



How to
PRAY FOR OTHERS



Praying for others

As Jesus traveled throughout Israel, he was constantly ministering to people through prayer and shepherding them into a profound experience of God's presence, love, wisdom and power. After his death and resurrection, Jesus invited his followers to carry his ministry into all the world. Today, praying for others is one of the most important ways Christians can share in the life and ministry of Jesus.



“As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.”

- John 20:21^b NLT



Prayer is how we help others experience God's kingdom

Prayer is simply how we help others taste the reality of God's kingdom for themselves. It's a conversation between us, another person and God - a conversation that creates space for God to draw near and express his love to us in beautiful and surprising ways.



“Come close to God, and God will come close to you.”

- James 4:8 NLT



Our posture of prayer

When it comes to prayer, the way we position ourselves before God and others really matters. One of the most amazing things about prayer is that God has designed it as a collaborative process. God, of course, does the things only God can do, but he prefers to do those things through us.



Our “half”

Our “half”, or our involvement, centers around how we posture ourselves to partner with God. (Obviously God does way more than half the work, but the acronym is pretty sticky.) Our posture should be one of:

- **H**umility
- **A**uthenticity
- **L**ove
- **F**aith



A posture of humility

We expect God to speak to us, and we also expect to hear his voice, albeit through our own broken humanity. Humility recognizes that none of us will hear the voice of God perfectly. For that reason, we present to others what we sense from the Lord gently, open to the idea we may have heard something only in part, or perhaps incorrectly.



“Now we see things imperfectly, like puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity.”

- 1 Corinthians 13:12 NLT



A posture of authenticity

When the Holy Spirit works in people's lives, it is always powerful. However, people can sometimes miss out on what God has for them when they feel pressured or manipulated toward a particular outcome or behavior. We never attempt to manufacture an experience of God! Rather, we simply trust God to work in different individuals in unique ways, and work alongside him in whatever he is doing.



“When I first came to you, dear brothers and sisters, I didn’t use lofty words and impressive wisdom... I came to you in weakness—timid and trembling. And my message and my preaching were very plain. Rather than using clever and persuasive speeches, I relied only on the power of the Holy Spirit. I did this so you would trust not in human wisdom but in the power of God.”

- 1 Corinthians 2:1^a, 3-5 NLT



A posture of love

Love is likely the most important aspect of our posture. If the person we are praying for feels heard, cared for, comforted and gently escorted into the loving hands of their heavenly Father, we can get a lot of other things wrong. Few things are more life-changing than a tangible experience of God's love. This is our first and most essential ministry to one another.



“...love covers a multitude of sins.”

- 1 Peter 4:8b NLT



A posture of faith

Faith believes God for really big things. We operate from a conviction that God cares about us more than we can possibly imagine, that nothing can stand in his way, and that he is already working to free us from every kind of spiritual darkness. We choose to pray in accordance with this reality and stand against pain and suffering of every kind. We pray directly for relationships to be restored, addictions to be broken, diseases to be healed, mental and emotional afflictions to be reversed and every kind of need to be provided for.



‘Then Jesus told them, “I tell you the truth, if you have faith and don’t doubt, you can do things like this and much more. You can even say to this mountain, ‘May you be lifted up and thrown into the sea,’ and it will happen. You can pray for anything, and if you have faith, you will receive it.”’

- Matthew 21:21-22 NLT



Our process of prayer

But how do we actually pray for others? Just as our posture before God is incredibly important, there is also a very simple process through which we can partner with God to see more of his kingdom come in people's lives.



How do we pray?

We partner with God, on behalf of people, in a ministry of:

- **Presence**
- **Revelation**
- **Breakthrough**



A ministry of presence

We begin by asking people to share what they would like to receive prayer for, and then simply invite God's presence to come. Focusing on the reality of God's nearness helps us to set aside other concerns and distractions, and to step toward God relationally. After inviting God to come, do not rush, but allow a few moments in order for you and the person you're praying for to move closer into his presence.



Simple prayers to invite God's presence

- “Holy Spirit, come.”
- “Lord Jesus, would you draw near?”
- “Father, help us to experience your presence.”
- “God, help us to sense your nearness and come close to you.”
- “God, thank you that you are here with us now.”



A ministry of revelation

Being mindful of the individual's prayer concerns, begin to seek God on their behalf. Often God is looking to do even more in that person's life than what they're asking prayer for. Spiritual discernment begins with what is plainly seen; i.e., their appearance, emotional state, physical limitations, etc...



...but is also able to perceive other considerations (the state of their relationship with God, strongholds like anger or a lack of forgiveness, demonic influence, generational sin, etc...). Patiently listen for God to speak and as you sense the Spirit's leading, pray accordingly.



Silent prayers to seek more of God's perspective

- “Father, help me to see what you see. Open my eyes.”
- “Jesus, what are you looking to do in this moment?”
- “Spirit, what is going on in this person's life?
Speak to me. Let me hear your voice.”
- “God, how are you looking to bring your
kingdom right now?”
- “God, how do you want me to partner with you?”



A ministry of revelation

After you ask God a question, patiently listen. God may express himself through Scripture, words, phrases, ideas, images, impressions, physical or emotional sensations, or in other ways. Trust the Holy Spirit to lead you how to pray. Always feel free to engage in dialogue or ask more questions for clarification or confirmation; that's good practice.



A ministry of breakthrough

God is always looking to free us from those things that hold us back from experiencing more of his kingdom in our lives. Praying for breakthrough is about shepherding people toward a profound and life-changing encounter with God.



“...where ever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.”

- 2 Corinthians 3:17-18^b NLT



A ministry of breakthrough

At the appropriate time, transition into a time of prayer with the individual. Step into your identity as God's ambassador, embracing your authority over spiritual darkness.



How to pray for breakthrough

- Pray with your eyes open, looking to see where God is at work (and always ask permission before laying hands on someone)
- Pray patiently, understanding that God doesn't always work in an instant
- Talk with the individual, frequently asking what they are sensing or how they are feeling
- If it seems like God is working in the moment, continue praying until that work seems finished



Praying for breakthrough

When praying, there may be overt signs of God's presence moving in their lives. Frequently, people have a physical and/or emotional response to their experience of God. This should not be unexpected and doesn't need to be disconcerting. Any type of response should be met with tenderness and patience. Cultivate a safe space for that person and continue to minister to them in a spirit of peace.



Bringing your prayer time to a close

Pray until you sense God has done what he wants to do in that moment. Even if there are no visible signs of breakthrough, something always happens when we pray. Remind people that the Father loves them, is for them and is working on their behalf. Jesus tells us to persevere in prayer, so encourage the individual to continue to reach out to God for their needs.



When you're finished praying

When you're done praying, provide that person with a few next steps such as:

- Reading their Bible and spending more time with God
- Building friendships with other believers
- Getting connected to appropriate people or resources
- Checking in with their doctor - if the prayer time involved physical healing



Now celebrate!

Well done! Whenever we pray for someone along these lines, we are sharing in the exact same ministry Jesus did over 2,000 years ago. Be sure to share with others the good things God does through these prayer times. We encourage one another and build one another's faith whenever we hear stories of God moving. Whenever we see God's kingdom come in someone's life, that's something to celebrate!



