



PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER: WEEK 9

Greetings ladies! Our **One Another** for the week is incredibly important. Learning how to best pray for each other is something we will be working on our whole life. Can we ever pray enough? Can we ever pray for all those we need to? How do we pray when we “run out” of things to pray for? How do we find the time to pray when we barely have time to breathe some days? Does it matter where or when I pray? These are questions that most people struggle with at one time or another. There are many great books on prayer, but we can spend more time reading ABOUT prayer than actually praying. So ... what does God’s Word say about the importance of praying for one another? Let’s get started! Your memory verse of the week is found in **James 5:16**, “Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.” (NLT)

The Book of James reminds us that those who have a relationship with Jesus Christ will respond in practical ways. A transformed life by the love of Christ will result in a love for others. The author deals with just about every area of our life, including what we say, what we do, what we feel, and what we have. In James 5, we are reminded that we called to care for one another by praying for them when they’re sick. In context, our verse is mainly focusing on praying for the sick, but throughout the rest of the New Testament, praying for one another is not limited to that. So, praying for one another is a free and powerful gift we can give to each another, interceding for them and bringing their requests to His amazing throne of grace (Hebrews 4:16).

1. Let’s look at some other verses about prayer. Paul gives us some specific instructions on holy living in 1 Thessalonians 5:14-22. What does he say about prayer? Also read Philippians 4:6-7. Does this verse add any detail?

2. Read Ephesians 6:10-20. What else does Paul say about prayer?
3. James tells us to pray for one another when they are sick. Who else are we told to pray for according to Matthew 5:44 and Luke 6:28? Is this something you do or you struggle with? What should you be praying for them for?
4. According to Romans 10:1, who else are we called to pray for? Is that something you pray for as well?
5. Here's another category to pray for. Who does Paul tell his friend Timothy to pray for in 1 Timothy 2:1-4?
6. Remember Job's friends who didn't really seem like friends? They gave him horrible counsel, bad advice, etc. What did Job do for them despite all that in Job 42:10?

Okay, I'm sure you see where I'm going with this. We are called to pray for one another ... ALL the one anothers. Authorities, enemies, good friends, bad friends, sick friends ... everyone. And never forget to pray for those who don't know Christ to find the truth.

- 7.** We know Jesus never asks us to do something He didn't do as well. Is Jesus praying for us? What does Romans 8:34 and Hebrews 7:25 say about that? What are your thoughts on that?

Robert McCheyne once said, "If I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would not fear a million enemies. Yet distance makes no difference. He is praying for me."

- 8.** Asking for prayer from someone requires a certain amount of vulnerability. How do we make someone feel safe enough to be honest with us?

- 9.** The command is to pray for one another, so we need to also allow people to pray for us. How vulnerable are you with people? Do you ask for prayer or are you guarded? How does it require humility to ask for prayer?

- 10.** Even Jesus was vulnerable and asked others to pray for Him. Read Matthew 26:38, 40-41. Who did He ask and what did He ask for?

- 11.** What can you learn from the example of Jesus in the Garden? Do you reach out in hard times and ask for specific, real, honest prayer, or do you try to bear it alone?

- 12.** Have you ever felt like you didn't know how to pray for someone? Read Paul's prayers for his friends in Ephesians 3:14-21 and Colossians 1:9-12. What are some things Paul prays for? How can his prayers be a model for you to pray for others?

I was reading about what praying for one another does and I had never thought of some of them. I mean, I think about inviting God into the situation and trusting Him, but praying for one another unites us in community, removes any feelings of isolation as we bear each other's burdens, and doesn't always change the situation but can change our perception and attitudes. Prayer invites people into the sacred places in our heart and creates opportunities to draw us closer together. Praying with one another lightens our burdens, points us to God, and builds our faith. Practicing this one another not only demonstrates our faith in God, but as we pray for others, we open our own hearts to God's compassion and love. And most importantly, praying for each other allows us to actively participate in God's plan for the world!

There are many different kinds of prayers. In Ephesians 6:18, Paul says to pray "with all kinds of prayers." There are prayers of confession and repentance, prayers of gratitude, prayers of worship, as well as personal prayers. The type of prayer we are talking about when we say to pray for one another are usually intercessory prayers. Intercession is "making an appeal or petition on behalf of someone else."

- 13.** As we intercede for others, why is it so helpful and beneficial to pray with specifics?

14. We often tell people we will pray for them but forget. Why not pray at that moment, with them, if possible? Try to make this a habit when you can. Is this easy or difficult for you? What are some ways to help remind yourself to pray?

15. Do you have a designated time or place to pray? Does that help you? Read Luke 6:12, Matthew 14:23, Mark 6:46, and Luke 9:28. How can it be helpful to have a consistent, predetermined place where you're comfortable praying? Do you HAVE to follow that example?

16. How do we practically pray "without ceasing"? What does that mean?

Prayer requires time, effort, and sacrifice, especially when someone's burdens become your own. J. Oswald Sanders wrote this about prayer, "The word 'wrestling' (in Colossians 4:12) is that from which our word "agony" is derived. It is used of a man toiling at his work until utterly weary (Colossians 1:29) or competing in the arena for the coveted laurel wreath (1 Cor. 9:25). It describes the soldier battling for his life (1 Timothy 6:12), or a man struggling to deliver his friend from danger (John 18:36). It pictures the agony of earnestness of a man to save his own soul (Luke 13:24). But its supreme significance appears in the tragedy of Gethsemane. 'Being in an agony He prayed more earnestly' (Luke 22:44), an agony induced by His identification with and grief over the sins of a lost world. Prayer is evidently a strenuous spiritual exercise, which demands the utmost mental discipline and concentration."

- 17.** Have you found that prayer is a strenuous exercise? In what way?
- 18.** Read 1 Samuel 12:20-25. The prophet Samuel is speaking to the people of Israel. What does he say about praying for them in verse 23? How does that challenge you?
- 19.** Have you established a group of people in your life who will pray for you and hold you accountable before God?
- 20.** Now it's time to pray. We've talked about prayer, the benefits, the need, and now, it's time to Just Do It, as NIKE would say. For the rest of the week, let's practice this one another. Look for opportunities to pray for others. Grab their hand and stop and pray. Write their names in your journal and pray over them, intercede for them, labor over them in love. Ask the holy Spirit to show you people who need prayer. Let's do this together.

To end our time together today in our group, we will spend time praying with each other and for each other. I'm excited about that. I hope you are too!

