

TEACH ME HOW TO PRAY



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TEACH US TO PRAY



It seems like such a simple request. It was a request made by the disciples to Jesus one day. They saw Him praying and were so impressed and impacted by His prayer that they wanted to learn to pray like Him.

Prayer can be one of the easiest things to do and one of the most difficult things at the same time. It's like talking to a friend – that's easy. It's talking to a friend you can't see or audibly hear – that's hard. Let's be honest, you look weird talking to someone that is invisible.

I have come to realize that even though God is unseen it does not mean that He is not accessible. He can be reached. He is just a prayer away. This guide will help you to connect with Him deeper and get more out of your time in prayer.

PRIVATE PRACTICE



I took piano lessons when I was a teenager. I actually think I started when I was 10 or 11 and kept going until I was 17. That was a long time. Twice a week, every week and even during the summer when school was out, I still had to go to lessons.

After reading that you might believe that I am pretty good on the piano. You would be wrong! Don't ask me to play anything unless you want to hear a bunch of wrong notes and stop-and-starts. I'm not that good and that is being nice.

My problem was I did not practice as much as I should have when I got back home from music school. It was time consuming and I wanted to do other things – like anything else. I did not like practice.

There were times people would find out I knew how to play the piano and they would ask me to play something. I could get some tunes out

(I play a mean chopsticks...Google it) but I could not play as well as I wanted to. I wish I knew how to play a bunch of songs. But the problem with me was I did not like to practice.

The lesson I learned through that experience is "Private Practice Produces Public Performance."

What you do by yourself, in secret, when no one sees, gives you the ability to do the things that people see. And that goes for prayer as well. Your private time with God fuels you to live out your Christian life in public – at school, in your neighborhood, with your friends.

How do you develop that? How can we make our time alone with God meaningful and enjoyable? How can we develop our private practice?

Before I give you some tips, I want you to know that God does not want time with Him to be boring, and something we treat like nasty medicine – hold your nose and just do it. No! He wants us to find our private time with Him to be the most enjoyable time of our day. He wants us to look forward to it and gain something from it.

The best model for how we should treat our personal, private time with God was Jesus and how He did it while here on earth. Mark 1:35- 37 gives us a sneak peek into Jesus' prayer life:

"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Simon and his companions went to look for him, and when they found him, they exclaimed: 'Everyone is looking for you'"

Here are some lessons we learn from Jesus and some tips to have private practice time with God:

1. MAKE IT THE FIRST THING YOU DO.

The Bible says Jesus got up very early in the morning and had His special prayer time before He did anything else. Ok, I just read your mind – "I don't have time in the morning when I wake up. I have to go to school, or rush to work, and I barely wake up in time to get ready so I don't have time in the morning." Raise your hand if you have ever said or thought that.

I can relate. I still think like that sometimes. With everything I have to do,

I think I don't have time to spend time praying first thing in the morning. And even when we plan to wake up to spend time with God, we end up hitting that snooze button a few times too many...and there goes our private practice time.

Well, I am sure Jesus had really important things to do, like heal the sick, raise the dead, and open all-you-can-eat restaurants in the desert. It would have been easy for Him to say, "I'm too busy to pray." Maybe He understood something that we know but forget. If we do not get our private practice in first, then the chances of us spending time in prayer later go way down.

Life tends to take up all our time. So we plan to check our social media for just a minute and that turns into an hour. We plan to pray later in the day but that time never comes.

To develop our private prayer time, we have to make it first.

So, how do we make this happen?

Go to sleep earlier so you can wake up earlier to spend time with God.

Even if you go to bed 15 or 30 minutes earlier, you can wake up earlier to spend time with God. (Some of us need to go to bed...period. Scrolling on the internet and texting all night will definitely stop you from having private practice with God in the morning.)

Set your alarm and when it goes off, get up.

I am a snoozer! I admit it. But when I stay in bed after those 9-minute intervals, I still feel as tired most times as I did when it first went off. If you want to develop your private practice, you have to stick to the time you planned to meet with God. And if you snooze you will lose (I didn't make that up). So here's my tip: when the alarm clock goes off, jump out of bed. It helps if you put the alarm on the other side of your room so you have to go turn it off. By then, you are already out of bed. Remember we are trying to grow our prayer time with God. We have to change some things up.

Don't touch distractions.

This is a big one. We may take the initiative to go to bed earlier and wake up earlier but the trick is to actually use that extra time to spend it with God. The temptation we all face is to do just one thing before we have our private practice prayer time. That one thing might be to check YouTube, Snapchat, IG, our text messages,

or even television. But that one thing can take our minds away from spending time with God and take up our extra time.

If we are going to make our prayer time a priority we cannot get into distractions before our time with God. I know I hate seeing notifications on my phone, so I have to turn off my phone and use a regular alarm or put my phone on do not disturb mode before I go to bed.

Is the thought of making some of these changes uncomfortable? Yes! Is it worth it? Absolutely. We want to have a better prayer time with God, so let's make it the first thing we do each day.

2. HAVE A SPECIAL PRAYER SPOT.

The second step to developing a private practice time is to have a special place where you meet with God each day. This is an amazing experience, by the way! Jesus went away to a solitary place. There was something about having a place away from everyone and everything that helped Him to connect with God. The same is true for us.

Many of us have never thought about having a designated place to have our private practice time with God. Just so I am clear, I don't mean you can't pray anywhere or in different places. You can and you should. All day and all places. Going to a special prayer spot, however, will specifically help us get our private time done in the beginning of the day and look forward to it. This will shape the way the rest of our day goes. I have also learned that having a special place makes my time with God come alive.

Here's some more information on how to make that happen.

Move away from distractions.

Distractions come in so many different forms. So either you move the distractions out of the place where you are meeting with God, or move away from the place that is filled with distractions. A room with a bunch of activity or things going on will not allow us to focus on God. You've got to move out to a private place for private time. The is just like if you got an important phone call, you would step away from everyone.

Move away from your bed.

This one may seem counter to what you have thought before. Most of us try to have our prayer time as soon as we wake up, right at the

edge of our bed. I am not saying to not pray as soon as you get out of bed, but if you want to have more rich time with God, that may not be the best place to do it.

I have found myself too many times in the morning or at night praying and falling off to sleep. Sometimes my prayers wander off and I have to catch myself. (I know I'm not the only one who has prayer-slept.) My suggestion is to get up, wash your face, even brush your teeth and then go to a spot and have your private practice. Places have associations. And beds are made for sleep. Your body knows that. So, when you try to pray there, your body may get confused and think, time to sleep.

Design your space.

Feel free to set up an area in your home where you meet with God. If you want to have a picture or something else that helps you to get into the mood for worship, do it. Even if it's your same space, do something with it at those times that helps to make it feel special at the time of prayer.

One of the places that is mentioned in the Bible where people went to meet with God was out in nature. That space is already designed by God perfectly for us to connect with Him. I know that may not be possible for everyone all of the time; however, if you are able to, I suggest taking a day a week to have your private practice time out in nature.

3. HAVE A PLAN FOR YOUR PRIVATE TIME.

Some things don't just happen. You have to plan for them to happen. One of those things is relationships – deep, meaningful relationships. That goes for our relationships with our friends in which we plan time to spend together along with what we will actually do when we get together. The same goes for our relationship with God. We have to plan for that time with Him.

The Bible says that Jesus went to a private place and He did what He planned to do – He prayed. Now we don't know exactly what that looked like or sounded like. The Bible gives us some examples of His prayers in Luke 11 and John 17. What I think is important is having a prayer plan so you can have amazing private practice time like Jesus did.

Let's look at some things we can have in our prayer plan.

Pray out loud.

Most people I know often pray in their head or in a mumble. I am most people. Are you? I think I know where some of us got it from. We were told the devil could hear our prayers and that he would bring the things to us we were struggling with. (Side note: The devil knows it even if he doesn't overhear it – he has our file.) Maybe we do not want other people to hear our prayers. I get that.

Now let's be honest. When we pray in our minds, sometimes our thoughts can drift. We lose focus and eventually don't even know what we were talking about. The Bible encourages us to pray out loud in multiple places. (See Psalm 142:1 and Psalm 34:1.)

When you pray out loud it helps you to focus and stay more aware of what you are saying. Also, praying out loud encourages you as you hear what you are saying to God. Try it.

Write your prayers in a journal.

One thing that you should consider adding to your private practice time is writing your prayers down. Some people call it journaling. It is where you have a special book (it does not have to be expensive, just a book you only write in during your time with God) and you write out what you want to say to God.

This helps to keep our minds on what we are praying. An added benefit of writing your prayers out is that you can go back to it to see what you have asked for before and how God has answered those prayers.

The Psalms are the prayer journal of David and others. It may seem weird at first but if you keep at it, this will boost your private practice time.

Use things that appeal to your senses.

We are all wired differently. Isn't the variety God put in us wonderful? Some of us are more auditory – connecting through our sense of hearing; others are more visual – connecting through sense of sight; and others are kinesthetic – connecting through sense of touch. Whatever way you are wired, I encourage you to incorporate that into your private practice time with God.

So, you can put on music while you pray or write your prayers. You can draw or paint as a part of your prayer time. You can even pray while walking – it's called a prayer walk. Try different things and whatever works, put it into your prayer plan.

IT'S ABOUT RELATIONSHIP

There are so many other things I could say about developing a private prayer time, but the most important thing I want you to know is that it is about building a relationship. Spending time with God is not a checklist item so God won't be mad with us. It is not a way to earn God's favor.

It is simply acknowledging that God wants to hear from you. So talk to Him. Say what's on your heart. Say what's bothering you. Say what's going on in that relationship or in school or even at home.

God doesn't need your words to be special or fancy. He just wants them to be sincere. So make it a priority, create a special time and place, plan for it, then just talk. He's listening.

THE POWER OF FRIENDSHIP



While going through an old wallet recently, I found something interesting. There's a napkin from an old pizza place that I have saved for close to 25 years. I know it might seem pretty weird or even slightly nasty. Before you judge me, let me explain.

I had a friend group of guys, six of us, who went through high school together. I don't know how we all bonded like we did, but we just did. None of us had a cell phone or social media (there was a time like that, and yes, we survived!). At the end of every semester for at least four years, we had a tradition. We would go to our favorite pizza place on the last day of school.

We joked around and had fun every time we did this, but there was one of those hangouts that was different. It was our very last day of high school. We were going off to different colleges in different places. Maybe we would see each other in the summer, but it would never be the same again.

So someone decided that we should all take napkins and each write our names and write something to each other on our respective napkins. We each left with a napkin with five names and messages on them. Call me weird, but I've kept my napkin (and to those of you wondering, it is unused and quite clean).

That napkin means a lot to me. One of my friends has passed away. Two others live in Europe, one in Canada and two of us here in the US. We have never been in the same place all together since then, but the napkin reminds me of the power of friendship.

WHEN FRIENDS PRAY...

As much as friendship was powerful back then and is still powerful today, there is a supernatural power that we can experience when friends pray together. I know many of us may not have thought about praying with our friends. If we go to a non-Christian school, it may seem weird or intrusive to bring up prayer and God. And even if we are around our church friends, we do not want to make things awkward by bringing up praying together.

I get it. We don't want to push others away. But I think there is an opportunity to grow the relationships with our friends even as we pray together. There is a passage where Jesus talks about what happens when friends pray together. It is Matthew 18:19, 20:

"Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."

Here are some lessons we can learn from this about praying with our friends:

1. GET A PARTNER.

It is important to have alone time with God – our private practice time. But is also important to have time that we spend together with others seeking God. You should not try to live life alone, especially not the Christian life.

Jesus gives us a minimum number for building our prayer life with

others. He says two! What that says to me is each one of us needs someone else to help us in our prayer life. One practice I would suggest is getting a prayer partner. A prayer partner is just a friend with whom you agree to talk to God on a regular basis.

If you have not tried having a prayer partner (and you do not have to call it that, you can come up with a name that works for you), do it. Here are some things to keep in mind as you develop that relationship:

Have a scheduled time.

If you are going to have a growing prayer life with a friend or friends you have to agree when you will call or meet for prayer. Don't get intimidated. You don't have to pray with your prayer partner every day. That can be a lot, especially if you are just starting. You can agree to pray together just once a week. Set the day of the week and the time each day, decide who will call who or where you will meet and stick to that time.

It is so easy to let other activities steal your attention, but if you are going to grow in your prayer life, you have to treat your prayer partner time as a non-negotiable.

Plan what you will do when you meet.

Not only should you plan when you meet, but also how long your prayer time will be and even what you will do when you meet. It can be as simple as getting on the phone, sharing your prayer requests/praises and praying. It is already something new, so you do not have to make it complicated.

When you meet, the prayers do not have to be long. Scratch that. When you meet, the prayers should not be long. God does not need our prayers to be long for them to be heard. So when you two meet up, keep it short and powerful.

It's also easy, if you are already good friends, to end up using your scheduled prayer time to catch up and hangout. To avoid it becoming just another social time, agree that you will designate that meeting for sharing praises and requests and praying. You can always use other times when you meet to hangout.

Have a trial period.

Have you ever joined a group in class for a semester to work on a project and you realized quickly, this group does not work? Imagine if that group had no end. That's how our prayer partnership can feel if we do not set up a trial period.

Now I'm not telling you to call it that. What I am suggesting is when you ask someone to become your prayer partner, you also create a timeline for your partnership. You can say let's do it for a month, two months, three months or however long you are comfortable with starting out. Give it some time because some things that may be awkward at first get better with time.

However, if it does not, the great thing about a trial period is that you have an agreed upon ending to your time as prayer partners and you can find another. But if you both are enjoying it, you can agree to continue.

2. CLAIM GOD'S PROMISE.

There was a program on television called the Get Schooled Challenge. It's a way to leverage celebrity power to encourage success in education. Schools enter the challenge and they have to hit certain goals such as attendance and test scores. If they are successful in achieving those goals, the school becomes eligible to enter the drawing for the prize. The prize is a visit to the school by a celebrity, who will be the principal for a day.

There are conditions they have to meet in order to be eligible to have a famous person show up at their school. What God is promising is so much better. He doesn't say if you do this you will be entered in the sweepstakes. He says if two or three come together in His name, He will be there. How do we apply that to our lives and grow in our prayer life?

Make the offer.

There are times when we are with friends who share with us different challenges they are going through. They may share that they are having issues with their boyfriend or girlfriend, with a class or assignment or even at home with their parents' marriage. That may be the time to make the offer.

The offer can go something like this: "That sounds really difficult. Do you mind if we talk to God about it right now?" What you are doing is claiming God's promise that He will come in your circle right where you are.

This takes the pressure off of you to know what to say when your friends are going through difficult things. You can claim God's promise that He will be there. And He knows not only what to say, but what to do.

3. LIFT ONE ANOTHER UP.

I love tug of war. Recently I was at a school where the students were divided into teams and competed in different novelty games against each other. Tug of war was the finale and the main event. It was the ultimate show of strength, and at the end, the winner would have bragging rights for the whole year.

It was interesting to see when the teams faced off that there was a clear favorite – the team with the strongest people on it. You could tell they were confident. The boys on the team rolled up their sleeves to show their muscles. On the other side, the team members did not have as much outward strength. But when the whistle blew, it was clear this was a much more even battle than was anticipated.

In a stunning upset, the weaker looking team won. How did they pull it off? Well, they had more supporters on their side. That simple. More people were encouraging them to not give up and keep going. And at times when they wanted to give up, their supporters carried them.

I think it's the same thing when we pray with our friends. At times when they seem weak, we have the power to carry them. And it comes back around to us. When we are spiritually weak, we get strengthened by the friends who pray for us.

Be honest with your friends.

It is so easy for us to try to impress the friends we are praying with. We want them to think we are always strong and not dealing with any issues. But the power of praying with friends is that we can be honest and "confess our faults to one another and pray for one another so we can be healed" (James 5:16).

If you are dealing with an addiction, a bad habit or even a lack of spiritual motivation, those are times to find your friends who pray with you. I will even admit there are times I don't even want to pray for myself and I need the friends I pray with to pray for me. We all go through those times, by the way.

Maintain the trust in the group.

When you begin praying with your friends you will learn things about each other that you would have never known if you hadn't begun that practice. Some things will be joys and some will be heartbreaks. Some will be things you are proud of and some will be things you each are ashamed of. What is super important is that

what is shared in the group for prayer stays between each of you and Jesus!

That is super important because when we pray with our friends, it is a circle of trust. We are trusting God to hear our prayers and we are trusting each other to not repeat our prayer requests to anyone else.

POWER MULTIPLIED

Back to my tug of war story. If all you looked at were the people pulling the rope it would make no sense. They had less weight than their opposition. They had less strength than their opponents. It did not make sense.

Some things don't make sense, like what happens when we pray together. The Bible actually tells us that in God's counting "One can chase 1,000 and two can chase 10,000" (Deuteronomy 32:30).

Now that does not make sense. If one can chase 1,000, I would think two would chase 2,000. But God says when we come together and pray, we do not get additional power, we get multiplied power. There's multiplied power when friends pray together. Try it with a friend and watch God multiply your powers together.

TO SAVE A LIFE



Did I ever tell you about the time I nearly drowned in a river? Well, I am about to right now. I grew up on the island of Trinidad and being in and around water was a common occurrence. I would say I averaged going to the beach about once a month (sorry to make anyone jealous).

If you are around water that much, the natural assumption is that you can swim. If you assumed that about me, you would be wrong. I knew how to beat and kick at the water really forcefully, but I would not call that swimming. Back then, however, I had much more confidence that I knew what I was doing than I should have.

One day I visited a friend and we decided to go swimming by a river close to his home. *No big deal*. We had been to this river before. There were places along the river that we were familiar with and had gotten in and out of those spots at other times. While we were at the river this particular time, I spotted a new and inviting spot. Without much thought, I jumped feet first from the banks into the water.

The water felt great but when I tried to stand up, I realized a problem. It went way deeper than I had anticipated. My feet reached down to stand, but I could not feel the bottom. Panic began to set in immediately and, all of a sudden, I felt like I was drowning. I don't think I yelled out. I was still frantically trying to save myself, but I was going under.

All of a sudden, I felt a hand forcefully push me from the middle of the river to within an arm's length of the bank. It was my friend. From outside the water, he saw my struggle and jumped in and wisely got me close to land. He saved my life that day.

I do not believe everyone needs to jump into a body of water to rescue a friend, but I do believe everyone has the power to save a friend's life.

FRIENDS DON'T LEAVE FRIENDS WITHOUT A PRAYER.

I know you have friends you care about a lot. It can be painful to see them going through a lot in life. From relationship drama to family issues to substance abuse challenges to school struggles, your friends may be dealing with so much. Of course you want to help solve their problems or fix their issues, but you may not know what to do. You may be feeling helpless.

I want to encourage you that you are able to help your friends more than you ever imagined and that help is found in you praying for them. The reason I know this is powerful is that Jesus even did it when He was getting ready to leave His friends. John 17 records the prayer that Jesus prayed for His friends. He understood how powerful it was to pray for His friends. Verses 9-11 say this:

"I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one."

Here are some lessons we can learn about praying for our friends.

1. WHAT SHOULD I PRAY ABOUT CONCERNING MY FRIENDS?

There are so many things you can pray about for your friends. Sometimes, because the list can be so long and daunting, we do not end up praying at all. It's like when you have so many things to do, you find yourself stuck at figuring out where to begin. So let me give you some categories for praying for your friends.

Pray for their salvation.

This should be our first priority when praying for our friends. We should want them to know God. Jesus wanted us to know God so much, He came Himself to show us who God is. And then when He was leaving, He prayed that we would know God even more.

"Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." -John 17:3

Many of our friends (and us too if we are honest) know about God. They may have heard about Him, but He wants more for them than that. He wants a relationship with them. Your responsibility, as their friend, is to pray that they get to know Him. It does not have to be complicated. Here's a simple prayer you could offer for them: "God, may my friend get to know you more and open their heart to you."

When you pray a prayer like that, God does supernatural things in your friend's life to create encounters with him or her. Try it.

Pray for their safety.

Have you ever been driving or riding in a car when another car approaches unexpectedly from a spot that you or the driver couldn't see? That's called the blind spot. On more occasions than I care to admit, my wife has been the one to warn me about a car coming that I did not see.

The truth is, we all have blind spots in life – dangers coming our way from places we did not expect. These dangers include physical dangers that threaten our lives, people that threaten our purpose and dangerous situations that threaten our future. Whatever they are, they can catch us off guard and unprepared.

Jesus knew that this would happen for His friends, so He prayed for God to protect them. You too can do the same for your friends

– pray that God would protect them from things that would try to hurt or destroy them. Does this mean that nothing bad will ever happen to them? No. Bad things still happen to good people. However, it means that you are asking God to cover them even when storms come to their lives.

A simple prayer you can pray for your friends goes like this: "God, please protect my friend from any danger that will try to stop your plan for his life."

I believe activity happens in heaven on behalf of our friends when we pray for them in this way.

Pray for their success.

This is an area where most of our friends would be most open to prayer. Someone said, as long as there are exams in school, there will be prayer in schools. In other words, everyone needs prayer when that big test comes. Side note: We always seem to need more prayer for the tests we didn't study for. Don't worry; God answers those prayers as well.

Our friends need our prayers for their success in school, in their athletic endeavors, in their careers, in their finances and in their relationships. Everyone goes further with God's blessings than they would with their own strength.

Let's define success. Success does not mean that they get all A's all the time. However, it means that God gives them strength and wisdom and directs them to what He sees is for their good. You want God's best for you and you should want it for your friends as well.

You can simply ask Him, "God, please be with my friend and give her your best in this situation."

2. WHEN SHOULD I PRAY FOR MY FRIENDS?

I would love to tell you that every time I told a friend that I would pray for them (at a later time) that I have done that. (If you are my friend and reading this, don't worry, I have prayed for you.) I have to admit that I have great intentions to do so, but as they say, "Out of sight, out of mind." Therefore, I have learned to try some things differently when praying for my friends. I think these tips can help us all.

Pray on the spot.

We all probably remember watching a safety video or visiting our local fire museum to learn these fire safety instructions: "Stop, drop and roll." If I could remix that I would tell you the best way to guarantee that you will pray for your friends is to "Stop, drop and pray." Now, I don't mean kneeling down and praying out loud in the middle of the cafeteria or mall (and I'm not telling you not to, but let's face it, most of us are not going to). What I am suggesting is instead of simply promising to pray for friends in the future, we should pause to pray then and there when we learn of their need.

You can take a short pause to pray silently in your heart or audibly to yourself for their specific need. You can even let your friend know that you are praying for them and invite them to participate. They don't have to pray as well, just listen in as you talk to God for them.

I think it's always easier and more honest to say "I just prayed for you about that" rather than "I will pray about that for you" when someone sends you a text with a need. Try it and see how it works for you.

Write it down on a prayer list.

I remember hearing about prayer lists when I was growing up. The line usually went something like "Please put me on your prayer list." I always wondered what that was and if it resembled a shopping list. Well I realize it can take various shapes and forms; you can make it work for you.

A prayer list is simply a tool to help you remember the people you are specially praying for and what you are praying about for them. You can write down a bunch of names and just call out names when you pray, but I think you miss out on knowing when those prayers have been answered. The more specific the request, the more you will be able to tell when God answers it. Some of the cool prayer list formats I have seen are listed below:

A journal where you write down friends' names and the requests you are praying for. Later you can go back and check it off as they are answered. You can even divide up your list and pray for different friends and family on different days.

A prayer wall where you write people's names and needs. You can have a wall in your room designated for prayer requests and even have your friends and others add their requests when they visit. As

an aside, it is cool to see your name on a wall that people pray over when they talk to God.

Sticky notes are similar to the prayer wall but they are more portable. You can stick them up on a wall, a closet or even in a book.

These tools are simply ways to help us remember who we are praying for and to remind us to pray for them.

Pray during your private practice time.

This goes hand in hand with the point above. If you have a journal, prayer wall or sticky notes, you can refer to them during your private devotional time and pray for your friends and family then.

Each time you come before God, you are not just coming for yourself; you are coming on behalf of others. From experience, nothing draws you closer to God than praying for others. I think it is the way God designed our spiritual lives to be. We gain by giving.

3. HOW LONG SHOULD I PRAY FOR MY FRIENDS?

If you are anything like me, whenever you are given a task, you want to know how long it will take. (In addition, if we are really alike, when your GPS says a time of arrival, your goal is to beat it. I digress.) It's natural to want to know how long a task takes. So, when we talk about praying for our friends, the natural question is, "How long do I need to do it for?"

Some issues are limited, like a particular test that our friends have to take. We pray until the test is over. But other issues are much bigger like their self-esteem struggles or healing from their parents' divorce or even for them to come to know Jesus. How long do we pray for those things?

Let's look at what Jesus does. Hebrews 7:25 says this:

"Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them."

Jesus is always praying for us. He lives to pray for you and I, His friends. So, my answer to how long you should pray would be, as long as it takes. If your friend is dealing with a long-term issue, don't give up on them or God's ability to fix it. Keep praying...as long as it takes.

You may never see the result of those prayers now, but they are powerful and they have the ability to save a life.

“VERY EARLY IN THE MORNING, WHILE IT WAS STILL DARK, JESUS GOT UP, LEFT THE HOUSE AND WENT OFF TO A SOLITARY PLACE, WHERE HE PRAYED.” -MARK 1:35

It seems like such a simple request. It was a request made by the disciples to Jesus one day. They saw Him praying and were so impressed and impacted by His prayer that they wanted to learn how to pray like Him. *Teach Me How to Pray* is a guide to help you connect with God during your prayer time. Included are sections on:

- Private Practice of Prayer
- When Friends Pray Together
- Praying for Friends

In each section you will find practical ideas on how you can grow your prayer life.



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