



Praying for Other Fishers and Those they Would seek to Catch

By Kurt von Schleicher

Have you ever wondered about how to begin praying for your lost loved ones and those you work around every day? Many of us—if not all of us—owe our own personal conversion to some friends or family who prayed the price for us so that we would come into the Kingdom of God on Christ's terms (yes, according to the Bible through true repentance and faith in Jesus Christ's finished work on the cross by grace with no meritorious works or anything else added to that).

Did you know that 73% of the American population believes that praying for people will heal their illness? But sinners have a spiritual cancer of sort that is worse than all diseases. Did you know that 8 out of 10 people in America do pray. But praying to the Father in the Name of Jesus is what is important.

What about your posture in prayer? In the Bible we see believers praying: Lifting their hands, lying down, kneeling, standing, sitting, bowing, pounding their chests, lifting their eyes, closing their eyes. People in the Bible prayed: during battle, in a cave, in a closet, in a garden, on a mountain side, in a home, by a river, in the sea, in Hades, in a street, in a bed, in the wilderness, in a prison, in the belly of a great fish (you know who that was). Did you know that God's Scriptures offer us over 500 verses dealing with prayer. It's so imperative!

Prayer is the big weapon for the salvation of souls. It's also very important for our Christian friends who are seeking to fish for people, or should be doing that. Intelligent argument and clever debate without prayer mean barren dry and fruitless witnessing. Many Christians have become adept at winning the argument, but they regularly miss leading the lost people to Jesus because they don't pray or witness right. Do not spend all your time bashing your head against the arguments of lost people or against hyper Calvinists who don't want you verbally witnessing. Instead bash into Heaven so to speak with strong breakthrough faith (not faith in faith, but faith in God) with earnest fervent prayers on behalf of those you want to see saved. Our time is short, and this is the best place to start!

Here are Eight Qualifications for Your Prayers:

1. *Prayer should be offered from a humble Christian rather than someone who is full of themselves. Ps. 10:17; Luke 18:13–14*
2. *Prayer should be bold and to the point. 1 John 5:13-15*
3. *Prayer should be in faith, (not faith in faith, or in anyone or in anything other than God including yourself). Heb. 11:6*
4. *Prayer should be sincere and earnest. Ps. 145:18*
5. *Prayer should be simple and biblical. Matt. 6:7*
6. *Prayer should be officered with persistence. Luke 18:7; Col. 4:2*
7. *Prayer should be definite and clear. Ps. 27:4; Acts 12:5*
8. *Prayer should be in accordance with God's Word and will. 1 John 5:14*

Why do we pray? (See Matt. 6-9):

1. *Jesus told us to pray (that alone should be enough).*
2. *Praying is God's appointed way for us to obtain things we need and sinners need Christ more than blessings or anything else.*
3. *It is God's way for us to join Him in the fishing process and overcome anxiety, fear of rejection and worry.*
4. *Prayer helps us develop godly character and be prepared for Christ's soon return.*
5. *Not so we can enjoy the feelings, the buzz, the applause of people or think we are someone big having God's anointing, but so we can be empowered for ministry and evangelism.*

“Pray for one another.”—James 5:16

In everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.—Philippians 4:6

“Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Have faith in God.’”—Mark 11:22

“I beg you.... strive together with me in prayers to God for me.”—Romans 15:30

“[God] is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think.”
—Ephesians 3:20

We Pray For The Lost That We Hope To Catch For Christ...

- 1. **Out of love** - if we love our neighbor as ourselves we will want him or her to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior too.*
- 2. **Out of holy fear** - if we realize that Hell is for real and for eternity then we will not want our friends, family or neighbors to go there.*
- 3. **Out of knowledge of the nature and ways of God** - Who loves to be merciful and earnestly desires that all individuals should be saved (born from above) and come to a knowledge of the truth.*
- 4. **Out of knowledge of the power of prayer that has the right address attached** - prayer often succeeds when all else has failed. We pray to God through Jesus Christ His Son. It is the only way we have of asking God to move in someone's life and heart. Sure we can commune silently with the Holy Spirit and with Christ as we go and tell people, there doesn't need to be some hyper strict restraints if we are respectfully and biblically talking to God about lost souls. It's a loving relationship we enjoy with God and want to see our friends also establish.*

We all know that the prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. We know that prayers according to God's will are answered. This is not spiritual manipulation from a distance. Rather prayer grants the person the ability to see clearly and make a free and informed choice, free from the manipulative bondages and blindness that the Devil tries to impose. We can legitimately pray that a person may be able to freely choose between the mercy and glory of God and the temporary trash of this world. We can pray that their blindness be removed and Christ shown to them convincingly and clearly. Imagine if we could present every non-Christian with a clear convincing presentation of the facts. Imagine they were made to choose between the love of Jesus Christ, eternal glory, a magnificent resurrection body, life in heaven etc. versus pain and torment and death and disgrace for all eternity. Only a crazy person would choose to remain a non-Christian. Prayer allows the unbeliever to glimpse the facts for what they are and to make a sensible choice. It is not unfair or manipulative -it is the fairest, most freeing way we have.

Here Are Some Specific Things To Pray For:

- 1. That God will make them curious about spiritual things. The first hurdle is often sheer apathy with regard to the truth. Pray that God will stir them up to search out the truth about life, about science, about the universe and about everything else ...for themselves to be convinced.*
- 2. Pray that God will surround your friend with witnessing Christians. Pray that they will feel absolutely surrounded and unable to escape from God. This forces people to consider Christ and the difference between their lives and the lives of true Christians.*

3. Ask that they may clearly grasp that they are sinful. Unless there is a clear perception of sin there can be no true repentance from sin. They must know that they are in the wrong.

4. That God will grant them an almighty thirst for God's Word. That even as unbelievers they will want to read the Bible especially Genesis, Psalms, Isaiah and the Gospels.

5. Plead for a clear understanding of Jesus as Savior and Lord. With some of the heresies abroad today Jesus is often misunderstood. Pray that your friends may see Jesus as real and historical and also as divine. Pray that God may clear up any misunderstandings in these areas and be prepared to answer questions. Be clear about Jesus being the only way to a true and favorable relationship with God.

6. Intercede for your friends at any points where they are being held under Satan's power. Ask for release from wrong ways and bad influences. Their friends may be a real obstacle to their salvation, pray that they may not give in to them but may instead have the courage to believe in God. There is today an increasing interest in the occult and some people are badly hooked -pray for their release from this dark addiction so that they may be free to believe.

7. Ask for grace toward your friends so that they may develop godly tastes which lead them toward Jesus and salvation. Pray that they may start liking Christian music or if they are literature buffs that C.S. Lewis, John Donne, Milton and T.S. Elliot may hold a fascination for them. If classical music - pray that the great Christian works of Bach and Handel may intrigue them. If rock, rap, or modern alternative music styles appeal then pray that sound contemporary Christian rock options (with good biblical messages in them) may become their passion (and go buy them some of this music or take them to a concert where some for of an altar call will be given). Pray that in everything that appeals to their non-sinful tastes will be used to draw them Christ.

How to Pray for Witnessing Believers

When you study the Bible and effective intercession, you will see that a whole lot of the praying that was prayed in the past, in the New Testament was offered up to God on behalf of believers. Jesus indeed prayed for His disciples a lot. Check out Christ's soul-winning prayer in John 17. Paul also prayed for believers. He prayed and also taught Christians the importance of praying for believers that they would become mature worshippers and disciple-ers and witnesses in his epistles (see Eph. 1: 15-19; 3:14-19; 1 Thess. 3:11-13). As saints according the God's Word, we definitely should lift one another up to the throne of grace daily and pray that we will have boldness along with open doors and opportunities to witness out loud. One writer said it well, *"More believers on their knees praying will result in more Christians on their feet evangelizing."* Prayer for believers from believers that focuses on the fulfillment of Christ's Great Commission should be at the heart of every church's and every Christian's prayer life. The following prayer suggestions can help believers pray with a view toward seeing closure on the Great Commission.

Pray For...

- *Christians to use Matthew 9:37-38, John 17:11-24, and Colossians 1:9-11 as a guide for them in praying and in seeing how Christ sent believers out into His harvest fields (Matt. 9:38)*
- *Christians not to be too busy with lesser things and to be where Christ is and join Him in His work (John 17:24).*
- *Christians to have Christ's joy overflowing—that it would be made full in themselves (John 17:13)*
- *Christ to keep witnessing Christians in His Name with His godly character (John 17:11)*
- *Christ to guard and protect believers from the evil one (John 17:15)*
- *Christ to sanctify (set apart and clean up the habits of) believers in and with the truth of God (John 17:17)*
- *Christians to be unified in love with one mission, one purpose and one Spirit, even as the Father and Son are one (John 17:21-22)*
- *Christians to be filled with spiritual wisdom, insight and passion and be pleasing in all ways to Christ, strengthened spiritually, mentally, physically, and emotionally, and bearing fruit in every good work (Col. 1:10-11).*

I really want to challenge you to go out from time to time and leave that comfortable cozy Christian huddle with your righteous friends and tell someone about Jesus today! Better yet, go take some of those Christians with you. By faith and persistence, get them involved in praying for and winning lost people.

"Prayer isn't an instant formula for getting yourself blessed. It isn't an end in it's self. It's a means to building intimacy with God. The disciples asked the Lord, how now do we pray and Jesus didn't point to Solomon's great prayer or to Jabez's prayer or anyone else's prayer. We are not to mention prayer mantras as the heathen do. Communion with the Father is the reward of prayer itself. The sweetness of prayer is in the offering of it. Pascal said that, "there is a God-shaped vacuum in us that only God can fill." If we don't fill it with our relationship to Jesus, we will try to fill it with other things. Build vertical relationship, don't fall for fads and formulas. Don't take narrative passages on prayer and make doctrines out of them. Don't build doctrines out of what someone thought, did or even prayed. Jesus didn't give us a prayer mantra, but a prayer manner. We pray because we are commanded to pray. You don't have to have a formula in order for Jesus to give you what you need or to bless you. My children don't have to have one in order for me to give good things to them. The Lord's prayer is a prayer manner."

–Hank Hanagraph

Here are some suggested intercessory prayers that you can use to stand in the gap for the salvation of lost people that you care about.

Father, in the name of Jesus, I plead that You will draw _____ to Jesus Christ in true faith and repentance (John 6:44).

In the name of Jesus, I ask You, Father, to quicken _____ who is dead in sins and trespasses (Ephesians 2:1).

Father, I ask You to bind and remove Satan's work in _____'s life and to open _____'s eyes to the truth of the gospel (2 Corinthians 4:4).

Holy Spirit, I pray that You would convince _____ that he/she is lost, separated from God, and headed to hell (Romans 3:23).

Holy Spirit, in the name of Jesus, I pray that You would destroy any false ideas that _____ has about Jesus Christ and salvation through Him (Proverbs 14:12).

Lord Jesus, I plead that You will seek out _____ and save him/her from his/her sins and eternal condemnation (Luke 19:10).

Father, I pray that You will open _____'s heart so that he/she will receive and believe the gospel (Acts 16:14).

Holy Spirit, I ask You through Your power and _____'s circumstances to prepare him/her to hear and receive the Word of God (Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23).

Holy Spirit, I plead that _____ will understand the gospel when it is presented to him/her so that the devil cannot snatch it away (Matthew 13: 5, 9).

Holy Spirit, in the name of Jesus, I plead that the Word of God will take root in _____'s life and bring about true salvation in _____'s life (Matthew 13:6, 20-21).

Father, I ask that the pleasures of this world and the pressures of life will not choke the Word of God that has been sown into _____'s life (Matthew 13:7, 22).

Father, I plead that You will deliver _____ from the kingdom of darkness and place _____ into the kingdom of Your dear Son (Colossians 1:13).

Father, I pray that _____ will receive the free gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ the Lord (Romans 6:23).

Lord Jesus, I ask that _____ will not trust in himself/herself, but that _____ will completely trust in You as his/her Savior and Lord (Galatians 2:16).

Holy God, I pray that You would grant genuine repentance to _____, a repentance that will cause him/her to hate sin and to turn from it (Acts 11:8; Luke 13:1-3).

Lord God, I plead that You would grant _____ genuine faith, a faith that trusts in Jesus alone and surrenders to Him as Lord and Savior (Ephesians 2:8-10).

Holy Spirit, I pray that You would stir _____ out of his/her indifference and complacency concerning his/her condition and his/her need of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 6:2).

I ask in the name of Jesus Christ that _____ would surrender himself/herself to the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 14:9).

Father, I pray that You will send people continually into _____'s life who will share the gospel with him/her (Romans 10:14).

Father, I plead in the name of Jesus that You will put a new heart in _____ and that You will place Your Holy Spirit in him/her (Jeremiah 42:30; Ezekiel 11:19-20).

Holy Spirit, I pray that You will cause _____ to hate sin and that You will break the power of those sins that are hindering him/her from coming to Christ (Mark 9:43-47).

Lord Jesus, I ask that _____ would surrender to You, denying himself/herself, take up the Cross, and follow You (Luke 9:23).

Father, I plead that _____ will understand that his/her only hope for forgiveness and acceptance with You is through Jesus' work on the Cross (1 Corinthians 1:18)

Father, I pray that _____ would not neglect the glorious salvation which is available through Your Son (Hebrews 2:1-3).

Lord Jesus, I pray that _____ will feel and know the burden of his/her sin and will come to You for forgiveness and salvation (Matthew 11:28-30).

Father, I plead that _____ will make a genuine commitment to Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior of his/her life (Luke 14:24-33).

Lord Jesus, I plead that _____ will not be content with the appearance of righteousness but will seek You for the transformation of his/her whole life (Matthew 23:27-29).

Father, I pray that _____ will see that his/her good works are as filthy rags in Your sight and that they will not save him/her (Isaiah 64:6).

Father, I ask that _____ would believe and trust Your Son that You sent to be the Savior of sinners (John 5:24).

Lord Jesus, I ask that _____ would not die in his/her sins but would trust You and receive eternal life (John 8:24).

Because You came into the world to save sinners, I plead with You to save _____ who is a sinner and in need of Your grace and mercy (1 Timothy 1:13-16).

Holy Spirit, I pray that You would humble _____ so that he/she sees his/her need of Jesus Christ (Psalm 18:27; Proverbs 8:13, 29:23).¹

Questions:

*(1) **Why:** Ask God to cause that lost person to wonder why they reject Jesus Christ and His salvation. Call on Him to show this person the foolishness of rejecting Christ and of living life without Him.*

*(2) **What:** Ask God to cause the lost person to start asking the question, "What is the purpose of my life?" Plead with God to plant in his or her heart an urgency concerning this question.*

*(3) **When:** Pray that God will grant this person an emptiness of heart. Ask God to show them that sin and selfishness will not satisfy. Call on God to cause this person to start asking the questions, "When will I really be free? When can I find true peace and hope?"*

*(4) **Whom:** Pray that God will cause this person to doubt all the lies that he or she has concerning Christianity. Call on God to cause the person to ask, "Whom can I trust? In whom can I find hope?"*

*(5) **How:** Plead that God will plant this question in the heart of the person, "How can I cope with my problems?" Pray that God will grant hopelessness in the heart of this person. Ask God to show this person that he or she cannot cope in his or her own power or strength. Pray that he or she will be forced to look to God.*

*(6) **Where:** Call on God to cause this person to contemplate the question, "Where will I go when I die?"*

Here's another option for you—the "Five-Finger Prayer"—to use as a guide when praying for others:

1. When you fold your hands, the thumb is nearest you. So begin by praying for those closest to you—your loved ones (Philippians 1:3-5).

2. The index finger is the pointer. Pray for those who teach—Bible teachers and preachers, and those who teach children (1 Thessalonians 5:25).

3. *The next finger is the tallest. It reminds you to pray for those in authority over you—national and local leaders, and your supervisor at work (1 Timothy 2:1-2).*

4. *The fourth finger is usually the weakest. Pray for those who are in trouble or who are suffering (James 5:13-16).*

5. *Then comes your little finger. It reminds you of your smallness in relation to God's greatness. Ask Him to supply your needs (Philippians 4:6 and 19).*

Whatever method you use, just talk with your Father. He wants to hear what's on your heart.

Praying for unbelievers that need to get caught by God through obedient fishers takes spiritual tenacity!

Evangelistic praying should include prayer for personal spiritual needs, evangelistic events and unbelievers. Prayer on behalf of lost people is clearly mandated by Jesus Christ in Matthew 6:9-10. The Apostle Paul prayed for sinners and he exhorted believers to lovingly pray for lost people (see Rom. 10:1-2; 1 Tim. 2:1-4). Use this device to pray biblically and effectively for those that are lost.

Pray for their hearts to be radically changed—that their lives will be changed from the inside out by God (not by you trying to pressure them). Pray for open receptive and repentant hearts (Luke 8:5-12)

Pray for their spiritual eyes and ears to be opened to the truth of Christ (2 Cor. 4:3-4; Matt. 13:15).

Pray for them to have God's attitude and hatred toward sin (Jn. 16:8).

Pray for the lost person to be released from the bonds of darkness so they will turn and believe (2 Cor. 10:3-4; 2 Tim 2:25-26)

Pray for a transformed lifestyle—that they would bring forth fruit meet for repentance (Rom. 12:1-2).

Pray for God to send them out to go fish for others (Matt 9:35-38).

You can do this! Yes you can. God will help you. It's time for me to stop talking about praying for the lost so that you and I can start doing this on our knees OK. And then let's go out there and tactfully tell people the Good News of Jesus Christ in His power!

¹ These suggested excellent prayer requests I adapted from Dr. Kevin Meador writings on prayer for lost people.