



Praying with Others

A DiscipleMaker prays for others – that’s a given. Often the missionary Paul told people he was praying for them. He wasn’t boastful – they’re Spirit-inspired words, after all. Don’t be shy to tell others you pray for them. **(This means some sort of list and habit)**

It’s important and encouraging to pray with others too. Paul, master DiscipleMaker, modeled this. *When he’d finished speaking [to the Ephesian church leaders], Paul knelt and prayed with them. (Acts 20.36).* **Take every opportunity to pray with someone.** **(It takes initiative. If you don’t propose to pray together, it won’t happen. Perhaps you pray for them – perhaps they pray too. Give them the option)**

Why pray for/with others? Young Christians often have messy lives. Messy relationships, messy habits, messy thoughts, messy vocabulary. Their **new ME** is emerging like the cocoon → butterfly process, but with intense struggle. They often feel guilty and discouraged. They know they’re not perfect yet (although they think you are). They keep slipping and sliding spiritually. Perhaps they avoid God because they assume he’s disappointed with them. Praying with them is an encouragement, especially when done in grace and love. Ask yourself when with a disciple, *Any good reason I shouldn’t pray with them?*

Practical ideas:

It’s polite to ask permission to pray with another, and respect their response. Pray in the middle of a conversation if there’s reason to. Model *never stop praying* (1 Thess. 5.17).

Pray as you conclude a conversation. Perhaps pick a concept you’ve discussed, or a need the disciple has, and pray about it. Thank God for them. Be effusive in your thanks.

Don’t pray as a superior – you’re not – but as an equal. We all come to God as little children. *Lads*, Jesus termed the fishermen – grown men, remember – in John 21. Be childlike, as he taught us to be.

If appropriate, write a prayer and send it to a Believer or Disciple. The letters in the New Testament have written prayers; we could do this too. *This is how I'm praying for you...*

Chat-pray if you're online with Skype or MSN. How? Simply pray like you chat. Type a sentence or two – not more – of your prayer and hit “Enter”. You can wait for the other to chat-pray too, adding their prayer sentences to yours. It's awkward at first; most things are.

Similarly, txt-msg pray on cell phones. This is how students and young adults communicate. If you txt-msg pray, you model what they can do with friends. Give examples of how to pray. For a Seeker, suggest a prayer like this: *God, I don't know you yet, but I want to. Please let me understand you more, so I can believe in you. I don't belong to you yet, but I need your help.*

Confess your sins to God during prayer. (You have some, don't you?) James is explicit, *confess your sins to one another and pray for one another... (5.16)*. When was the last time you heard a mature Christian or a leader confess sin? Hmm. No wonder young Christians get discouraged. They think everyone's perfect but them; they know they're not.

Hint: pray brief, uncomplicated prayers. Don't intimidate a young Christian with elaborate, jargon-filled prayers. They'll give up, feeling they'll never pray this way. Ever heard someone pray a long, boring, windy cliché-filled prayer? Yes, we've all experienced this. Save long prayers for your *get-alone* time with God. Model what prayer is with short, simple ones.

Ask for prayer: Paul often asked others to pray for him. Even Jesus asked for prayer during his agony in the garden. We have all the more reason to. *We all make many mistakes (3.2a)*, James says. That includes you, right. Me too. How encouraging for a young Believer or a Disciple to know you struggle with temptation, need guidance, get discouraged, are sometimes bewildered or overwhelmed. Ask them to pray for you! *(Talking about prayer and learning about prayer and reading about prayer isn't helpful. Not unless we pray. How soon can you put this into practice? Good!)*