

This Short Prayer Is Exactly What You Need When Facing a Serious Health Crisis

Everyone will face a moment of crisis, a midnight hour, at some point in his or her life. For some, the moment comes sooner than for others, but rest assured, your moment will come. What will happen at that time? Will you know what to do? Will you know how to pray?

When many of my patients are faced with serious health crises, they don't know what to do or how to pray effectively. They haven't been prepared for this dark moment. Fortunately God, in His wisdom and providence, has given us in His Word the answers we need for all of life's situations. When my patients ask me to help them pray, I happily show them what the Bible teaches. In fact, Jesus's disciples asked Him the very question that my patients ask me. They had seen their master's prayer life—the many times that He would retreat to be alone with His Father and pray, sometimes all night— and they saw the power and effectiveness with which He healed the masses.

For that reason, they came to Him one day, entreating Him, “Lord, teach us to pray” (Luke 11:1b). Jesus provided them with the pattern of prayer that we still use today called the Lord's Prayer. I believe that Jesus gave this prayer to the disciples—and to us today—not only for us to memorize and recite, but also to teach us the basic principles of prayer.

This simple prayer embodies certain fundamentals that we should understand and apply to all our prayers. As we focus briefly on these important aspects of effective prayer, I encourage you to begin to use them in your prayers with renewed faith.

“Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name” (Matt.

6:9). We must begin our prayer by acknowledging God as our Father. In His great love, He is our provider, the one who knows us and knows what we need and what is best for us. He is interested in our welfare and is lovingly approachable to His children at any time.

“Your kingdom come; Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven” (v. 10,). As the ultimate “higher power,” God’s kingdom supersedes—and overrides—all earthly governments. As we learn to recognize that His will is always good, we seek to follow Him always and desire His direction for our lives.

“Give us this day our daily bread” (v. 11). God is the source for everything we need in our lives on a daily basis. We should ask Him specifically to provide for our needs—including health and healing for every part of our being.

“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” (v. 12). The word “debts” is sometimes translated as “transgressions” or “trespasses.” God’s perfection can obliterate our imperfections, His wisdom far exceeds ours, and His divine mercy and grace are able to save to the uttermost when we seek forgiveness for our sins. It is important to remember that we are forgiven when we forgive others (see Matt. 6:14–15.)

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” (v. 13). There is evil as well as good in the world, and there are things that we may be tempted to do (such as smoking, drinking excessively or having gluttonous eating habits) that could adversely affect our health and our ability to ward off disease. Only with God’s active help that we entreat through prayer can we overcome the many pitfalls, problems, temptations and opposition that we will inevitably confront.

“For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen” (v. 13). Our success in prayer, in our lives and in our health will depend on us understanding and remembering who God is, what He asks of us and how we cultivate relationship with

Him.

With this guidance received from Jesus's example, it seems easier to understand how God wants you to pray.

As a Christian physician, I can tell you that my primary weapon against disease is prayer. When I see patients who are ravaged by the effects of a particular illness— or even worse, their test results and case history are inconclusive so that we are not sure what is causing the symptoms—I do not turn first to further testing or to my prescription pad. I turn to what I consider to be the Bible's greatest health secret: the effective weapon of prayer. {eoa}

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