

Prayerwalking



Taking Your Faith Into The Real World



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Does Praying For The Lost Do Any Good?

When I preach and teach on praying for the lost, one question continues to surface, “Will this do any good? Will my prayers for the lost make any difference?” A variety of people have asked me this question – from skeptics who doubt it to people who genuinely want to see people saved. This is a valid question. It needs a clear answer.

The answer to this question is a resounding “Yes!” God delights in your prayers for the lost. He uses your prayers. He rejoices in your prayers. Since He is the loving God who wants to save sinners, you are joining Him in His great purpose and desire. When you pray for the lost, you touch the very heart of our God.

In our churches and individual lives, we pray for a variety of concerns. We believe that God hears and answers us in these things. An example is healing. We pray for sick people, asking God to heal them. We believe God for His healing power. We trust that God heals as we pray. Why can’t we do this when it comes to praying for the salvation of sinners? The same God who hears and answers our prayers for healing is the same God who can save the lost. If we will seek Him, God will hear and answer our prayers for those who need Jesus.

You may be wondering, “How can you be sure of that? How can I know that my

prayers for the lost make a difference?” The Word of God provides us with some truths

that make it clear that our prayers for the lost matter. The Bible does not give us a direct command to pray for the lost. You will not find any place where it says, “Thou shalt pray for the lost.” Yet, the Bible offers numerous truths that give us clear direction and motivation to intercede for the lost. At the same time, these truths can give you the confidence and build your faith to pray for those who need Jesus.

The Biblical Basis Of Praying For The Lost

The Word of God offers clear proof that God want us to pray for the lost. Moreover, they show us that these prayers make a difference. What proof does the Bible give us that our prayers for the lost make a difference?

- **Praying for the lost is God’s desire (1 Timothy 2:1-2).**

In this verse, God reveals the priority for His church. We are told that the church exists to pray for all kinds of people with all kinds of needs. The word “first” in this text means first in rank, first in priority. The church’s first priority is to pray for people. We are to

intercede for all types of people who have all kinds of needs.

In this same section, Paul refers to God as the Savior (2:3). Of all the needs that a person has, salvation is the greatest need. Moreover, it is the great desire of God to save. The combination of this call to pray for people and the emphasis on God being the Savior who desires to save puts praying for the lost as the priority of the church. People have many needs, yet their greatest need is forgiveness and a right relationship with God through faith in Christ. God desires that we pray about this great need in peoples' lives. God delights in it when His church prays for those who need His salvation. The church should intercede concerning all kinds of needs; yet, our primary focus in prayer must be the salvation of sinners. This is why the church exists!

Will your prayers for the lost do any good? Absolutely! This is the priority of the church. God desires this. He will respond if we seek Him.

- **Praying for the lost characterizes the true child of God (Romans 10:1).**

Paul desired the salvation of the lost. He longed to see them come to Jesus Christ in true faith. Yet, he also prayed for their salvation. He cried out to God for them to come to Christ. It was not enough for him to desire the salvation of lost people. He had to combine this with prayer.

Paul's example is God's call to believers (Romans 9:1-3). We see the heart of the apostle in this Romans 9:1-3 and Romans 10:1. Yet, we have to remember that this is also inspired Scripture. These are the words of God. The example of Paul is recorded not just for historical fact. It is given to us to show us how God wants us to respond. This is a model for all true believers. He wants His people to pray for the lost. God longs for his people to desire and to pray for the salvation of the lost. Those

who know and love God have the desire to intercede for the lost.

- **Prayer enables you to fulfill Matthew 22:37-39**

In Matthew 22:37-39, Jesus says, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself." First, we are to love God with all of our beings. If you love God, don't you want to see Him glorified? What glorifies God more than the salvation of sinners? Loving God means that you want to see people saved by God that God might receive glory. Praying for the lost is a tangible way that you can love God with all your heart. Second, you are to love your neighbor as yourself. You are to seek the highest good for those around you. What greater thing can you do for those around you than pray for their salvation? Loving your neighbor means asking God to have mercy on him and bring him to Christ. Praying for lost people is a tangible way to love your neighbor as yourself.

- **Prayer is the key to evangelistic effectiveness (2 Thessalonians 3:1-2).**

In 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2, Paul asks the Thessalonian church to pray for his labors in Corinth. He wanted them to pray for open and receptive hearts and that obstacles to the good news would be taken out of their lives. The Word of God tells us in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." Paul says, "And such were some of you."

These Corinthians had been ungodly and wicked; yet, now they had believed the good news of Jesus and had been transformed by it.

This is exactly what the Thessalonians had prayed for! They prayed for changed lives in Corinth and it became a reality! Praying for lost people does make a difference. . . When God's people pray for the lost, He hears and transforms lives. There is an inseparable connection between prayer and the lost coming to Christ. They go hand in hand.

- **Prayer opens doors for our witness (Colossians 4:2).**

In this text, Paul connects prayer and open doors for witness. He states that only prayer could prepare people to hear and receive the good news of Jesus. Prayer would provide him with opportunities to make the good news of Jesus known. In addition, prayer would prepare him to share the truth with the lost. Powerful evangelistic outreach has to be saturated in prayer. We must pray for the lost and for ourselves. Through this, God prepares the lost to hear and empowers us to share. Prayer is crucial in people hearing and receiving the good news of Jesus.

- **God has ordained prayer as part of bringing people to Christ (Matthew 7:7-8).**

In this text, Jesus gives us a basic, unchanging principle - if we want to receive from God, we must ask of God. We must plead with Him for the desired blessing. He is the Father who hears and answers our pleas. This is also true when it comes to the salvation of the lost. If we desire their salvation, we must plead with God. We must cry out to God for their salvation. God has made prayer an essential in bringing people to Christ. God determined in His heart to save sinful people. When He devised the plan to save them and bring them to Jesus, He made prayer for them an essential part of that plan. Just as people need to hear the gospel, we must pray for them to have

open minds and hearts to receive that gospel. Prayer is an essential part of God's purpose in bringing people to the Lord Jesus Christ.

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Answering The Objections

The following are some objections to praying for the lost. Read each one and use the Word of God to answer them. Meditate on the verse and write out an answer to the objection.

"Where are we taught in the Bible to pray for the lost? Show me in the Word where it tells me that I am supposed to pray for lost people."

Bible Answer - Romans 9:1-3, 10:1

Does praying for lost people really make a difference? I'm just not sure that my praying for the lost will impact them.

Bible Answer - 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

The most important thing you can do for a lost person is tell them about Jesus. Prayer really isn't that important when dealing with the lost.

Bible Answer - Colossians 4:2, Matthew 7:7-8

I believe that the pastor ought to pray for lost people. Why should I pray for the lost?

Bible Answer – **Matthew 22:37-39**

How can I be sure that God wants my church to pray fervently for the lost? Show me in the Bible where it says that my church should commit itself to praying for those who need Jesus.

Bible Answer – **Matthew 28:19-20, Matthew 7:7**

Seeking For Conviction

Cry out to God this week and ask Him to give you the faith and confidence that you will need to pray for the lost. Ask Him to convict your heart of the necessity of praying people to Jesus. Spend time interceding for your church. Call on the Spirit to unleash a spirit of prayer for the lost among you. Plead for Him to convict your church of the need and power of praying people to Jesus.

Evangelistic Prayer: Praying Through Hindrances To the Gospel

Praying for the lost requires dealing with hindrances. When you seek to lead someone to Jesus Christ, there will be obstacles. This is due on the one hand to the sinfulness of

4 people. Our lost condition puts a barrier between the gospel and us “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (**1 Corinthians 2:14**).

On the other hand, the devil, the enemy of the lost, desires to keep them in spiritual bondage, “In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (**2 Corinthians 4:4**). The devil will seek to put every hindrance he can between the lost person and Jesus Christ the Savior. For these reasons, we must pray through hindrances in order to see people come to Christ.

Father, I pray that You would break the pride in _____’s life. Deal with the pride that is hindering _____ from turning to Jesus Christ in faith and repentance (**John 5:40; James 4:6**).

Lord God, I ask that You will destroy _____’s self-righteousness. Show _____ that his /her goodness and works are not acceptable to You. Reveal to _____ the uselessness of his/her works for salvation (**Luke 18:9-14; Isaiah 64:6**).

Father, deliver _____ from the false ideas that he/she has about Jesus Christ and the gospel. Demolish all the arguments that he/she has for rejecting Jesus and the gospel. Deal with any false thinking that is keeping _____ from turning to Jesus Christ and His salvation (**John 14:6**).

Father, show _____ the necessity of turning to Jesus Christ now. Create within _____ a sense of urgency concerning faith and repentance. Deliver him/her from

putting off commitment to Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior of his/her life (**2 Corinthians 6:2**).

Father, I ask that You would deliver _____ from the fear of others. Grant him/her the courage to trust in Jesus Christ and to confess Him before men. Set _____ free from rejecting Christ because he/she is afraid of the opinions of others (**John 12:42-43**).

Father, I plead with You to set _____ free from the love of the world. Reveal plainly to him/her that this world is passing away but only the one who trusts Christ and serves Him will live forever. Let _____ see the eternal importance of Christ and His Word (**1 John 2:15-17**).

Father, I pray that You will deliver _____ from any sins that are hindering him/her from turning to the Lord Jesus Christ. I ask that he/she will see that these things are actually destroying him/her and keeping him/her from the only hope that he/she has for salvation (**Mark 9:43-48**).

Lord God, I pray that You would cause _____ to focus on the lives of godly people. Cause _____ to see the powerful and lasting transformation that Jesus Christ brings into a person's life. Deliver him/her from focusing on hypocrites and using them as an excuse for turning away from Jesus Christ and His salvation (**Matthew 5:13-16**).

Father, do whatever it takes to break _____'s stubbornness. You know the rebellion of his/her heart. Work powerfully to destroy this rebellion from

his/her life. Use whatever means is necessary to break his/her stubbornness (**Jeremiah 32:17**).

Father, set _____ free from the love of money. Show _____ the vanity of pursuing material things above a relationship to God. Do not let him/her squander his/her life on material possessions. I plead for You to convict him/her deeply concerning the foolishness of material things without a personal relationship to God (**Luke 12:13-21**).

Father, I ask that You would deliver _____ from self-centeredness. Show _____ that his/her selfishness is leading him/her away from God and into hell (**Galatians 5:19-21**).

Father, I plead with You to reveal to _____ that You can and will save him/her through Jesus Christ. Show him/her that there is no sin or addiction that is too great for Him. Let _____ know that You are willing to forgive and that You have the power to change him/her (**Matthew 11:28**).

Praying John 3:16

John 3:16 is the most well known verse in the Word of God. It is the classic statement of God's salvation through Jesus Christ. This verse describes God's plan of salvation in simple but powerful words. This verse of Scripture also provides you with a prayer model to use in praying for the lost. It offers you vital truths that you can use to plead with God for the lost.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Adoration

-Adore God for being the saving God.

- Adore God for loving sinners.
- Adore God for sending Jesus Christ.
- Adore God for delivering people from eternal damnation.
- Adore God for granting the gift of eternal life to all who believe in Jesus.

Confession

- Confess that this person has not believed in Jesus Christ.
- Confess that this person has rejected the gift of God's Son.
- Confess that he/she deserves to perish.
- Confess that he/she cannot merit nor earn the gift of eternal life.

Thanksgiving

- Thank God for your salvation.
- Thank God for sending His Son as the Savior.
- Thank God for His love that moved Him to send Jesus.
- Thank God for the free gift of salvation through Jesus.
- Thank God for His love for sinners like _____.
- Thank God for His willingness to grant eternal life to those who believe in Jesus.
- Thank God for His willingness to deliver from eternal damnation.

Supplication

- Pray that _____ will know that God has love for sinners.
- Pray that _____ will understand that Jesus has been sent by God as the only Savior.
- Plead that _____ will realize his/her lostness and future damnation without Jesus Christ; ask the Spirit to bring deep conviction concerning this truth in his/her life.
- Plead that _____ will believe in Jesus Christ and receive eternal life.

Listening

Father, what is hindering _____ from believing in Jesus? What false ideas or beliefs are standing in the way of him/her accepting Jesus as his/her personal Lord and Savior?

The "Six Questions" Method Of Prayer Evangelism

The "Six Questions" Method of Prayer Evangelism is designed to help you intercede for the lost through a series of questions. These questions deal with the most basic issues of life. By praying for these things, the lost person can be prepared to hear and receive the gospel of Jesus Christ.

(1) **Why:** Ask God to cause this person to wonder why he or she rejects Jesus Christ and His salvation. Call on Him to show this person the foolishness of rejecting Christ and of living life without Him.

(2) **What:** Ask God to cause the person to start asking the question, "What is the purpose of my life?" Plead with God to plant in his or her heart an urgency concerning this question.

(3) **When:** Pray that God will grant this person an emptiness of heart. Ask God to show them that sin and selfishness will not satisfy. Call on God to cause this person to start asking the questions, "When will I really be free? When can I find true peace and hope?"

(4) **Whom:** Pray that God will cause this person to doubt all the lies that he or she has concerning Christianity. Call on God to cause the person to ask, "Whom can I trust? In whom can I find hope?"

(5) **How:** Plead that God will plant this question in the heart of the person, "How can I cope with my problems?" Pray that God will grant hopelessness in the heart of this person. Ask God to show this person that he or she

cannot cope in his or her own power or strength. Pray that he or she will be forced to look to God.

(6) **Where:** Call on God to cause this person to contemplate the question, "Where will I go when I die?"

Praying As A Way Of Life

1 Thessalonians 5:17

Prayerwalking flows out of a life of prayer. God has called every believer to live a life of prayer. Prayer is to fill every part of your life. It is not limited to a quiet time. It is to extend to all the places you go and for all the people you come into contact with on a daily basis.

What does it mean to "pray without ceasing?"

What does Jesus instruct believers to do in **Matthew 6:6**?

How do **1 Thessalonians 5:18** and **Matthew 6:6** fit together?

Every believer needs to get alone and get with God. You should have a quiet time with God on a daily basis. This is the desire of your heavenly Father. Jesus is revealing God's heart in **Matthew 6:6**. He longs for you to pull aside

and spend time with Him in prayer. He yearns for you to pour your heart out to Him.

Yet, your time of speaking to God doesn't end with your quiet time. It continues even after your quiet time ends. **Matthew 6:6** teaches that you should have a specific time of concentrated prayer with Him.

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In **1 Thessalonians 5:18**, God is calling for you to have an ongoing conversation with Him. He longs for you to speak to Him about everything you see, hear, and face throughout your day. God desires that you extend your prayer closet into the real world. He yearns for you to praise Him and thank Him throughout your day. He desires that you intercede for the countless people you encounter on a daily basis.

Praying without ceasing means having an ongoing conversation with God throughout your day and night. It is continually speaking to Him, crying out to Him, during the good, the bad, and the ugly of your days! He is looking for a lifestyle of prayer. You can pray without having a life of prayer. Your Father wants prayer to fill your life. Speaking to Him should be as natural as breathing is to a human.

Your heavenly Father longs to have an ongoing conversation with you. Pray today that He will enable you to remove the obstacles that stand in the way of this. Ask God to give you a clean heart and a renewed spirit. Plead that praying will become as natural as breathing to you.

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