

February Prayer Challenge

What does your prayer life look like? Are you consistent or random? Do you have a system? Do you write out your prayers in a journal? Do you keep an updated 'prayer list'? Do you pray for people specifically? Or are your prayers more general? Do you pray for your church? Do you pray *expecting* results?

Today, I want to issue a prayer challenge for you. For the Month of February, I challenge you to pray for 7 people each week. This is 7 people in addition to your regular prayer list. You can pray for each 7 every day each week. Or you can pray for one person per day. This prayer should be intentional and specific – not just something thrown out casually or as an afterthought. I suggest using a prayer journal for this challenge. I would use one page per person. Write their name across the top of the page and then start listing ways you can pray for that person.

If you're not sure how to pray for those you choose, remember Paul's words to the Romans in Chapter 8, Verse 26 & 27:

26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.

27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

And as you're praying, even if you don't know how to pray for this person, keep your pen and journal handy so you can write down what comes to you through the Holy Spirit. Here are some things to remember while praying:

- Nothing is too trivial to pray for. What may sound like a frivolous prayer to us, may be just prayer the person we are praying for needs.
- We don't have to use fancy or formal words or phrases. It doesn't have to be grandiose. It just has to come from your heart.
- Our prayers don't have to be directly for the other person. Our prayers may be just as much for ourselves with regard to the person. I may pray for my relationship with the person to become stronger. I may pray for God to help me love this person that I'm struggling to love. I may pray for God to show me ways to show His love to the person.

Now I want to talk to you about who you're going to pray for.

- I want you to choose 7 people who you wouldn't typically pray for specifically.

- I want you to choose the person you don't have a great relationship with.
- I want you to choose the person who isn't a daily part of your life.
- I want you to choose someone who tends to irritate you.
- I want you to choose someone who is 'different' from you.
- I want you to choose someone you've had a conflict with in the past. Or in the present.
- I want you to choose someone who you just don't know very well.

Anytime there is a challenge there needs to be accountability. This will be accountability to yourself. This is between you and God. But at the end of each week and at the end of the month, take some time to evaluate what has happened as a result of this prayer challenge and write it down in your journal. What effects have you seen on the people you are praying for and on you? It's possible that you won't see any effects now. Maybe you won't see the effects ever. But that's ok.

In Isaiah 55:8-11, the Lord said: 8 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways,"
declares the Lord.

9 "As the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10 As the rain and the snow
come down from heaven,
and do not return to it
without watering the earth
and making it bud and flourish,
so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,

11 so is my word that goes out from my mouth:
It will not return to me empty,
but will accomplish what I desire
and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

Just as the Lord's words will not return to Him empty, neither will ours. There will be results, whether we see them or not.

Thank you and God bless you.

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