

One Month of Prayer

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The Write Idea
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Week One

Prayer Partners

“Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.” Ephesians 6:19-20

Paul, the “super apostle” as many consider him, faced the same fears you and I face! To top that, he faced persecution, chains, and beatings for his faith. So how did he ask to be ready? He asked others to pray for him. Sometimes it’s hard to ask others to pray for us because we have to admit we don’t have everything together. It can be hard to open up. But if you don’t have fellow believers to support you, then you’re missing out on an incredible blessing and you may be opening yourself to spiritual attack.

Consider the story of David and Jonathan (1 Samuel 18-20). Jonathan became friends with David during a critical time in David’s life. Jonathan’s father, King Saul, wanted David dead. Many times, Saul promised not to kill David (1 Samuel 19:6) and then turned around and tried to kill him later (1 Samuel 19:9-10). Every day, David faced treachery and lies. No wonder he was worried that Jonathan would be just like his dad: *“If I am guilty, then kill me yourself! Why hand me over to your father?” 1 Samuel 20:8.* Jonathan responded, *“Never! If I had the least inkling that my father was determined to harm you, wouldn’t I tell you?” 1 Samuel 20:9*

David was concerned Jonathan would betray him too. But instead, Jonathan saved David’s life, alerting him to Saul’s wrath so David could escape. Just before Jonathan and David parted ways, the Bible says:

“David got up from the south side of the stone and bowed down before Jonathan three times, with his face to the ground. Then they kissed each other and wept together – but David wept the most.” 1 Samuel 20:41

Notice the end of verse 41: *“But David wept the most.”* David had faced lies and betrayal from a man who should have been God’s representative. Now, in Jonathan, David met someone who was true to his word and true to God. It was exactly what David’s spirit needed. It was a salve to David’s emotional wounds.

Before you can experience this type of blessing, you need to share your struggles and let a fellow Christian pray for you. Of course, this can be tough. Some people get burned because they share with the wrong person (and let’s be honest, it can be really hard to discern that sometimes.) But remember that even if God allows that to happen, He will see you through it. Bad experiences should never rule our future.

“Many a man claims unfailing love, but a faithful man who can find?” Proverbs 20:6

Faithful friends like Jonathan are rare gems in this world. Such people have been polished by God. Jesus is the treasure of their hearts. What a blessing such friends can be!

This week, consider taking time to ask a brother or sister in Christ to pray for you. One of Paul’s methods of preparing to share the gospel was to ask faithful friends to pray he would be courageous and ready. If you don’t have such a friend, ask God to bring someone across your path. Then keep your eyes open for His answer!

Week Two The Power in Stillness

"Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." Psalm 46:10

One night, my church hosted an incredible conference called Harvest 2000. Audio Adrenaline performed and a preacher named Greg Laurie brought the message. Hundreds came forward to accept Christ or rededicate their lives. At the end of the night, I was exhilarated. I left the church and walked outside for a few minutes. It was chilly, but I didn't care. After a few minutes, I sat down on some steps outside the church, lay down, looked up at the night sky, and prayed.

You know, the best part of that evening wasn't listening to Audio Adrenaline and jumping around until I was out of breath. The best part was stepping outside into the cool night air, where no one was around, and just praying. The renewal I felt in my spirit reminded me of the importance of prayer. Not just presenting a wish list to God, but really listening to Him.

Sometimes we get so caught up in serving God that we forget to be with God. Ministry should never be something we "drum up" inside ourselves. Ministry should be an overflow of our personal relationship with Christ.

This week, focus your prayer time on simply being alone with God.

1.) Jesus should be our prime example. He often prayed before the major events in His ministry.

"But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed." Luke 5:16 (Also see: Luke 6:12, Mark 12:35, Mark 6:46, Hebrews 5:7)

2.) Don't deceive yourself into thinking you can do ministry without prayer. The disciples found this out in a difficult way.

"After Jesus had gone indoors His disciples asked Him privately, 'Why couldn't we drive it (the demon) out?' He replied, 'This kind can come out only by prayer,'" Mark 9:28-29. (Or, in some translations, "by prayer and fasting.")

3.) Satan wants to deceive you into thinking prayer is not important.

"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The Spirit is willing but the flesh is weak." Matthew 26:41

Jesus shared the words found in Matthew 26:41 with Peter on the night of His death. But because Peter failed to pray, he was not prepared to acknowledge his relationship with Christ. Instead, he denied that he knew his Lord. The Lord forgave him, however, and renewed his ministry. What a blessing to know that even when we do fall short, we can turn to God and He will renew our lives.

Week Three

Fears

"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea." Psalm 46:1-2

I don't like airplanes. The idea of being in the air, with just a little shell separating me from instant demise, is unsettling. But despite this fear, I always try to keep in mind that God does not want any fear to rule my life.

"Fear the Lord your God, serve Him only..." Deuteronomy 6:13

If you fear anything more than God, your fear will eventually become your new god. At some point, you will find yourself unable to do what God asks because your fear is too great. You will serve your fear instead of God.

"If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all." Isaiah 7:9b

This week, pray over your fears. Below is a list of three fears Christians commonly face. You may be dealing with others. Write them down and pray over them, studying the verses in today's devotional.

1.) Avoiding a new calling for fear that you are ill equipped.

"The gifts He gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry...." Ephesians 4:11, 12

"It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed." Deuteronomy 31:8

2.) Compromising your beliefs for fear of being outcast by friends.

"Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in Him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put of the synagogue; for they loved praise from men more than praise from God." John 12:42-43

3.) Avoiding witnessing for fear of not knowing what to say.

"But the Lord said to me, 'Do not say, "I am only a boy;" for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and you shall speak whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord.'" Jeremiah 1:7, 8

The enemy is crafty. He will use fear to keep you from doing God's work. He will try to make you believe your faith is not strong enough, you're not godly enough, or he may even try to make you doubt your beliefs. If you believe in Jesus as your Savior, then you are a child of God and no one can snatch you from the Father's hand (John 10:29.) When God calls you, you must **go** - not in your own strength, but knowing God is with you.

Take courage, for *"you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light," 1 Peter 2:9*

Week Four Trusting God's Promises

*"Those who know Your name will trust in You, for You, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek You."
Psalm 9:10*

The Bible is full of promises we can stake our lives on. But sometimes, our fears and anxiety overshadow His promises. Today, take a moment to read Hebrews 11:13-39. Think about the faithful followers of God who have gone before you. They too suffered fears and anxiety. But God's perfect will still prevailed.

Many of us, secretly, are afraid to submit our lives to God, for fear of what God's will might bring. What if you don't like it? Maybe you're single and concerned that if you submit to God, He will choose for you to never be married. Or maybe you're scared God will want you to work in a job you hate. Or that you will never see your friends or family come to know Christ. Take a moment to think about one thing you're struggling with. Think about an area you are afraid to give to God. Now ask yourself: "Why is it so hard to let this go? What am I afraid will happen if I do?"

This week, pray that your faith will be strengthened. You may not always see the fruit of your prayers, but you must not lose faith and turn back (Hebrews 11:15).

"Oh Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like You in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and steadfast love for Your servants who walk before You with all their heart, the covenant that You kept for Your servant my father David as You declared to him; You promised with Your mouth and have this day fulfilled with Your hand. Therefore, Oh Lord, God of Israel, keep for Your servant my father David that which You have promised him ..." 1 Kings 8:23-25

Our prayers reflect the level of trust we have in God. Solomon's trust showed in the boldness of his prayer. He recounted the promises God kept and called Him to continue doing so. Recall the promises God kept in the Bible and in your own life, and use that to fill your prayers with boldness. The Lord is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. Pray that God will give you patience in waiting for His promises. God may call you to lay a foundation for others to build upon or He may simply be calling you to wait on Him.

Sadly, the Bible contains examples of people who did not trust God would fulfill His promises, so they stepped in to "help." Rebekah used deception to obtain the blessing for Jacob (Genesis 27). Abraham slept with Hagar to conceive a child (Genesis 16). These choices resulted in grave consequences. Pray God will reveal areas in which you have not trusted Him, if there are any.

We should all strive to trust God in all circumstances. It's not always easy, but with God anything is possible.