

How to Say "Praying for You" and Really Mean It

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"I'll be praying for you" is a common phrase used in church. Whether it be with friends, or in life, but what does it mean to really mean to be praying for someone? What does it mean to not just talk the talk, but to pray the prayer?

Prayer is perhaps the most intimate action of our relationship with God. Through prayer we come before the Creator of all that is, was, and will be. We come into the presence of the Almighty God, the One Who has the power to part seas and raise the dead. Though we cannot control most situations we will offer prayer for others, we can seek the One Who can make a difference. Here are some simple steps to think through before you use the phrase "praying for you".

Have a Sincere Heart When You Tell Someone You'll Be Praying

A sincere heart is the root of meaning something. The position of your heart matters more than artful or eloquent words to the Lord. David was the man after God's heart, and one of his prayers about his own heart's position was clear in Psalm 51:10:

"Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from Your presence;
take not Your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,
and sustain me with a willing spirit."

It is something to seek and ask for to be in right spirit with the Lord. For it is when we are in that right position that the true sincerity of our hearts becomes all the more true and authentic. David knew this, but most importantly God knew this. Albeit the many renowned mistakes and sins committed by David, God knew within him there was a heart of true gold after Him.

This is encouragement to us today that even the worst of sins can be forgiven by God, and in turn no longer separate us. We can be embraced into the forgiving love of God and renewed with a clean heart and right spirit just as David.

It has been said that to pray for someone is the kindest act in the world. For it is in praying for them, we hand them over to the Protector of the Universe. Throughout the Bible praying for others is not only encouraged, it is proven fierce. James 5:16 shares, "Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working."

Righteous in this context is not to say someone is better than another, rather, it implies a heart position made right before God in earnest, and therefore there is no division between that person and God to intercede.

Don't Worry About Getting the Words Just Right in Your Prayer

Keep in mind as well that even if we cannot find the eloquent or beautiful words we would wish, God knows and understands our spirits because of His Spirit within us. Romans 8:26 opens our eyes to this truth, "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God."

The Holy Spirit is able to translate even groans in their true meaning to the Lord, so there is no fear of miscommunication or misinterpreting from us to God in prayer. What a glorious reminder that God is not small or finite in understanding as we so often are.

Follow Through By Setting Time Aside to Pray

A final reminder of backing the words of, "praying for you" is to carry that out. Not for show like the Pharisees, rather, the conversation and imploring done between God and His child. Some ways to keep the purpose and to

fulfill praying for them can include journaling, lists, or a visual reminder. Journaling prayers is a beautiful way to see the tapestry of prayer life God is weaving.

Through daily writing down your prayers, eyes can be opened to the prayers God is answering that may have been asked even years before. Keeping the people you have offered prayer to in this journal will also allow you to be a witness of what God does in their lives; almost like a narrative of the testimonies of others working and weaving as you record such prayers.

Lists are good organizational ways to pray for others as they help you not get anyone. But it is important to not just see the prayer or person as someone to check off the list, but to use the list as a genuine tool for recalling persons you wish to intercede for.

At times, even visuals work well. Not to be confused with idols to pray to, but sometimes God uses the most unexpected to jump a memory to pray for someone. Perhaps your best friend loves sunflowers, so seeing a sunflower is a reminder to you that they need prayer this day. Maybe a song on the radio is an instant reminder of your earthly father, and when it is heard it is like a God wink to consider them in prayer.

Help Weave God's Tapestry

God works in very mysterious ways sometimes, and with prayer being communication with Him, He will evoke much to bring us into prayer for not only ourselves, but others as well.

Perhaps the greatest blessing of praying for others is the truth of coming closer to Him ourselves. It is much like the difference of watching someone build a bird house from afar, or coming alongside and talking to the person, helping hold the hammer, and becoming a part of the building of that bird house.

It is an intimate and special occurrence to see the work being done by the Father, and to be in that inner circle as well. Our Father in Heaven rejoices to commune and be close to us, and prayer is one of the many ways we can best take part in that.

Truly praying for someone and meaning it is not only a good thing to do, it is the blessed thing to do. We can fight the good fight in the trenches on our knees to intercede for one another, coming closer to God in the process. We also have the opportunity to see even over spans of years God's ultimate plan for His glory, and for the benefit of all involved (Romans 8:28). Even if it is not seen in full purpose until the other side of the Veil, we can know He is working, and our prayers are never wasted.