to forgive their oppressors.

When the Lord’s Prayer speaks of temptation and the attacks of Satan, remember to pray that God will powerfully help those who are struggling with evil of any sort. It is important to bring other Christians into prayer against Satan. To face off in prayer against the devil you want the special presence of Jesus as He promised to be with two or three meeting in His name.

When Jesus prayed for His followers in John, Chapter 17, He talked to God, His Father, about their spiritual condition. This adds many things to pray for other Christians.

Jesus prayed that His followers would know both God the Father and Himself. He did not pray that we Christians would know about God, but that we would know God. Pray for those in your Christian Inner Circle that they will not be satisfied with anything less than a vital personal relationship with God, not just a relationship with their Bibles or churches.

You might be able to discern who in your Christian Inner Circle just knows about God rather than relates to Him as a person. It is subtle, but very important that you listen closely to your Christian friends and family and then consult the Holy Spirit. If someone needs to take the next step in their relationship with God to make it more personal, you want to be praying for that as Jesus did for all of us.

Jesus prayed that his followers would be full of joy. So, it is important that you pray that those Christians you are close to will find joy in the difficult things they face. That is hard, so you need to pray in advance for them to experience joy in the midst of all they face in life.

Jesus prayed for the sanctification of His followers. So, pray for the growth in their spirits of those in your Christian Inner Circle, not just growth in their heads, but also deep within them. Again, the Togethers can be a guide to all the things we can pray for regarding sanctification. You can see a list of all 65 Togethers of Scripture at our web site, ChristiansTogether.org. Not c-o-m, but o-r-g.

Almost all of the things we pray for naturally will not need prayer in heaven because there are no problems from sin and all of our needs will be met. It seems we won't need to pray for one another's safety or temper, for example. So the question arises how praying for one another now prepares our spirits for heaven?

Praying for others now pushes us to care about the vast number of things that glorify God. That will give us a great capacity to care for others in heaven, for their situations there even though they do not come from evil, will all be designed to glorify God. It will also endear us to God for having made Him so important that we glorified Him by caring so deeply as to pray more than superficially for His people.

Heaven is not a place where we no longer need God's help, but where we are unhindered in accessing it. As it is now, there God will help others through us. For one example, in heaven we will still pray that others worship God in spirit and in truth. Everyone will surely be able to grow in their ability to worship.

Praying deeply for others now will make it easier to pray for others in heaven, that they take advantage of heaven's tremendous opportunities. In heaven you will also continually pray for the spiritual development of others. Perhaps in heaven you will pray that another thoroughly enjoys learning to play a musical instrument for the first time or you will pray that someone appreciate God's grace at a higher level.

* * *

This only minimally explains praying for one another. To learn much more, go to our website ChristiansTogether.org and go down the list of the Togethers and click on "Pray for One Another".

Prayer to Embrace this Together

I and those in my Christian Inner Circle will need Your help to grow our spirits to pray for one another as You would want us to pray. Help us to yield to the work of the Holy Spirit for all of us to give You more glory in the way we pray.

Please help us all to become more like Jesus and expand our praying beyond generalities to more specific concerns that accurately shows how much we really care for those for whom we pray. Help us to pray for both physical and spiritual needs for those in our Christian Inner Circles.

May our lives worship You more because we follow the example of Your trinitarian nature and discuss really critical prayer needs with one another and come to agreement before we come to You together in prayer.

Make us strong in Your power to defeat the devil by unleashing Your power against him in prayer before we act. Help us to remember that prayer is battle against Satan. Remind us, O Lord, to pray against Satan's attacks on those in our Christian Inner Circles and that we together will stand up to the evil one on one another's behalf.

Help us all to prepare for heaven by growing more naturally in talking to You because there we will pray continually without the hindrance of sinful distraction. Aid us in elevating Your desire that all of us conform to the image of Your Son Jesus by praying for the growth of one another's spirits to be more like Jesus. We look forward to a closer relationship with You in heaven because we pray in a way that esteems You and Your desires for other Christians You place in our lives.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.