

SECTION 2

Lesson 2: Forgive and Pray

Unit 2 | Love Thy Neighbor | Grades: 1-5

FIELD MANUAL FOR
QUEST PARENTS



UNIT VERSE: MARK 12:31

“The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

SECTION VERSE: JOHN 15:12-14

“My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command.”



Do it God’s way - Forgive and Pray

PRAYER

Do you have anyone you are bitter with? Is there someone who you’ve had a fight with? Pray for them. Ask God to help you forgive them.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What does it mean to forgive?
- How did God forgive us?
- ★ Why does God want us to forgive others? (Read aloud Matt 18:21-35) What do you think Jesus was trying to teach?
- ★ In your own words, what is prayer?
- ★ How can we pray for our brothers and sisters in the church? (John 17:6-26)



PARENT DEVOTIONAL

DO IT GOD'S WAY - FORGIVE AND PRAY

"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command."

- John 15:12-14

Forgiveness and Prayer: A Life Giving Combination

The church is made up of people, and as people being transformed into the image of Christ we are by definition not finished products. This leaves us open to mistakes or offenses committed against one another. The question is not whether we offend one another but rather when it happens how do we respond in a way that is not of this world?

Forgiveness and prayer. This is the model we have in Christ. If we behave as the world behaves we diminish our witness to the lost, inflict pain on the body of Christ, and damage our own walk with the Lord. As we take a look at the topic of forgiving one another and praying for one another, take personal inventory of your relationships in the church. Are you actively praying for those with whom God has brought you into relationship within the body? Are we keeping short accounts with our brothers and sisters in Christ? As you prepare for this week with the children I encourage you to read the two attached articles on forgiveness and prayer, keep your kids before the Lord on your knees, and ask the Father to continue your extreme makeover in this critical area of our spiritual lives.

Thank you for giving to the Lord by serving His children. Your offering is making an eternal impact.

(See attached articles, "As God has forgiven" & "Praying for one another")

Forgiveness does not mean ignoring what has been done or putting a false label on an evil act. It means, rather, that the evil act no longer remains as a barrier to the relationship."

~ Martin Luther King Jr.

MEDITATING ON THE WORD

John 17:6-26 | 2 Cor
1:8-11

Col 3:13 | Matt
18:21-35 | Eph. 4:31-32



As God Has Forgiven

By: Richard L. Strauss

Let's assume that you have been hurt, more than you ever thought you could. A friend has betrayed you by telling someone else a secret which you had revealed about yourself in strictest confidence. Now everyone knows it, and you are ashamed to show your face. How can you ever forgive that blabber-mouth? Or maybe a co-worker has presented your idea as if it were his own. He has taken full credit for it and received all the glory for it, including a promotion and a raise. Now he is finding it difficult to look you in the eye. But you don't even care. In fact, you don't care if you ever see him again. How can you ever forgive him?

The possibilities for other ways to be hurt are endless. Someone lied to you, or spread a false rumor about you, or ruined a possession, or refused to believe you or listen to you. Your parents are continually trying to manipulate your life. Your ungrateful children have shamed you by repudiating everything you stand for. Your brother has swindled you out of the family inheritance. Your mate has abused you so badly you hardly have any self-esteem left. A so-called "friend" has alienated your mate's affections. An ex-mate keeps trying to sabotage your life. A pastor has failed to stand by you when you needed him. How can you ever forgive? There is little that affects our relationships so profoundly and adversely as an unforgiving spirit. Holding something against someone has a tendency to dominate our lives. We may not even realize it. We think we have it resolved in our minds. But all the time it is eating away at us, affecting our disposition, our physical health, and unquestionably affecting the way we treat the people who hurt us. It may be in small ways—looking the other way when they pass, refusing to smile, maintaining a coolness in our voices. It may be in more extreme ways like anger or malicious gossip. But it is always there, extinguishing the warmth and intimacy we long to enjoy with the people around us.

The Apostle Paul made an interesting point about forgiveness in his central passage on human relationships. "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:31-32). Did you notice how he contrasts destructive attitudes and practices like bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, slander and malice on one hand, with kindness, tenderness and forgiveness on the other? Would you like to rid yourself of those destructive chains that shackle your freedom to get along with other people? One key that unlocks that chain is forgiveness. But it is so difficult to forgive, isn't it? "How can I do it?" you ask. The secret is found right here in this verse: "forgiving each other just as God in Christ also has forgiven you." We forgive as God forgives. How is that? If we could learn some of the elements in God's forgiveness, we would know how we can forgive.



As God Has Forgiven

He Is Understanding of Our Weaknesses

Forgiveness is a dominant theme in Psalm 103 (note especially verses 3 and 10-13). But look at the reason God is so gracious and compassionate as to pardon our iniquities and remove our transgressions from us as far as the east is from the west: “For He Himself knows our frame; He is mindful that we are but dust” (Psalm 103:14). He knows what we are like, how weak we are. In fact, when He became a man He shared the very same weaknesses. “For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). He has been there Himself. He understands. Forgiveness begins with learning to be understanding of others. That should not be too difficult. We know what we are like. At least if we are honest with ourselves, we do. We know how proud, how selfish, how spiteful, how jealous, how inconsiderate and how inept we can be. Why shouldn’t we show a little tolerance for those same faults in others? People who refuse to forgive may have the foolish notion that they themselves are almost perfect.

As McGinnis put it, “If we are to forgive freely, we need a tolerance of others as generous as the tolerance we display toward our own errors. It is remarkable how understanding we can be of our own flops in interpersonal dealings—we didn’t intend the error, or it happened in a moment of stress, or we weren’t feeling right that day, or we’ll know better next time. We tend to see ourselves not for what we are but for what we strive to be, whereas we see others for what they are.” Being understanding of others does not always mean that we will agree with them. Mary and I used to go around and around on this. “You don’t understand me,” she would say. “Of course I do,” I would insist. “But if you understood me you would agree with me,” she would counter. I didn’t think that was necessarily true and I would tell her so. But I have since figured out what our problem was. I understood her, but I was not being very understanding. And there is a difference.

To be understanding is more than comprehending words. It is trying to look at things from the other person’s point of view, whether or not we agree with them. It is trying to feel what they are feeling, and accepting their feelings whether or not we consider their feelings well-founded. They can usually sense that attitude in us—or the lack of it. And cultivating that attitude can help us forgive when the need arises to do so. One spiritually-minded young wife shared with us how she managed to forgive her husband when he was short and irritable with her. She said, “I know that’s not the way he wants to be. He wants to be a man who pleases God, and usually he is. Some difficult circumstances have him out of sorts right now.” That is what it means to be understanding, and that attitude helped her forgive.



As God Has Forgiven

He Pays for Our Offenses

Have you ever had someone apologize to you, and you responded with something like, “Oh, don’t worry about it. It was nothing. It didn’t bother me at all”? You probably thought your attitude conveyed genuine forgiveness. But it didn’t. In fact, you had probably already complained to several people about what that person did to you, revealing that it really did bother you. And it probably affected the way you acted toward the person. Forgiveness is more than pretending the offense didn’t happen, or pretending it didn’t hurt. Forgiveness is facing the fact that it did happen and admitting that it did hurt, but deciding to pay for the offense ourselves. That is what God did. In Paul’s second epistle to the Corinthians he assures them that God was not counting their trespasses against them (2 Corinthians 5:19). How could a holy God not count our trespasses against us? Paul explains how. “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (5:21). He could forgive us because He was willing to bear the penalty of our sin in the person of His son. Or as Peter put it, He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross (1 Peter 2:24). When an offense is committed, somebody has to pay. When justice prevails, the offender pays. But when forgiveness is granted, the offended party himself pays.

Our sins offended God’s infinite holiness, but He Himself paid the debt they incurred. When Jesus Christ bowed His head in death, He cried, “It is finished.” That is one word in the Greek text, a word sometimes used in business transactions of the day. When written across a bill it meant, “Paid in full.” There is nothing we can add to what Christ has done, nothing we can do to deserve His forgiveness and nothing we can pay to secure it. God in His grace has paid for our offenses in full and has absolved us of our guilt forever. That grace is at the heart of forgiveness. Our failure to appreciate this truth is one of the major reasons we find it so difficult to forgive others. That was the point of Jesus’ parable of the unmerciful servant (Matthew 18:23-35), which He told in answer to Peter’s question about how many times he had to forgive a brother who sinned against him. It was the story of a king who wanted to settle accounts with his slaves. One of them owed him the enormous sum of \$10,000,000. There was no way he could possibly repay it, so the king commanded that he and his entire family be sold in order to recoup a little of his loss. “The slave therefore falling down, prostrated himself before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will repay you everything’” (Matthew 18:26). He wants an extension of time. He thinks that given enough time he can pay his debt.



As God Has Forgiven

“And the lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt” (v. 27). He got a whole lot more than an extension of time. In an act of unparalleled mercy and grace, the king cancelled his entire debt, forgave him fully. He himself paid his slave’s debt in full. But understanding alone is not forgiveness. It is merely an important preparatory step. We see the heart of forgiveness in the next thing God does. That king pictures God, and what he did dramatizes the tremendous price God paid for our eternal forgiveness. But in the story, the slave never fully grasped what the king had done. He never received the king’s forgiveness. He still thought he had to pay, and that somehow he could pay. That is the point of what follows. He went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him the equivalent of about \$20, and he grabbed him by the throat and began to choke him and demand his money. His fellow slave pleaded with him to have patience, promising to repay him everything he owed. But he was unwilling. He threw his fellow slave in prison until he should pay back his debt. What a hypocrite—to be forgiven so much but refuse to forgive so little!

That is exactly what some of us professing Christians are doing. We have little understanding of the reality and immensity of God’s gracious forgiveness. And because we misunderstand God’s grace and think we have to pay Him off with a certain level of performance for the forgiveness He has offered us, we think we have the right to turn around and demand payment from others before we have to forgive them. They have wronged us, so they owe us and now they have to pay. And we are going to see that they do, in one way or another. So we begin making our demands. We may demand an apology, insist that they crawl back to us and admit their blame. “It’s all your fault,” we insist. “Admit it.” We may demand that they try to undo the wrong they have committed against us, to change the unchangeable past. We may demand a guarantee that they will never do it again.

If they will not pay what we think they owe, we may punish them. We can do that with an angry tirade, or we can change our tactics and snub them with the silent treatment, acting as though they weren’t there. In addition to that, we will probably tell others about the awful things they have done to us so we can put them in a bad light with their friends. That will fix them. We may even take them to court. But one way or another, we are going to make them pay. That was the problem in Corinth. Believers were taking each other to court over trivial matters. They had not grasped the meaning of God’s grace and the reality of how much God had forgiven them. “Why not rather be wronged?” Paul asked. “Why not rather be defrauded?” (1 Corinthians 6:7).



As God Has Forgiven

It is far better to suffer insult, injury, loss or damage ourselves than risk the slightest possibility of inflicting it on other believers. That is the essence of forgiveness—paying the damages ourselves, canceling every demand, giving up the right to seek any kind of revenge, blatant or subtle, overt or covert. It is giving up our right to hurt others simply because they have hurt us. That is what God does for us, and that is what He wants us to do for others.

Do you remember what happened to the slave who refused to forgive in Jesus' parable? When his fellow slaves saw what he had done, they were grieved and reported it to the king. He called the slave to him and said, "You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you entreated me. Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, even as I had mercy on you?" And he handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that he owed. Jesus concludes the story by saying, "So shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart" (Matthew 18:35). That is a frightening thought. We are not sure who the torturers are, but some have suggested that they are the inner tormentors that plague the person who refuses to forgive—the acid of anger, resentment, bitterness, malice, guilt, depression and despair that eats at us and destroys us. What a horrible plight!

Dr. S. I. McMillen tells of a college student who came to his office suffering from burning sensations in his upper abdomen as well as acute indigestion. Medication did not seem to help, and the doctor was baffled with the case. One day a fellow student reported to him of hearing the young man give a heated diatribe denouncing some people who had defrauded his grandfather, and with whom he was determined to get even one way or another. The doctor confronted the student with his grudge and encouraged him to forgive, but he refused. His condition eventually got so bad that he had to drop out of school.¹⁰ As much as forgiveness may cost us, the expense is usually greater when we withhold it, particularly in terms of inner tormentors.

He Seeks Our Fellowship

The aim of forgiveness is reconciliation. There is no such thing as forgiveness that says, "Well, I'll forgive him, but I don't ever want to be close to him again. Let him live his life and I'll live mine." That is not the way God's forgiveness operates. He seeks out sinful people like us (see Luke 19:10). He actually reaches out to His enemies and endeavors to reconcile them to Himself (Romans 5:10).



As God Has Forgiven

But as you might expect, reconciliation is a two-way street. In order for the sinner to be reconciled to God he must acknowledge his sin and repent. And there is a lesson in that for us. One-sided forgiveness on our part may relieve the bitterness in us and drain some of the tension out of the relationship. But there can never be true reconciliation until there has been loving confrontation and repentance, until the wrong has been worked through together, until both parties have acknowledged their wrong and both are willing to trust each other again. We cannot demand that other people repent. We cannot insist that they work through the wrong with us. But we can acknowledge our part of the wrong, then reach out to them and let them know we are willing to work at reconciliation. That is all God asks of us.

If you are the offended party, your responsibility is to take the first step. “And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother” (Matthew 18:15). You must do it in love and meekness, but you must do it.

If you are the offender, again, your responsibility is to take the initiative. “If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering” (Matthew 5:23-24).

If your brother has something against you, then evidently you have offended him, and you are to make the first move. The Scripture knows nothing like, “Well it was more his fault. He should come to me.” God wants alienated brothers and sisters in Christ to be reconciled. And whichever role you fit, the offended or the offender, if you want to obey the Word of God you will reach out. Biblically, it is always your move.

Is there a wall between you and some other believers? You have been hurt, more than you ever thought you could. God wants you to forgive just as He has forgiven you in Christ. Be understanding toward them in their weakness. Be willing to pay for their offenses in full. Put the wrong behind you permanently, and then reach out in love to effect a reconciliation. You will contribute to greater harmony in the Body of Christ. You will feel better emotionally and physically. You will enjoy life more. You will find greater reality in your walk with God. You will experience greater effectiveness in your spiritual service. And God will be glorified!



Praying for One Another

By: Dr. Will Bruce

Every Christian in our modern world is under constant satanic pressure and attack. We must bear one another's burdens as we see these pressures escalating. We can and must do it by regular, specific prayer. So much of our praying is limited to just, "Lord, bless ...," or, "Lord, meet the need of ..." We are admonished in Galatians 6:2 to bear one another's burdens. Some burdens are too heavy to be borne alone because of a sudden flood of problems, lack of adequate Bible teaching or spiritual immaturity. On the other hand, Galatians 6:5 tells us there are burdens for which each one must take responsibility. He must seek God's help and do what he can for himself.

In 2 Corinthians 1:8-11, Paul writes of the extreme pressures that can be handled only through the prayers of others. To be guilty of the sin of prayerlessness is to be guilty of the worst form of practical atheism. It is actually saying we can get along without His help while the evidence is very clear on every hand that we cannot. Could it be that the sin of prayerlessness stems from our unbelief that He is a living God who exercises direct influence on the affairs of men? Instead of waiting until crisis problems develop which result in panic praying for others, we need to trust God to protect them as we pray Spirit-led, thoughtful, caring prayers before the problems overwhelm them, and they are unable to cope. We need to engage in major battles, not just minor skirmishes, moving from surface praying to in-depth praying. We need to pray both defensively and offensively. Praying for others is vital to our own spiritual growth. If we pray for them at all we often get bogged down with the material or the trivial and do not move on to the spiritual and the eternal.

Where are our priorities? Often they are so clouded by humanistic and materialistic philosophies on the one hand and the pressures of the day on the other that we ignore the spiritual almost entirely. Needless to say, we do not cease to intercede for material needs as we learn to pray protectively for spiritual needs and growth. We need to progress beyond, "Lord, bless John and Mary," and be specific, thus moving from crisis praying to protective praying. For example: Fred or Jane is unemployed. We pray for a job, as we should, but what is God saying in this circumstance? What are the spiritual lessons to be learned? What are the attitudes, the frustrations, the mental depressions, the fears? How about the interpersonal relationships within and outside the family? Is God glorified in this time of stress by their actions and reactions? Many times in our very limited intercession for others we pray for deliverance from difficult circumstance, sickness, or accident. We forget to ask that Fred or Jane will take God's more than ample provision and learn the lessons God has for both in this trial. Our concern is not necessarily for the removal of the problem but for victory in it and God's glory. Daniel was not kept out of the lion's den. He was kept in it!



Praying for One Another

Another example: After six years of seeing the happy marriage of a fine young couple who have been leading the young people's group, we find that they have filed for divorce on grounds of incompatibility. They say, "We no longer love each other." We petition God with deep concern for them in this crisis, but have we been praying for them protectively, strategically, specifically and with discernment during their years of married life? As we recognize the absolute necessity of praying protectively for one another and bearing one another's burdens, we must not excuse ourselves by saying, "How can I pray for them when they do not tell me their needs?" Others' needs are often similar to our own. As we think of their needs, His Word and His Spirit will lead us in prayer.

PRAY THAT THE PERSON FOR WHOM WE ARE INTERCEDING:

... will realize his present exalted position in Christ.

Paul places the utmost importance on the child of God entering into a mature partnership with the Father partially achieved by realizing his present exalted position before God in heaven now through the work of the Lord Jesus on the cross. It is only as we acknowledge who we really are in Christ that we can live that new identity. Many believers seem to be ignorant of this. Pray that others will get their true identity and self-worth from who they are in Christ and not from success, failure or what others say or think about them.

... will present himself as a living sacrifice.

In Romans 12:1, 2 Paul presents the ultimate and totally necessary step of Christian dedication. This is presenting our bodies and all we have and are as a living sacrifice to God. This commitment is not essential to salvation, but no progress will be made in the Christian life without it. Pray that others, like Paul, will cry out, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" and then do it.

... will be filled with the Holy Spirit.

The Lord commands us to be filled (Ephesians 5:18). The filling of the Holy Spirit is not optional equipment for the Christian. Nothing in the spiritual life is accomplished without His power and in-filling. In the measure that we are not Spirit-filled we are self-centered, selfish and carnal. Pray that the believer will allow the Holy Spirit to work daily in his life.

Praying for One Another



... will be regular and systematic in the study of God's Word.

It is essential for us to pray specifically that the one we are praying for will take the Word of God as his food, guide, companion, only source of information about God and the spiritual life, only authority, and the ultimate fountain of joy in this life (Psalm 119). Pray, too, that as he is in the Word he will appropriate it and obey it, let God's Word guide him, show him his blind spots, and keep him balanced.

... will have the mind of Christ.

In 1 Corinthians 2:11-16 the spiritual man is seen as having both the spirit of man and the Spirit of God. Thus we pray for the believer, that having supernatural life in Christ through the indwelling Holy Spirit, he may appropriate the mind of Christ in all matters of life. Pray that he will choose to make Christlike decisions in regard to priorities, goals, and guidance, with sharpened insights so as not to waste time on good things and miss God's best. Pray that he will constantly live with eternity's values in view, an attitude impossible to attain without the realization that the Christian life is a miracle life from beginning to end (Galatians 3:1-3).

... will grow daily in Christian maturity.

Nothing is more tragic than a twenty-year-old infant! Many today are in that spiritual condition after having been saved for a number of years. Pray that the believer will see that after the crisis experience of being born again there is the lifelong process of daily growth in Christ that takes patience, time, discipline, and the power of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:10; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12 and 13). The mature Christian must have a spirit of forgiveness with no root of bitterness because of any treatment of himself or others. He must learn to handle stress, frustrations, and unfulfilled expectations in a Christlike manner.

... will appropriate the full armor of God.

Pray that the believer will have his eyes opened to the dangers of certain satanic attacks and will put on the full armor of God. The armor plus the skillful use of the authority he has in the victorious Christ insures full protection (Ephesians 6:10-18; Colossians 2:1-15). Pray that the one for whom we are praying will fulfill his responsibility as one born for battle, resist temptation and repent promptly of any sin in his life.



Praying for One Another

... will be alert to Satan's strategy.

Pray that the believer will not only be kept from sin but also that he will be aware of the threefold satanic temptations: the lust of the flesh, (fulfilling any of our desires outside the will of God) is Satan's effort to get us out of the will of God; the lust of the eyes (coveting that which God does not allow at a particular time or place) is Satan's effort to get us to distrust God; the pride of life (self effort or independence from God) is Satan's effort to destroy our confidence in God (1 John 2:16). Also he must realize that he is incapable of meeting Satan in his own strength. Victory comes only as he takes the victory of Calvary as his own (1 Corinthians 15:57, 58). Pray that he will discern between satanic pressure and Godly chastening, and remain keenly alert to all satanic deception.

... will not love the world system.

Pray that the child of God will have mental, emotional, doctrinal and moral stability in a day in which the pressures from peer groups, the media, and the world are increasing in their opposition to Biblical standards. The believer must know that love of the world is not consistent with loving God (1 John 2:15-17). Pray that he will realize that his love for God is expressed through obedience. (John 14:15, 21, 23)

... will have a spirit of brokenness and humility.

Pray that the believer's pride will be broken and that he will deal with his sins through repentance and seeking forgiveness. Psalm 51:17 says: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." Pray for willingness to give and take, willingness to change, and willingness to see another's viewpoint. Pray that the believer will have an understanding spirit in place of a judgmental one. Pray that instead of looking for someone to blame in various situations he will be willing to say, "I am sorry," or "I was wrong."

... will have a servant's heart.

Pray this believer will be convinced of the Lord's desire for him: that he be a servant of God and of his brothers in Christ. (Mk. 10:44-45)



Praying for One Another

... will build a Scriptural family.

Pray that the one for whom you are praying will look neither to the world nor to carnal Christians but to the Word of God, and that he will fulfill his God-ordained place as head and spiritual leader of his home. Pray that his wife will be submissive and seek the Lord's approval as did Sarah when she called Abraham, "Master" (1 Peter 3:6). Pray that as parents they will be firm, yet loving, realizing the absolute necessity of being godly models for their children. Pray that the husband and wife will maintain a balance among family, ministry, and job responsibilities (Ephesians 5:14 to 6:4), that all in the family will love each other with agape love, seeking the highest good for each other, rather than demanding their rights. Pray for those who are single that they will look to the Lord for His choice of a life partner; or pray that their lives will glorify God as singles.

... will become an effective prayer warrior.

Pray that the believer will have a vital and effective prayer life from a clean heart. It is absolutely necessary to keep short accounts with God. "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me" (Psalm 66:18). See also 1 John 1:9. Pray that his praying will be Biblically based, specific, consistent, steadfast in the Spirit, in faith, and with understanding.

... will know God's hand on him in physical and material things.

Pray that the one you are praying for will have the measure of health that will best glorify God. Pray that when set aside by ill health he will learn the lessons God has for him and draw upon Divine resources. Pray also for safety in travel, financial provision in keeping with God's plan for him, and proper use of the time and money God entrusts to him.

... will engage in prayerful worship.

To truly worship is to truly serve. Pray that the believer will not be on a treadmill of activity, substituting it for time with the Lord in true worship. Pray, too, that he will learn to praise the Lord, that he will give thanks for who he is in Christ, for spiritual growth, and for the fact that "God is a living God, He has spoken in the Bible; He means what He says, and will do all He has promised." (J.H. Taylor)



Praying for One Another

... will be involved in an accountability team.

Pray that he will not be deceived into thinking that he can stand alone and grow spiritually. Pray that he will select a group, or at least one person who is spiritually mature and committed to walking with God, to whom he will be especially accountable and faithful in all areas of his life. Pray that this commitment will be characterized by openness, honesty and teachableness. Pray that above all he will recognize his accountability to God: "So then, everyone shall give an account of himself to God." (Romans 14:12)

... will reach out to the unsaved.

Pray that others will love the lost as the Lord Jesus does and will reach out to a lost and dying world with the message of salvation. The Lord loved the unlovely and the destitute; His disciples should do no less. This love will best be communicated to the lost by a sacrificial sharing of the good news of Christ, sharing of themselves, and at times sharing materially with the hungry and needy. Pray that as God reveals His will as to the type and place of service at home or abroad, those who are His own will respond without hesitation.

SO THEN, HOW DO WE PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER?

- Confess sin and let the blood of Jesus cleanse.
- Prayer must flow from a cleansed vessel.
- Psalm 66:18, "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me."
- Be tied to the mind of Christ so thoroughly that you think His thoughts about His embattled saints.
- Be motivated by love for God and a desire to help others (Hebrews 6:10, NIV).
- Pray fervently to be led by the Holy Spirit to the exact needs of the one for whom you ARE praying.



Praying for One Another

- Be specific, systematic, and steadfast in praying for others.
- Agree in prayer with others, the “two or three” of Matt. 18:19-20.
- Learn to saturate a situation or problem with prayer.
- Pray with the authority you have in Christ to bind the power of Satan. (Matthew 18:18, Mark 3:27).
- Pray the prayer of faith and claim the victory (1 Cor. 15:57-58.)
- Pray for others as you pray for yourself. Any problem you have others probably have, even if in a slightly different form.
- Use a passage of Scripture as you pray for others. Here are some suggestions: Ephesians 1:15-23; Colossians 1:9-12; Ephesians 3:14-21. (Use Scripture also in praying for yourself.)

ACCEPT YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

May you accept your responsibility of interceding for others by getting down to the real business of praying for them. “O God, awaken us all to our responsibility to pray for one another so that all Christians may glorify You and fulfill the purpose for which we have been saved!”