

September 19, 2022
PrayerCast

As you enter into this time of reflection and prayer, slow down your thoughts and truly work to stop the world around you. The word teaches us to *“take all thoughts into captivity.”* So, take those racing thoughts and set them aside. Lay them down. You will be able to pick up your thoughts again soon. But in this time, in these moments of right NOW, belong only to Your Father. Turn your mind toward Him, encounter Your God and center yourself in His peace.

In services, Brian has been challenging us to BLESS 217. BLESS is an acronym, that gives us simple ways to bless those around us, in our community. They stand for

- Begin with prayer. Pray for the people in your life and the places that you're in.
- Listen. Listen to and discover the needs of others and the places where God is at work.
- Eat. Share meals and spend time with people in my life.
- Serve. Respond to the needs of others and help them in practical and impactful ways.
- Story. Share the story of Jesus and what He is doing in my life with others.

This next six weeks, we are focusing on Beginning with prayer. So in our next few prayercasts, we're going to focus on praying for those who we want to bless and share Christ with.

Brian challenged us to choose one person in our lives who we want to see come to know Jesus. Then, to dedicate these next six weeks to praying for that person. Like a lot of great things, it's not complicated. It's simple. But it is very very powerful.

I recently began listening almost exclusively to a group called Maverick City during my drive time. They combine gospel sounds, old hymns and new songs in a whole new blend of vibrant worship music. One of the songs that I find running through my head has these simple yet powerful lyrics. I like to sing it as I ride my bike around my neighborhood or drive my car around town:

Bless me, bless me
Bless me God indeed (come on)
Death has been defeated
He is our victory (woo)
Bless me, bless me
God not just for me
But so everyone around me
Can have everything they need (let all these folk)
Let all these folks that's with me
God, have everything they need (say it again, let all these folk)

This is just exactly what we want to do –ask God for his blessing on all those around us.

In the next few moments consider the rhythm of your days. Who do you see regularly or interact with regularly that needs the Lord? Maybe it's a neighbor you regularly chat with, a family member, a co-worker, another parent that you see often at your child's games. Take a moment to let God impress upon you who He'd like you to dedicate these next six weeks of prayer to. PAUSE.

Connections matter. I'm sure in your life you've seen the power of relationships, and connections. Sometimes when I'm trying to get a response from someone and they're not returning my call or text, I reach out to someone that is close to them. I ask a few questions, see if they can make connections when I can't.

This illustration only works so far-but I love visual. Here we are, you and I, the much-loved children of our Father. We have his ear. We have his attention. He delights in us, and He is grinning at us, waiting for us to share with Him our stories and concerns. As we sit and talk with Him, we bring before Him our friend. We ask Him for His blessing on them. That He would reach out to them and meet them where they are.

Certainly God doesn't need our help. But because He delights in us. Because He wants to spend time with us. Because He wants to do life with us—He involves us in this great commission.

Take a moment to ask the Lord for a piece of Scripture to pray over your friend or loved one. Use this as direction to pray this week. PAUSE.

We'll close today with a prayer for our friend or loved one that Paul prayed for his friends in Ephesus.

In the words of Paul:

Lord,

I pray that Christ may dwell in their hearts through faith. And I pray that they, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that they may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. In Jesus Name I ask, Amen.