

# Timeless Tools to Help Make Praying With Your Spouse a Reality

Praying with your spouse can be one of the most intimate, healing and meaningful aspects of your relationship. You know you should, but perhaps praying together feels awkward, even scary. If you struggle with knowing how to pray with your spouse daily, or if you wish praying together were more meaningful, this is for you.

Like communication between you and your spouse, communicating meaningfully with God in prayer develops over time. Communicating with your spouse is sometimes superficial, sometimes deep, sometimes frustrating, sometimes challenging, sometimes transforming. The more you and your spouse learn about each other, the more meaningful your communication becomes. Investing in learning appropriate skills makes your communication together better.

So it is with God. Sometimes your prayer will be a quick cry, "God, help us!" Sometimes it will be about "little" things and sometimes about overwhelmingly important things. And the more you as a couple get to know God, the better your prayer life together with Him will be.

Some husbands, especially, feel intimidated by praying with their wife. Don't let that stop you. Use these ideas to start where you are and take the lead in bringing your marriage and family to God in prayer.

Here are some practical tools that will help you pray with your spouse regularly.

- **1. Pray together silently.**

If praying together has not been part of your marriage, this may be the easiest place to start. Agree with your spouse that praying together is important. Then when you're in bed together at night, or any other time, take your spouse's hand. Each of you pray silently while you're next to each other, and squeeze your spouse's hand when you're done. Simply praying while in your spouse's presence may feel like a big step forward. Go for it!

## **2. Agree on a daily topic.**

Praying out loud together is important, but may feel difficult. Agreeing on a topic for each day may help you move forward. For example, Monday: our marriage. Tuesday: our children and family. Wednesday: our home and finances. Thursday: our church and friends. Friday: God's kingdom nearby or through missions. Each of you talk to God briefly about where you see the need in that area and ask for God's intervention.

## **3. Don't over-spiritualize.**

High-sounding religious prayers don't work in God's ears (see Luke 18:11-14), and they don't work with your spouse, either. Whatever you do, don't try to one-up your spouse in prayer. No King James English; this is *you* talking with God. Use the same tone you would in talking with a friend. If you tend to be the more verbal one in your marriage, make your prayers shorter when praying together. Prayer is *not* the time to criticize your spouse, demean them, preach at them or make yourself look more righteous. It's a time to be vulnerable and real.

## **4. Keep up your own prayer life.**

Prayer with your spouse is no substitute for your own personal prayer life with God. It's absolutely vital that you maintain your own daily time with God, learning, listening, praying, growing. God's relationship with us always begins with One on

one. As you allow the Holy Spirit space to continue to transform your own heart, your spiritual connection with your spouse is likely to become stronger also.

### **5. Invite, don't force.**

If your spouse is not a believer, Paul's direction is to live together as peaceably as possible as long as your spouse is willing. (1 Cor. 7:12-16). Let your life make Jesus appealing to your spouse. If your spouse is a believer but resistant to praying together, use a similar posture. Let your spouse see you becoming a more loving, more resilient, more joyful Christian, and watch for any opportunities the Holy Spirit brings to invite your spouse to grow—and pray—with you.

### **6. Bring tough stuff into God's presence together.**

Every marriage will face problems. Perhaps it's an illness, financial struggles, a problem child, problems between you or a big life-decision affecting your family. Pray about it together. If you disagree about money, go to God together and ask Him to show you how He would have you use the finances He has entrusted to you. If sex is a struggle between you, talk to God about how you can come closer together in this area. When facing big decisions, ask God's opinion before deciding what to do.

### **7. Get emotional with God.**

It's a big point of spiritual growth, both individually and as a couple, to let your feelings become real in God's presence. Look for opportunities to do that with your spouse. When something great or unexpectedly good happens, grab your spouse's hand and say, "Let's thank God together for this!" When one or both of you is sad or worried, hold your spouse close and lift the situation up to God out loud. Allow each other to feel sad, upset, angry or excited in God's presence.

### **8. Ask for reasons other than getting things.**

If all your communication with your spouse was asking for things, your relationship would always remain superficial. Any intimacy you develop together comes through doing life together, learning about each other and communicating about deeper things. Learn about God together too; consider doing a daily devotional where you read the same verses or devotional message, talk briefly together about it and then pray together about it. See your prayer life as a way of growing spiritually more than simply “getting things” from God.

### **9. Pray for your spouse out loud.**

It can provide an awesome sense of security to hear your spouse thank God for you and ask Him to be with you. Bring your spouse before God out loud often. As a husband, this is one of the most powerful ways you can support your wife. As a wife, this is one of the best ways you can encourage your husband. Thank God for the specific things your spouse brings to your marriage, and ask Him to be with them in specific challenges they are facing right now.

### **10. Just do it!**

Even in our troubled world there's much truth to “the family that prays together stays together.” If you already pray together, commit to doing it more regularly and more deeply. If you aren't praying together, start small but just do it. So what if it's uncomfortable? You and your spouse are both sinners, both finite. You must have the presence of God in your marriage if it is to be successful and if you want to fulfill the purpose God has for your union. Start where you are and just do it!

**Your turn:** *What is the status of your prayer life with your spouse? What is the next step you need to take in growing your prayer life together? Leave a comment below. {eoa}*

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