



We Pray for One Another

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WHEN
HAVE YOU
REALLY
ENJOYED
BEING PART
OF A GROUP?

The
POINT >

The church is strengthened as we pray.

> EPHESIANS 3:14-21

¹⁴For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, ¹⁶that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

²⁰Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

FACT:

The youngest marathon runner in the world is Budhia Singh. He finished 48 marathons before his fifth birthday.¹



LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // BIBLE

The Bible consists of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments and is the only inspired written Word of God.

Some things are just better when done with a group. It's one thing to grab a basketball and shoot hoops, but you can't play a game of basketball by yourself—it takes a team.

Every year, millions of people decide to take up running to stay fit, and many more choose to walk. However, after only a few weeks, many of the newly committed fitness buffs call it quits. What causes some people to stick it out and others to quit? Really, there are a lot of reasons. However, one of the biggest reasons is the support and encouragement of other people. The miles of training and the pace of race day can be difficult, and when you're alone, it's easier to just say, "I've had enough!" But running with others has a way of providing just enough encouragement to keep us going.

There's strength in numbers. And this truth applies not only to our fitness regiment, but to our spiritual lives as well. God certainly hears the prayer of the solitary individual, but when we know we have others praying for us or when we gather with others for the purpose of prayer, something special happens. As a church, we need one another, and we support one another through our prayers.

EPHESIANS 3:14-17a

1 When have you experienced something that was obviously an answer to a prayer?

2 How does prayer help us experience the power and presence of Christ?

EPHESIANS 3:17b-19

3 How have you experienced the height and width of God's love?

4 What about God's love is most amazing to you?

5 How does knowing you are loved by God give you confidence and assurance?

EPHESIANS 3:20-21

6 When has God gone above and beyond what you asked Him for?

7 How do we know what brings glory to God?

8 What are some specific ways your group can pray for the church?

Prayer is not about us; it's ultimately about God and His glory. #BSFLtheChurch





LIVE IT OUT



LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // BIBLE

The Bible consists of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments and is the only inspired written Word of God.

Among the greatest privileges associated with faith in Christ is our relationship with God, and relationships are built on communication. Therefore, prayer is essential for every Christian. Yet, many believers don't pray as we should. One of the most effective tools for growing in prayer is praying Scripture. It helps us to focus our prayers. It gives us confidence when we pray, because we know our prayers are established on truth and not just our opinions. Plus, we see believers in both the Old and New Testaments, as well as Jesus, praying Scripture (Neh. 9:5-37; Acts 4:24-26; Mark 15:34).

> CHRIST

Communication is key to any relationship, and this includes our relationship with God.

9 What habits or practices characterize your prayer life?

10 What plan will you put into place this week to help your prayer life grow?

GOD

JESUS

HOLY SPIRIT

BIBLE

SALVATION

CREATION

CHURCH

PEOPLE

FAMILY

COMMUNITY
& WORLD



> COMMUNITY

We are to pray as worship to God, to express our dependence upon Him for meeting our needs, and to show gratitude for all God gives. Further, we are to pray continually for our fellow Christians.

11 Whose needs do you feel burdened to pray for? What are those needs?

12 This week, ask at least five friends about their needs—it's certain there are many needs you're not aware of. Write down all these needs in a journal or make a note in your phone, and pray for them every day.

> CULTURE

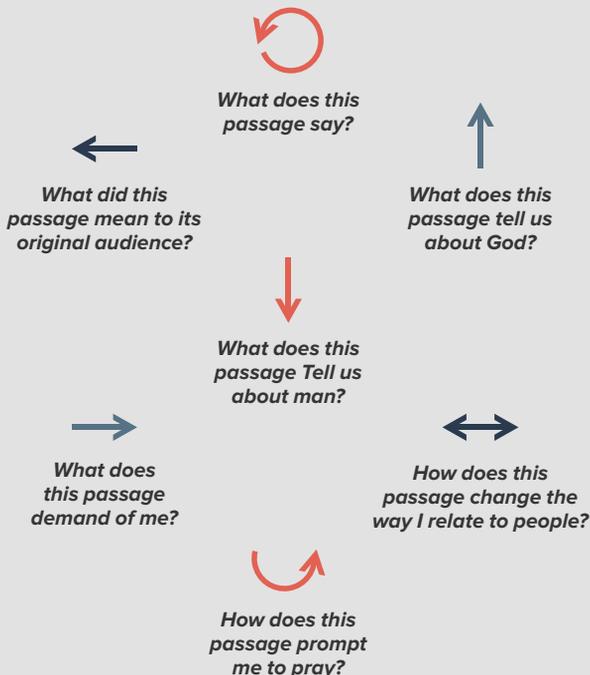
Many times, even if someone is not a follower of Jesus, they appreciate knowing that a Christian is praying for them.

13 Identify the needs of a non-believer and commit to praying regularly for them. Let them know that you're praying. God's answers to your prayers can go a long way in helping others see the truth about Him.

DAILY DEVOTIONS



The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



Day One **JAMES 5:13**

Suffering and cheerfulness represent the ends of the spectrum of the human experience. There will certainly be times when things go right, when we're happy and totally aware of the many things we have to be thankful for. On the other hand, there will be times when it seems like everything is going wrong, and we're overwhelmed by life's difficulties. What Pastor James says is pray! In all of life's circumstances, we should live with an attitude of prayer and praise to God. The natural response to suffering should be to express our dependence upon God to help us through. The natural response to things going well should be to joyfully express our gratitude and praise to God, who provides all good things in our lives. Whatever the circumstances, we are to pray.

> **Why is it important to live continually in prayer?**

> **What do you have to thank God for? Express your gratitude.**

Day Two

JAMES 5:14



When we go through difficult times, we are ourselves to go to God in prayer. But this isn't all. We're to invite others, specifically the pastors in our church, to pray for us. James wrote to Christians who dealt with a specific kind of "sick." Because of their faith in Christ, these believers were suffering intense persecution. Sickness likely refers to being weak and ill from the abuse they suffered. James instructed them to have church leaders anoint the sick with oil and pray that God would provide comfort and healing. God uses the prayers of others to make a powerful difference in our lives.

➤ **What are you weak from right now?**

➤ **Who will you invite to pray for you this week?**

Day Three

JAMES 5:15a

We understand that the sick person here was so weak that he was, perhaps literally, unable to stand up. This is why he needed the Lord to raise him up. We don't know specifically what led to this circumstance, but we know this sick person was in a desperate situation. At times, we try to solve our own problems until we come to the point of absolute desperation, and then we beg God to rescue us and turn to others for help. But the truth is that our first response should be pursuing prayer and the support of others. No matter where we find ourselves, even if we've neglected prayer in the past, God calls us to turn to Him. When we pray in faith and are surrounded by others doing the same, God works powerfully through those prayers and brings healing, particularly spiritual healing, into our lives.

➤ **When have you felt like you couldn't go on in terms of your faith?**

➤ **How have the prayers of others made a difference in your life?**

Day Four

JAMES 5:15b-16a

It's not enough to ask God for healing. We have to confess our sins, turn away from pursuing the wrong things, and devote our lives to Jesus. Many people want the blessings of God but aren't willing to give up the worldly things they want. God's physical healing in our lives points to the spiritual healing He wants to bring to our hearts. Therefore, we can never expect healing without repentance. One of the best ways we can make sure to be consistent in putting away sin from our lives is to confess to a trusted friend or leader. If we sin in secret, then repent in secret, it's far too easy to fall back into old habits. But if we invite others to walk with us through our struggles, their prayer and support can make a big difference.

- **Why is confession and repentance closely tied to healing?**

- **Why does James call us to confess our sins to one another?**

Day Five

JAMES 5:16b



Many people today believe they have God's favor based on the fact that they're a "good person." Good, in this sense, is essentially the same as righteous—doing what's right in God's sight. This "good person" perspective couldn't be more wrong, because there has only ever been one truly good person, and that's Jesus. When James refers to a righteous person, he's not referring specifically to Christ or to someone who's lived up to God's perfect standard. He's speaking of people whose life pattern is to follow Christ. When we pray as Jesus would, we can trust that He intercedes before the Father on our behalf. Therefore, the sincere prayers of faithful followers of Christ are effective in bringing about God's purposes in our lives.

- **Why is it so important that we live righteous lives?**

- **When have you seen prayers have a powerful effect?**