

8 Amazing Things That Happen When We Pray for Others

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There is a misconception that only certain people are called or gifted to be intercessory prayer warriors. There are people in our churches and our lives who seem to have that special intimate connection with God. They are relentless when it comes to praying for others. The truth is we are all called to pray for others.

In Ezekiel 22:30, God is searching for those who would stand in the gap, to intercede for others. The invitation is for all Christians to serve through intercessory prayer. Praying for others is not a choice; it is our privilege.

Whether we believe it or not, we are all equipped to be prayer warriors on behalf of others. We are heirs with Christ. We are adopted sons and daughters and therefore possess the same power and access to God that our Savior enjoys. We can whisper, or cry out, and offer our requests to our Heavenly Father, and He hears us. Sharing in the inheritance of Jesus, we are called high priests with a direct connection to God and an opportunity to offer up prayers on behalf of family, friends, neighbors, government officials, and our nation. The words do not have to be perfect, only spoken through love and trust in a God who hears and answers.

Are you wondering if praying for others makes a difference? Here are 8 amazing things that happen when you pray for others:

1. When We Pray, We Participate in God's Work

There are many people in our lives who need prayer. At times their needs are clear. Other times we may not know what to pray. Either way, when we pray for others, we join God in His work in their lives. If you are not sure what to pray, follow 1 Timothy 2:1-4:

“I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. Being obedient in prayer for others clears the way for God's work and will to be done.”

2. Praying for Others Emulates Jesus

In the book of Luke, we find Jesus praying often. He goes to His Father in prayer as His ministry begins. Jesus prays during temptation, and He prayed for strength and relief as He neared the cross. He withdrew from people to pray, and He prayed early in the day. He also taught us how to pray. (Luke 11:2-4)

As we can see in Scripture, Jesus prayed about everything. By bringing petitions of prayer on behalf of others, we imitate our Savior.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6-7)

3. When We Pray for Others, We Share in Their Burdens

In Philippians, Paul reminds us to put others ahead of our needs and to consider the needs of others more important than our own. Our nature is to do the opposite. Our first thought is to pray for our burdens to be lifted or erased altogether. It is humility that allows us to pray for others earnestly. And by offering prayers for the relief of others and sharing their burdens, our burdens seem lighter.

“Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.” (Philippians 2:3-4)

4. By Praying for Others, We Join the Ministry of Reconciliation

Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 5 that God made our relationship with Himself through Christ, and then gives us the ministry of reconciliation, or working to help others know Jesus, salvation, and God's love. (1 Corinthians 5:18) Our first tool is prayer. Praying for others puts us in the middle of God's work to bring everyone to Himself. By

praying for others, we are ministers in the work of salvation, opening the gospel to those in our prayers. God wants everyone to be saved, and we are invited to be part of the work.

“This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.” (2 Timothy 2:3-4)

5. When We Pray for Others, We Learn to Trust God

If we depend on our strength and abilities, we cannot accomplish God's will. Only through surrendering to God is He able to work through us to accomplish His desires in our prayers for others. When we offer intercessory prayers, pleading with God on behalf of loved ones and friends, we are trusting in His ability to answer, and He does. We are giving up our capabilities to answer and depending on God to keep His promise to answer our prayers. When we pray for others, God will answer.

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.” (Matthew 7:7)

6. When We Pray for Others, We Are Also Changed

Pastor Oswald Chambers wrote, "Prayer is not a matter of changing things externally, but one of working miracles in a person's inner nature." While we pray for others, we plead with God to intercede in their lives, perhaps to bring healing or strength in difficult times. But we are also opening our hearts for change. When we pray for others, we connect to the One who has the power to transform the hearts of others and bring change to their circumstances. At the same time, it amends our hearts.

“I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.” (Ephesians 1:18-23)

7. Praying for Others Glorifies God

When we practice intercessory prayer, we glorify the only One who can answer prayers. Our prayers display trust in God, our belief in Christ, and when prayers are answered, we praise Him for his faithfulness. Our prayers glorify God. Praying is not just a conversation. Prayer is praise for the work God will do through our prayers. He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again.

“And whatever you ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” (John 14:13)

8. God Answers When We Pray for Others

As Christians, our prayers do not bounce off the ceiling or dissipate like fog. God hears when we pray for others, and He answers. The answer may not come quickly, nor may the reply be what we expected. Or, because God is gracious, we receive much more than we asked. Either way, God answers our prayers when we pray for others. Our prayers are powerful, and our loving God wants us to know through His answer to our plea that He has the power and authority to answer whatever we ask.

“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.” (1 John 5:14-15)

Intercessory prayer is a never-ending opportunity to join God in His work while, at the same time, a chance to be transformed both in heart and circumstance. Ephesians 6:18 says, “And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests”. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. Not just a few are called to pray for others; we are all called to pray unceasingly for all of God's people. As twentieth-century author and pastor, E.M. Bounds said about prayer, ***“Prayer should not be regarded as a duty which must be performed, but rather as a privilege to be enjoyed, a rare delight that is always revealing some new beauty.”***