

The Spirit-Filled Power of Partnership in Prayer

Have you ever thought of tithing your prayer life by spending part of your prayer time praying for others?

A friend of mine decided to try praying for three other people every time she sent God a request concerning her own needs. Angie said, "When I started this practice, I was amazed at how God's answers to my prayers began to increase."

That goes along with a study conducted over 60 years ago by a professor at Redlands University in California. Dr. Parker and Ms. St. John detailed this 10-year experiment in their book *Prayer Can Change Your Life*.

They describe creating three test groups made up of people with one thing in common: They were all desperate for an emotional or physical healing. The first group was made up of individuals who each met with a psychiatrist for one hour a week. The second group prayed for themselves by themselves, while the third group met together and prayed for each other for an hour every week.

Which group do you think had the most dramatic results? You guessed it: It was the group that prayed for one another. The members of this group had a 72-percent answered prayer result, with 100 percent saying they had at least some lasting improvement in the areas prayed over. In fact, a non-believing husband of one of the members of this prayer group was actually healed of cancer.

As for the other groups, the group that met with the psychiatrist had some improvements, but only as long as they continued to attend their weekly sessions.

But what results did the lonesome prayer people have? Believe

it or not, they had little to no improvements.

I can't say I'm surprised. I know when I've set out to pray for a need for myself, I find it's easy to get discouraged in my prayers. But when I take this same need to a praying friend and we pray together, it seems to me I can count on a swifter answer from God. In fact, I saw such a result this past weekend when my flight to Baltimore was in jeopardy of cancellation because of high winds. The airline attendant told me, "I think you're grounded until tomorrow."

Of course, I'd been praying all along, but it wasn't until I reached out to my prayer team that the winds instantly died down, and my flight was able to take off.

Carole puts it this way, "When we pray together, we have a more open-heaven experience."

By this she means we can more easily access God and his answers to our prayers. I think the reason for this can be found in Ecclesiastes 4:12: "And if someone might overpower another by himself, two together can withstand him. A threefold cord is not quickly broken."

I know when I call out to God, I have a direct line to him. But when I come to God with a friend, it's like our individual prayer lines are knitted together, creating an even stronger cord. Carole says, "I find that by adding a third person to a prayer circle, it's like our cord of prayer grows even stronger. I'm always amazed at how much power these entwined prayers seem to have over the prayers I pray by myself."

If you haven't already, I would encourage you to start your own prayer group, even if it's made up of you and one other. If you can't meet in person, meet online or over the phone at least once a week. Share requests, then step back and watch what God will do with your cords of prayer.

So, if you are seeking a blessing, be that blessing by praying

for others and including the needs of others in your times of beseeching God. Don't be surprised when God answers. {eoa}

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