

God is looking for people who care enough to pray for others

And along with sharing the Gospel, is the most powerful thing we can do to reach the lost

1 Timothy 2:1-4 *I urge, then, first of all, that supplication, 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 the knowledge of the truth.*

One of the greatest callings of the church and all believers is prayer for others

Supplication, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving

Supplication (petition) is an earnest, humble and passionate request or plea to God for help

Intercession is a bit different, it means to stand on behalf of another, to stand in the gap on behalf of someone else, to take the place of another, to represent them to God

Ezekiel 22:30 *"I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found no one.*

God was looking for someone to pray for the land (the people in the land)

Our intercession allows God to show his great love and mercy

Isaiah 43:25-26 *"I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for my own sake; and I will not remember your sins. Put me in remembrance; let us contend together; state your case, that you may be acquitted.*

Make your case, let's have this out, we remind God of his word, of his love and mercy. We contend – (argue on behalf of) for the ones we are representing in prayer

Our prayer is critical in setting people free from deception and strongholds that are stopping them receiving and understanding the truth – particularly the truth of the Gospel

James 5:16 *The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.*

James 5:16 AMP *The earnest heartfelt and continual prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available*

All prayer has some power, but better to have "tremendous power"

Effective prayer is Spirit led prayer from the heart – sincere with pure motives (earnest, heartfelt), not just going through the motions

Now, prayer for the lost, and also in many other instances, includes using our spiritual authority. We use our spiritual authority in prayer to break down the devil's hold on people. Lost people are under Satan's control, he has blinded people's minds, he has them captive and our job is to help them see the truth, set them free

2 Cor. 4:3-4 *And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

Unsaved people are spiritually blind and cannot see the truth of the gospel

The devil is trying to keep people from the knowledge of God, but we have the power in Jesus name to set them free

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 *For though we live in the world, we do not war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world, on the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God.*

The devil builds strongholds (fortresses) around people's minds that are based on lies and deception

In prayer we are destroying arguments (speculations) and every pretension (lofty/high thing) raised up against the knowledge of God.

Prayer not only asks God to extend his mercy – actually he has already done this in Jesus Christ. Our prayer is mainly to break the bondage that the devil has over people

Ephesians 6:12 *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms (Not people - The devil and his demon spirits who hold them captive)*

Spiritual warfare is more about declaration - using our authority to confront the powers of darkness

Jesus defeated satan and his demonic forces on the cross

Colossians 2:15 *And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*

He has given us the authority to execute judgment on the devil

In prayer we come against the demonic spiritual forces and strongholds that are holding people captive

Luke 10:19 *I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy and nothing will harm you.*

So we are not trying to defeat the devil in prayer, our job is to enforce that victory that Jesus has already achieved

Matthew 28:18-19 *All authority in heaven has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations*

We must also continue to share the Gospel as much as possible

Romans 1:16 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes*

1. Pray for the removal of strongholds in their lives (using our authority - declaration)

2 Cor. 10:4-5 *The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world, on the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God*

We need to declare God's word over the situation. Use our authority and the sword of the spirit (the word of God) to defeat the enemy's lies and strongholds over people

Matthew 16:19 *I give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven*

Based on all Jesus has done and promised we bind the devils strategies and turn the key of heaven in people's lives and unlock the kingdom to them.

Binding means to forbid, prohibit, stop, declare unlawful

Loose means to release, free from restraint, declare lawful

2. Pray that the Holy Spirit will open the eyes of their understanding

2 Cor. 4:4 *The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

Loose their minds from satan's deception, from wrong understanding so they can see the truth – the light of the Gospel

Then pray Ephesians 1:18 over them

Ephesians 1:18 *I pray that the eyes of your heart (understanding) may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you....*

3. Pray that they will get a revelation of God and their need for salvation

Matthew 16:17 *Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven.*

Peter got a revelation of who Jesus was, given to him by God

Pray that those you're praying for would get a revelation of God, that God would reveal himself to them, reveal his love for them

4. Pray for God to draw them to himself

John 6:44 *No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him*

It is not in the nature of our fallen human nature to take the initiative to come to the Lord (*we like sheep have all gone astray*)

5. Pray that they begin a spiritual journey and start to believe

Pray that they would respond to his drawing, start to ask questions, that they would desire truth

Acts 17:27 *God did this so that men would seek him, and perhaps reach out for him and find him*

Pray that they would be open to hearing about your faith, about Jesus, and when the Gospel is explained to them they would be open to it and come to believe it

1 Thessalonians 2:13 *And we also thank God continually, because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe*

6. Pray for the Holy Spirit to bring conviction of sin

John 16:8 *When he (H.S) comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regards to sin and righteousness and judgment.*

Pray that their consciences will be awakened to God's righteous standard – *all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*

Pray for the Holy Spirit to bring conviction of sin, that he would reveal the danger they are in – *the wages of sin is death (eternity in hell) but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus*

7. Pray for God's goodness to lead them to repentance.

Romans 2:4 tells us that it is - *the goodness of God leads us to repentance*

Pray for God to extend his goodness to them that would lead them to acknowledge their sin and repent.

Pray that they would follow the conviction in their heart. That they would recognise and respond to God's grace and kindness that is leading them to repentance and faith in him

8. Pray that the Holy Spirit would soften their hearts.

Hebrews 4:7 *"Today if you hear his voice do not harden your hearts"*

Pray that they would not resist the Holy Spirit, not fight against what God is trying to do in their lives. That they would open their hearts to Lord

Acts 16:14 *The Lord opened her (Lydia) heart to respond to Paul's message.*

Pray that God would soften and open the hearts of those you are praying for

9. Pray for a divine visitation

Job 10:12 *You have granted me life and favour, and your visitation has preserved my spirit.*

A visitation of God always changes destiny. His visitation upon the people set them free and restored them. Pray for God to visit those you are praying for.

10. Pray in tongues

We should include praying in tongues with our natural prayers. It makes them so much more powerful.

Romans 8:26 *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*

Praying in tongues is praying the perfect will of God, very powerful