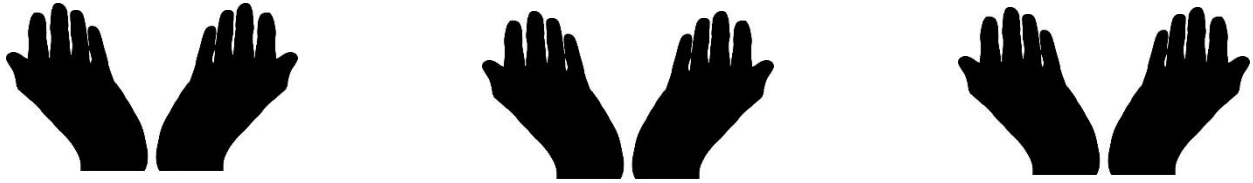


# Praying for the Unsaved



**1 Timothy 2:1-7** (NIV) I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—<sup>2</sup> for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. <sup>3</sup> This is good, and pleases God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. <sup>5</sup> For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time. <sup>7</sup> And for this purpose I [*Paul*] was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth, I am not lying—and a true and faithful teacher of the Gentiles.

## 1. One Mediator

- There is but one mediator between God and humanity.
- There is but one way to be saved and that is through Jesus Christ, God's only son.

**2 Peter 3:9** (NIV) The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

- It is God's desire that none are lost and that all would accept the gift of salvation that comes through Jesus.



- Let us pray and give God praise for all people and our leaders; local, national and international.
  - Pray that they would hear and come to a saving knowledge of the truth; that Jesus Christ gave himself so that all would be saved.
- This then, is God's desire...that all would be saved.
  - But there is a problem.
  - How can people receive the Gospel if they don't hear or experience the Gospel?
- This is where you and I come in . . .

## 2. Prepared to Give and Answer

**1 Peter 3:15** (NIV) But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,

**Romans 10:14–15 (NIV)** How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? <sup>15</sup> And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

- Now, we need to ask ourselves a few questions.

- a. Do we truly revere Christ as our Lord?
- b. If we do, are we prepared to testify to the hope we have in Jesus for any who ask or for those to whom we are sent?
- c. And if we are ready to testify, do we know what to say?

### **Tell your story**

- The first part of our testimony can be sharing how following Jesus has changed our heart, mind, and life. Tell them your story.

- Let's consider Paul's story as our example.

**Acts 9:1–21 (NIV)** Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest <sup>2</sup> and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. <sup>4</sup> He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”

<sup>5</sup> “Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked.

“I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” he replied. <sup>6</sup> “Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”

<sup>7</sup> The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. <sup>8</sup> Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. <sup>9</sup> For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

<sup>10</sup> In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, “Ananias!”

“Yes, Lord,” he answered.

<sup>11</sup> The Lord told him, “Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. <sup>12</sup> In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight.”

<sup>13</sup> “Lord,” Ananias answered, “I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name.”

<sup>15</sup> But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. <sup>16</sup> I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.”

<sup>17</sup> Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” <sup>18</sup> Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, <sup>19</sup> and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. <sup>20</sup> At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. <sup>21</sup> All those who heard him were astonished and asked, “Isn’t he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn’t he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?”



- Pray and give thanks to God for your conversion story.
- Pray to receive a Godly wisdom and understanding about how you came to know Jesus as Savior and Lord. (*What were the circumstances? What were you going through at the time? How did your life change?*)
- Ask God to help you put your story into simple words that will be easy to share and be an encouragement to others.

### Share the Good News

- The second part of our testimony is sharing how someone can be saved.
- Knowing a few simple verses can go a long way to sharing that information.

- As we know, all are in need of salvation

**Romans 3:23** “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

- Salvation is a gift and cannot be earned.

**Romans 6:23** "...But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

- God truly does love each and every one of us in spite of our sins.

**Romans 5:8** “God demonstrates His own love for us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us!”

- God will hear our prayers seeking forgiveness and salvation.

**Romans 10:13** Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

**Romans 10:9–11** (NIV) If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.

<sup>11</sup> As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.”



- Pray that God would write these verses on our hearts so we can recall them whenever they are needed.

- Pray for receptive hearts to hear God's plan of salvation.

### 3. Praying by Name

- Now it's time to get more personal.
- Has God laid the name of a specific person or persons on your heart with a concern for their eternal soul-their salvation?
- If so, write the name/s down.
- If not . . .



- Let's pray and ask God to reveal the name of those he wants you to be interceding for. (*When you have a name/s write them down.*)

### Intersession

- There was a time in the life of the Jewish nations, before their exile into Babylon, when God was looking for someone to help guide his people back into a life of righteousness.
  - He sent Ezekiel to them to tell them this . . .
- Ezekiel 22:30 (NIV)** "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 has laid upon our hearts the names of those he is trying to reach.
  - Remember, soldiers will stand in the gap of a fortified wall to maintain an unbroken line of protection for the people within the walls.
  - So too, God is asking us to stand in the gap between the person on our heart in order to help protect them from eternal damnation in the lake of fire.
  - We do that by sharing the Gospel . . .by helping them discover and accept Jesus as their Savior.
  - Let us stand in the gap, to intercede in prayer, on behalf of the one/s God as laid on our hearts. pray, by name,



- Pray, by name, for God's mercy to fall upon the person/s he has laid on your heart.
- Ask God to help this person/s see themselves as God sees them--as one of his own beloved sons or daughters.
- Pray that this person/s would be receptive to the call of the Holy Spirit on their lives and be open to hearing God's Word.

## A spiritual battle for the soul

- As we continue to intercede for those God has laid on our hearts remember this is spiritual warfare.
- We are not the only ones in the fight for the soul of this person/s.

**John 10:10** (NIV) The thief [*Satan*] comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I [*Jesus*] have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

- Satan doesn't want anyone else to know Jesus.

**2 Corinthians 4:4** (NIV) 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.

**John 3:19** (NIV) This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.

- Satan will fight to keep the eyes, ears, minds, and spirits of the people closed to God through distractions, lies, and trickery.

- Let us then consider where the battle might be for those God has laid on our hearts.

- a. Are there wounds in this person's past that need to be healed?
- b. Are there wounds inflicted by the church that need to be cleansed?
- c. Is there generational bondage that hinders this one from hearing the claims of Christ?
- d. Are there strongholds of unbelief or unclean spirits holding this one captive?

- Pray for this person to receive the healing power of Jesus in their heart, mind, and spirit.
- Pray and bind, in the name of Jesus, any demonic hold that might be in this person's life.
- Pray specifically against any spirits of deception, disobedience, addictions, or distractions.
- Bind these demonic influences, in the name of Jesus, and cut them off from the person/s you are interceding for.
- Pray for this person/s to be set free from the bondages of sin and painful memories, or experiences.



## Preparing for salvation

- Once the battle for the soul has begun, we also need to intercede on this person/s behalf to help them become receptive to hear and accept the Gospel.

**Ephesians 5:8–14** (NIV) For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light<sup>9</sup> (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth)

<sup>10</sup> and find out what pleases the Lord. <sup>11</sup> Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. <sup>12</sup> It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. <sup>13</sup> But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. <sup>14</sup> This is why it is said: “Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

- As we enter into prayer once more be sure to use the name/s you have written down.

- Pray they will be able to see the light of Christ through his Word and your testimony.
- Pray they are able to begin to distinguish between the righteousness of the world and the truth and righteousness of God.
- Pray they will lose the any worldly desires that are holding them captive so they may draw near goodness and light of Jesus.
- Pray they have ears to hear and awaken from sleep to respond to the call of the Holy Spirit and see the light of Christ shining upon them.
- Pray for the Lord to stir within this person/s the desire to seek salvation.
- Pray they will have the courage to acknowledge their sins and repent.
- Pray for them to have the desire to surrender themselves unto Jesus and accept his unconditional love.

- In that we are in a spiritual battle for the eternal souls of those around us we should also remember that we do not fight alone.

- God has not left us to fight for him on our own.

**Matthew 9:36-38** (NIV) When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. <sup>37</sup> Then he said to his disciples, “**The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.** <sup>38</sup> **Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.**”

- Pray for God to surround this person/s with many faithful soldiers of the cross.
- Pray that each testimony, each witness, and each act of sacrificial love will draw this person ever closer to Jesus, their Savior and Redeemer.

#### 4. Persistence and Patience

- Salvation can come to a person in quick and unexpected ways.

- However, we also understand, if not from our own experiences then the testimony of other Christians, that sometimes it takes time for a person to be ready to accept Jesus as their Savior.

- Which means we need to be persistent in our prayers and patient for the outcome.

**Galatians 6:9** (NIV) Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

**Romans 12:11–13** (NIV) Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. <sup>12</sup> Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. <sup>13</sup> Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

**Ephesians 6:18** (NIV) And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

**John 15:7–8** (NIV) If you remain in me [*Jesus*] and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

- First, know that God hears and will answer our prayers.
- Second, keep praying.



- Pray and envision the one/s you've named as already being saved, delivered, and healed.
- Pray and envision the ministry God is preparing for them to serve in, and the lives their testimony will one day lead to Jesus.
- Pray you will be ready to help lead them in a prayer of repentance and acceptance when the time is right for them to say; "Yes" to Jesus.

## 5. Prayer of salvation

- A prayer for salvation only needs a few things...

- a. Admit you're a sinner.
- b. Ask forgiveness and be willing to turn away from your sins.
- c. Believe that Christ died for you on the cross.
- d. Receive Christ into your heart and life.

- Here's one example of a salvation prayer.

"Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Son of God. Thank you for dying on the cross for my sins. I know I am a sinner and I confess and repent of my sins before you now. Forgive me Jesus and come into my heart and life. Fill me with your Holy Spirit and create in me a clean heart. I receive you as my Lord and Savior and I want to serve you now and forever. In the name of Jesus I pray, Amen!"

- A Final Blessing;

Mighty God, bless and empower these your faithful daughters and sons with the Holy Spirit. Grant them the ability and opportunities to proclaim the Good News and share their story. May all those you have laid on our hearts come to know Jesus as Lord, Savior, and King. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen!