

Praying Your Friends to Christ

Session 3

How can we pray Evangelistically?

As noted earlier, effective evangelistic prayer involves specific prayer on behalf of unbelievers, believers, personal spiritual needs and evangelism efforts. These four categories can easily be combined to simplify the way you pray evangelistically. Below are biblical ways to pray for Christian witnesses, evangelism efforts and the lost.

-Praying for Christian Witnesses and Efforts-

Believers who are seeking to share their faith are in desperate need of specific prayer. Effectiveness in witnessing does not depend on fancy techniques or smoothly prepared gospel presentations. Effective witnessing depends on a Holy God who is constantly seeking to save those who are lost. Christians are filled with boldness and power to share the Good News as they are spiritually prepared and undergirded with specific prayer.

Matthew records that when Jesus saw a vast crowd in need of the gospel He was moved with compassion and commanded His disciples to "pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth workers into his harvest" (**Matt. 9:38**) There is a definite connection between our praying and His sending.

When we apply this text to the individual(s) we are praying for, we can pray to the Lord of the harvest that He will place someone in the lost person's path to share the gospel, to water spiritual seeds already sown or help to bring in the harvest.

Scripture gives many specific prayers to pray for Christian witnesses:

1. Ask the Lord to send laborers into the harvest.

"Therefore said he unto them, the harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest" (**Luke 10:2**).

2. Ask the Lord for opportunities to witness.

"With praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds" (**Col. 4:3**, emphasis added).

3. Ask the Lord for boldness for the messenger.

"And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel: for which I am an ambassador in bonds; that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak" (**Eph. 6:19-20**, emphasis added).

"And now, Lord, behold their threats: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word" (**Acts 4:29**, emphasis added).

4. Ask the Lord for clarity in presenting the gospel.

"That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak" (**Col. 4:4**, emphasis added).

5. Ask the Lord to focus the hearts of His people.

"Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (**Acts 13:1-3**).

Ask God to grant you the courage to be willing to be the answer to your prayer. Jesus instructed the disciples to pray for laborers in **Matthew 9:38**. In **Matthew 10:1**, the disciples are called and sent out as an answer to the prayer.

Below are additional ways to pray for Christian witnesses and special evangelistic efforts:

1. Pray for Christ to motivate and send witnesses into His harvest fields (**Matt. 9:38**)
2. Pray for Christ to prepare His witnesses spiritually, making them holy and blameless in every way (**John 17:11**)
3. Pray for the Lord to protect the witnesses spiritually, mentally and physically from the evil one as they share their faith (**John 17:15**)
4. Pray for witnesses to be filled with spiritual wisdom, pleasing in all ways to Christ, and bear fruit in every good work (**Col. 1:10-11**).
5. Pray for Christian witnesses to have open doors to share a Gospel witness (**Col. 4:2-3**)
6. Pray for evangelism and mission efforts to be fruitful and productive for the kingdom (**Matt. 6:9-10**)
7. Pray that believers will experience divine encounters with lost persons as they are sent out and participate in witnessing events and opportunities (**Acts 8:26-41**)

Praying for the Lost

Praying for the lost results in changed lives for eternity. Paul said that when a person is converted he is “delivered from the domain of darkness and transferred to the Kingdom of [God’s] beloved Son, in whom there is redemption, the forgiveness of sins. God desires that all men, women, boys, and girls might come to a faith relationship with Christ (see **1 Tim. 2:1-4**). What the lost need is a new heart, a cleansed and regenerated life in Jesus Christ. Lost people need hearts that can be born from above (**Matt. 15:15-20**).

Therefore as you pray for the salvation of the lost, pray for unbelievers to have changed **HEARTS**. Use the **HEARTS** acrostic to help you remember how to pray.

➤ *Pray for Receptive **H**earts (Luke 8:5-15).*

- In the parable of the sower (see **Luke 8:5,12**), the seed that fell beside the road was trampled under foot, and the birds of the air ate it up. Jesus explained that the seed is the Word of God and the seed that fell beside the road represents those who heard the Word. The devil then takes away the Word from their heart, so that they may not believe and be saved. We need to pray that God will prepare the heart so that the seed would take root.
- Pray for their Spiritual **E**yes and **E**ars to be opened (**Matt. 13:15; 2 Cor. 4:3-4**) The lost person is blinded by Satan.

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (**2 Cor. 4:3-4**, emphasis added). Only God can open their eyes.

The individual must hear God speak.

"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (**Matt. 13:15**).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (**Romans 10:9-10**).

"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (**Romans 10:14**).

- Pray for unbelievers to have and understand God's **Attitude** toward sin (**John 16:8**)

This will require that they admit they are sinners who face judgment and are in need of the righteousness of Jesus. The Christian, on the other hand, with God's attitude toward sin, will be proactive. The role of the Holy Spirit is to convict and convince of sin.

"And when he comes, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (**John 16:8**).

- Pray for the lost to be **Released** from barriers and strongholds that hinder faith (**2 Tim. 2:25-26**)

"In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God per adventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will" (**2 Tim. 2:25-26**).

God would grant repentance, then the lost individual will come to his or her senses and escape the trap . . . which includes the destruction of barriers and strongholds in the individual's life.

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds)" (**2 Cor. 10:3-4**).

Praying specifically for a lost individual is warfare. Satan will go to any extent to keep a person lost and in his kingdom. We are involved in praying for and

sharing with individuals who need to be rescued from the kingdom of darkness and transferred by God to the kingdom of His dear son.

"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." (**Col. 1:13**).

In this spiritual warfare, we do not fight with weapons of flesh, but with mighty weapons of God. Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces in the heavenly realms.

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (**Eph. 6:12**).

- Pray for unbelievers to experience a **T**ransforming life in Christ (**Romans 12:1-2**)

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (**Romans 12:1-2**).

- Pray for the Lord to **S**end believers to witness to lost persons (**Matt. 9:35-38**)

Prayer is the key to effective soul winning efforts. We cannot win lost souls in our own wisdom and strength. Therefore it is imperative that we call upon the Lord of the harvest to save the lost, send us into the fields, and empower us with bold speech to be His witnesses in this generation. Let us then be about the task of winning souls as we labor on our knees in prayer!

Testimony Time

At this point, invite participants to share brief testimonies concerning ways they have seen God answer prayer on behalf of Christian witnesses, special evangelism and mission efforts, and how they have seen God answer prayer on behalf of lost people.

Prayer Prompts

Instruct the group to break up into teams and then lead the group in a directed prayer time using the specific prayer bullets and the Heart acrostic above. Lead the group to pray specifically for the persons and events listed on the *Praying Your Friends to Christ* brochure.