PRAYER AND EVANGELISM

How to Pray about our Sharing of Faith

Pray Without Ceasing...

Prayer is our starting point when it comes to sharing our faith. In prayer we express our dependence on God, the one who is the evangelist, who draws people to himself, and who enables us to show and share the faith in our daily lives. But sometimes people express an uncertainty about what or how to pray. This handout explores how to do this, and offers some prayers that could be used as part of our regular times of prayer.

Why Pray?

Here are some of the reasons why prayer is so important when it comes to sharing our faith.

- Christians believe that in some mysterious way God's activity on earth is linked to our praying, so one of the most loving acts we do for another human being is bring them to God in prayer.
- The Scriptures show us that God is the evangelist (John 15:16), so we express our dependence on the work of his Spirit in people's lives by asking him to do what he alone can do, and by being open to his nudges to join in with what he is doing in people's lives (John 15:26-27).
- We recognise that people coming to faith is a spiritual battle (2 Corinthians 4:4), and prayer is one of the weapons we have in this battle.

TALK TO GOD ABOUT PEOPLE BEFORE YOU TALK TO PEOPLE ABOUT GOD.

What do we Pray?

When it comes to evangelism, a number of Bible passages inform what we pray.

LUKE 10:2 – FOR CHRISTIANS

This is known as 'the other Lord's prayer'. Jesus specifically instructs us to pray for God to send workers out into the harvest field, because the harvest field is ripe and ready for harvest. So we pray for God to do that, for him to raise up people with a concern for those who don't yet know him, and a willingness to engage with those people wherever they might be. And of course as we pray this prayer, we realise we are praying for ourselves as well, for we are sent onto our frontlines to show and share the faith, we are the 'workers' in our spheres of life.

COLOSSIANS 4:2-6 – FOR OURSELVES

Paul urges the Christians in Colossae to pray for him in his role, and then encourages them in their role. Specifically we pray for those who lead our churches that they would have courage and clarity in their gospel proclamation. And for ourselves, we pray for opportunities, eyes to see them, courage to take them, and wisdom to know what to say.

JOHN 14:12-14 – FOR NOT YET CHRISTIANS

Jesus tells us we will do what he was doing, and that if we ask for things in his name (according to his will and purposes, and to glorify him and his Father) then he will do it. Jesus showed and shared the faith, so by implication he will long for us to do the same, and will help us to do just that. So we pray for those who aren't yet Christians, for them to come to know the grace and truth of Christ in their own lives, believing that we are praying according to his will.

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LEAD ON

How to Pray

Here are a few prayers and ways of praying we could include in our regular prayers.

FIVE A DAY

The Thy Kingdom Come encourages us to pray regularly for five people we are in contact with who don't yet know Christ. They have a variety of helpful resources to help us do that at www.thykingdomcome.global/prayer-resources.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Many Christians pray the Lord's prayer each day. John Sentamu suggests when you pray it, pray it for someone you know who isn't yet a Christian.

SOME PRAYERS

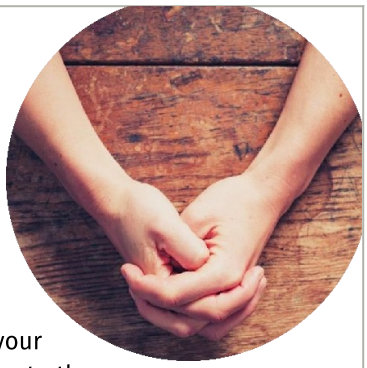
Make my life a sign of your engaging love:
may my heart be penitent,
my actions generous,
my words be sensitive.
Fill me with longing to share with others the good news I have received,
And anoint my life with your Spirit that Jesus be formed in me:
his tongue to speak in me,
his hands to work in me,
his heart to beat in me.
And so through all I do, and all I am,
and with the people where you call me to witness,
may Jesus be known
and his kingdom established.
Amen

From Stephen Cottrell, From the Abundance of the Heart.

Heavenly Father
I thank you that you love X and that you long for them to know you.
I ask you to stir up a spiritual hunger within them, take the blindness from their eyes, convict them of their need of you, and reveal Jesus to them.
Direct their steps so that they may come into contact with others Christians, and speak to them through the circumstances of life.
Bless my relationship with them and use me to draw them closer to you.
And in your good time, may they come to faith in Christ, and know him as Saviour, Lord and friend.
Amen.

Heavenly Father,
Please give me opportunities this day to share you with others.
Give me eyes to see them,
Courage to take them,
And wisdom to know what to say.
Amen

From James Lawrence, Lost for Words.



Lord Jesus Christ, I am no longer my own but yours.
In gratitude for your saving death on my behalf, I offer my life to you afresh.
Call me to the mission of your kingdom and open my eyes to the spiritual need of those around me.
Give me your love and compassion for the lost, and strengthen me with your grace to serve them and be a blessing to them.
Send me in the power of your Holy Spirit to witness to the gospel and reveal you to those I meet.
Teach me how to make disciples and where I need to change my attitudes, lifestyle and habits.
I freely and wholeheartedly commit myself to this call, knowing that in everything you will give me your inspiration, strength, and grace.
Glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you are mine and I am yours. So be it.
Let this covenant now be made on earth and be fulfilled in heaven.
Amen

From John McGinley, Mission Shaped Living.

THINGS TO PRAY FOR

Use these questions to deepen your sense of what it might be helpful to pray for someone:

- What Scripture might I pray for them?
- What passion or power is directing their life?
- What priorities shape their dairy? Who or what determines their schedule?
- Who is important to them?
- How are they doing in various aspects of their life?
  - ⇒ Physically?
  - ⇒ Intellectually?
  - ⇒ Socially?
  - ⇒ Emotionally?
  - ⇒ Spiritually?
  - ⇒ Mentally?

Keep a record of your thoughts and prayers, and in particular any answered prayers, for your encouragement and guidance.

BEST OF ALL

Write your own prayer for yourself and those you are praying for. It doesn't have to be long or eloquent, just heartfelt and meaningful.

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