

The Power of Intercessory Prayer

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Pray Like Jesus | September 13, 2026 | 1 John 5:14-15; 1 John 5:19; Hebrews 7:25; Romans 8:34; John 12:31; Matthew 17; John 17; Luke 22:31-32

Prepared from the spoken message and lightly edited for readability. Scripture quotations and spoken phrasing are preserved as delivered.

Now, I want to invite you to take God's Word and turn to John chapter 17. We're continuing in our Pray Like Jesus series. We've said that the goal of this message series is to grow in our intimacy and our walk with the Lord, to make sure that we are seeking the Lord in prayer and growing in our personal walk with Him.

We want this fall to really highlight spiritual fervor. Part of that is our Resilience Conference that's coming up in October. You'll see on the screen that you can scan this right here and go to the website. We want to encourage you to sign up.

This is a conference that'll start on Tuesday at 11:00 and go through Thursday at noon. There are workshops during the day. If you come during the day, you need to sign up and pay the conference fee, and you get a 50 percent discount for being a Champion Forest member. Then at night, the worship sessions are open to the public. Just treat those worship sessions at night like old-school revival services. You remember those, man? You come in for old-school revival, and that's what we're going to have in the night sessions. We want you to be here.

I was looking over the workshops that are going to be here at Resilience. Here are the names of some of them, and this will lead into where we're going today. One of them is "The Essential Role of Spiritual Parents and Grandparents." That might interest you. Another workshop is "Becoming a Prayer Advocate Your Church and Your Pastor Need." "When Prayer Is Hard" is another workshop. "God Uses Our Weaknesses: Praying Through Mental Health and Personal Challenges." Several of these workshops are Spanish only, and some are women only. It's going to be really, really great. If you're interested in coming, we would love to have you.

I thought about these workshops because, if Jesus were teaching a workshop on prayer, the passage that we're covering today would be titled "The Power of Intercessory Prayer." That'd be awesome to hear, wouldn't it? You look at a conference and go down the list: "Okay, what's being taught here? Who's the instructor? Oh, Jesus is teaching on intercessory prayer. I think I'll go to that one."

Today, in John 17, we get a glimpse of the intercessory prayer life of Christ. We've said that prayer is both caught and taught. It's taught. The disciples came to Jesus and said, "Lord, teach us to pray." This is where we get the Lord's Prayer, the disciples' prayer, the model prayer.

But John 17 is a caught prayer. Jesus is praying this out loud in front of His disciples, and He wants them to hear what He is praying. It is a prayer of intercession.

I pulled a workbook off the shelf in my library this week. I remember doing this workbook as a student, and I've

taken a friend of mine through this workbook. It's called **Pray in Faith**. The authors are T.W. Hunt and Claude King. Claude King's name may ring a bell for you. If you were in **Experiencing God** in the spring, Claude King wrote **Experiencing God** alongside Henry Blackaby.

They define intercessory prayer like this: praying for others and praying for kingdom purposes to be completed in their lives. This is what intercessory prayer is. It's praying for others and praying for kingdom purposes to be completed in their lives.

Jesus was an intercessor. The Bible says that Jesus would oftentimes go to a desolate place and pray. It was a regular routine and rhythm for Him to get away and pray. It's not hard to imagine that many of these times in prayer, as we've said, He was just sharing life with the Father. Many of these times in prayer, He was praying for people.

In fact, we're given a glimpse of His intercessory prayer life in Luke 22, which is in the same context as John 17. It's the Last Supper, and Jesus is sharing the meal with these disciples in the upper room. Do you remember what He said to Peter?

Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you.

— Luke 22:31-32

Jesus says, "Peter, I've lifted you up, and I've asked the Father that your faith not fail."

I think it's awesome that you have people praying for you. I get an email nearly every week from members of life groups who are praying for me. They're assigned that week: "I'm praying for you, Pastor. Any needs?" It blesses me. I love to know that people are praying for me.

I've got a group of intercessors, probably five or seven. Some are members of this church. I will text them when I'm on a speaking engagement, traveling, or doing something ministry-related and ask them to pray. Or, if there's an immediate need, I know they're going to bring that need before the Lord on my behalf. I think it's wonderful.

But you know what's really remarkable? Knowing that Jesus is praying for you. That's what this Scripture today teaches.

We're going to see Jesus pray for Himself. We won't spend very long there. We'll just make a couple of comments. Then we get into this prayer of intercession where Jesus prays for His disciples, the 12 who were following Him. Then He looks down the annals of history, and this is amazing: He prays for me and you.

Jesus Prays for Himself

Let's look first at Jesus praying for Himself. What does He pray? To put it in a word, He prays for glorification.

John chapter 17, starting in verse 1, says this:

When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you,

since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.

And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.

And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed."

— John 17:1-5

Eternal life is knowing God and knowing Jesus Christ, whom He has sent. If you want to know if you have eternal life, do you know Christ? Do you have a relationship with Christ? This word "know" is experiential knowledge. Do you have a relationship with Him?

Again, we're not going to stay here long, but there are a couple of things to note as we make our way through these verses.

Jesus has just finished supper with His disciples. Read John chapter 13 through John chapter 16 in your own time alone. It sets up this prayer. Jesus has covered a lot of ground in chapters 13, 14, 15, and 16. Then we get to chapter 17, and it's apparent that Jesus and the disciples are somewhere between the upper room and the Garden of Gethsemane, probably after midnight.

Jesus lifts up His eyes, and He begins to pray. It's not lost on Jesus what's taking place in this moment. He knows, as He makes His way to the garden, that He is going to be betrayed. He knows that He is going to be handed over to the authorities. He knows that the cross is coming. He is going to incur the wrath of God on sinful man's behalf. There is some serious and sobering weight to this moment.

It's in this moment that Jesus, the Bible says, looks up and addresses God the Father the same way He has addressed God the Father in every prayer that we've looked at in this series. He just says, "Father." He starts with relationship.

What He prays for is the glorification of God. He's aware that His hour has come. In the second part of verse 1, He says, "Glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you." Then He prays it again in verse 5.

I just want you to notice at the outset the foundation of Jesus' prayer before He moves to intercession and begins praying for His disciples and, ultimately, praying for the future church - me and you. The foundation of His prayer is the glorification of God.

What's surprising about the glorification of God is that the answer to the prayer is the cross. How is the Son going to glorify the Father, and the Father going to glorify the Son? Jesus has to go to the cross. He's making a commitment here to get to the cross. Jesus' all-consuming desire is for the glorification of God. He says, "Lord, I'm going to the cross. Bring glory to Your name."

Then He says, "Let's bring it full circle. I want the glorification that I had with You before the world existed." It's

not just the cross. He's speaking of the resurrection. He's speaking of the ascension, where He will sit at the right hand of God and will have and share in the glory that He had with the Father before the world existed.

All prayer, including intercessory prayer, where we pray for one another, which is the subject today, has at its foundation the glory of God. What we want most when we pray for others, behind every ask, is the glorification of God's name. This is where Jesus starts, and this is where we must start as well.

Jesus Prays for His Disciples

He moves from a prayer for Himself to a prayer for His disciples. He prays two things for His disciples: protection and sanctification.

Look at verse 6 of John 17:

I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world.

Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.

Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you.

For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me.

I am praying for them.

I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours.

All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.

— John 17:6-10

In verses 6-10, Jesus doesn't ask for anything. If you notice, Jesus is telling His Father things that the Father already knows. My buddy Stephen Smith is the one who pointed this out to me. Jesus is just repeating to God the Father what the Father already knows. He's not informing Him or asking Him anything.

Instead, like people of old in the Old Testament, such as Moses and Nehemiah, what Jesus is doing in this moment is reminding the Father in prayer of God's own commitments that He's made in His Word.

This is classic biblical intercession. It's remarkable to think about the fact that, in prayer, we're not informing God of anything. When we're praying for someone, He knows the situation they're in. He knows the circumstance that they're up against. God loves our prayer because He loves to hear our voice.

In prayer, specifically intercession, part of it is reminding God of His commitments and reminding God of His own Word. What does this show? It shows that we know God and that we love God.

The question you could be asking is, "Well, then, why do we intercede in the first place? If we're not informing God of anything, if He already knows the situation, knows what He's going to do, and knows whether it's going to work out, why do we pray at all?"

It's a good question to ask. In God's sovereignty - and I can't figure this out; these are the ways of the Lord -

He has chosen to limit Himself in some ways to the prayers of His people. Just think about that.

To put it another way, I've heard it said like this before: There are some things that God is going to do regardless of whether we ever pray or not. He's going to do it. But there are some things that God will never do unless we pray.

We don't know what those things are, so we ask. What did James say? "You do not have because you do not ask." Asking honors the Lord. This is the power of intercessory prayer. It's a major means by which God has chosen to work in this world through the prayers of people.

Protection

Notice what Jesus prays and asks God to do for His disciples immediately. He prays for their protection. It's part of the Lord's Prayer: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Look at His prayer as they make their way to the garden:

And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you.

Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.

While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me.

I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.

— John 17:11-15

Jesus says, "I'm no longer in the world." He's headed to the cross. His glorification is set. It's settled as cement.

"Holy Father, keep them in Your name." That's what the word "keep" means: preserve them, protect them. He prays it here, and He prays it again in verse 15.

He says, "While I was with them, I kept them in Your name. I protected them. I preserved them. You gave them to Me. I guarded them. Not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled." He's talking about Judas there, of course.

I want you to think about this as it relates to intercession. When we pray for people in need, loved ones whom we lift up in prayer, more often than not, what do we pray for them? Escape from the problem, right?

"Lord, deliver them. Fix that problem they're having. Get them out of that circumstance they're in. Remove them from that situation."

That's not bad to pray. That's an honest prayer, and we should pray honest prayers. We should pray what we desire and what we hope for. God knows our hearts anyway. It's not like when we come to Him, we have to act all spiritual and saintly and ask for something we don't really want. No, we ask according to our desires. That's an honest prayer.

But if Jesus is leading this workshop on intercessory prayer, He doesn't pray for escape. Notice that He prays for endurance. He prays for protection.

Eighteen times in this passage of Scripture, He uses the word "world." He is very much aware that the ruler of the world these disciples are in - because Jesus is headed out of it - is the evil one. He even says so in John 12:31, that Satan is the ruler of this world. John will write:

We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

— 1 John 5:19

This prayer for protection, as Jesus was praying for His disciples, was very real. Think about it in the context of the moment. They don't yet have the Holy Spirit, and they're going to the garden where Jesus is going to be betrayed, arrested, handed over to the authorities, and put on a cross. Who do you think is next on the most wanted list? It's His followers.

Jesus says, "Father, protect them."

Sanctification

Not only does He pray for their protection, He prays for their sanctification. Look at verse 16:

They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.

And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.

— John 17:16-19

The word "sanctify" means to be set apart. You remember in the Lord's Prayer, "Hallowed be Your name." "Hallowed be Your name" means to set apart, to make holy, altogether different. It's the same exact wording right here.

Just as we are to hallow God's name, Jesus prays here that His followers, His disciples, would be hallowed - that they would be set apart, made holy, and consecrated for God to use.

In your Bibles, if you look at the heading for John chapter 17, I guarantee you that most of your Bibles say, "The High Priestly Prayer." Anybody have that right there at the heading of your Bible? "The High Priestly Prayer."

John doesn't use that language anywhere, so where does that come from? Where do the Bible interpreters

and those who helped us put the Scripture together and added chapters and numbers get this priestly action?

Think about what a priest does. A priest goes to God on behalf of man. A priest is a mediator. He represents man to God and represents God to man. Who is the mediator? The Lord Jesus Christ.

Look at verse 19: "For their sake I consecrate myself." It's the same word as verse 17, "sanctify." It means a setting apart. It was used in the Old Testament. A priest would be set apart, or they would make an offering and set it apart, making it holy.

Look at what Jesus is praying here. Again, we see that He's the answer to His own prayer. When He was praying for the glorification of God, how is God going to get glory? Jesus is going to the cross. He's the answer to His prayer.

Here's the prayer for sanctification. Jesus is the answer to this prayer too. How are the disciples going to be sanctified? Jesus has to go to the cross, and He does the work of a priest. He does for the disciples what they could never do for themselves.

In this prayer and in the action of the cross, He represents them, accomplishes for them, and secures for them what they could never do for themselves. At the cross, Jesus is setting Himself apart so His disciples can be set apart.

He prays for Himself, and then, on the foundation of the glorification of God's name, He begins to pray for others. He prays for the disciples' protection and sanctification.

By the way, He answers those prayers. In John 18, when Jesus is in the garden, He thanks the Lord that not one who was given to Him was lost. When He was arrested, He said, "Let these men go," and the disciples left. They were all protected. He answered His prayer.

Did He answer the prayer for sanctification? You bet He did, because He went to the cross.

Jesus Prays for Us

Then this prayer transitions to a prayer for me and you. This is where we're going to spend the last part of our time together.

I want you to think about this: Before you ever prayed a prayer, before you ever breathed a breath, Jesus was praying for you. We get to eavesdrop on what He is praying for us.

I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word.

— John 17:20

That's me and you. It's every Christian down through the ages.

What does He pray? Remember, repetition in the New Testament was emphasis, so see if you can figure out what He's praying for here:

*That they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you,
that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.
The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one,
I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one,
so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.*
— John 17:21-23

Any idea what Jesus is praying for? Unity. Oneness. That's what He prays for His future disciples.

I'm getting ready to perform about three weddings. I'll have a groom standing here and a bride standing here. I always tell the congregation, "Man, this represents God's math up here. One plus one equals one." It's amazing.

They're two different people, but today they come together under the lordship of Christ, and He makes them one. They're not the same. They're very different, with different backgrounds and different experiences. They were raised differently, but they're one in mind, purpose, and heart.

This is what Jesus prayed for His church. Not uniformity. We're diverse. This church is so diverse. It's one of the glories of this church on this side of eternity and of the greater church. We're diverse. But what Jesus prayed for is a oneness around truth.

The fruit of that is evangelism. Jesus said, "The world will know by your unity, by your oneness. The world's going to know, Father, that You sent Me."

I tell married couples, "The greatest evangelism tool that you have should be your marriage, because your oneness puts on display the unity of the bride of Christ."

We might not agree on secondary issues, issues in the Bible that aren't fundamental. What Jesus prays for here is that His true church would unify around the truth: the exclusivity of Christ - He is the only way; the authority and inspiration of Scripture - this is God's Word; the substitutionary atonement - Jesus died in our place; the physical death, physical resurrection, and physical return of our Lord.

These are non-negotiables. This is truth that the true church rallies around. Jesus prays it right here.

But He doesn't just pray for unity. He also prays for glorification - our glorification. The first prayer was for the glorification of God. That's what Jesus prayed for Himself. But this latter prayer is for our glorification.

Just think about this. Look at verse 24:

*Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am,
to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.*
— John 17:24

"That they may be with Me."

Salvation is a past, present, and future thing. When we are saved, past tense, we are justified - legally declared righteous before God. For me, it happened in a moment, on August 3, 1989. I was 11 years old. I asked Jesus into my heart to be my Savior and forgive my sin. On August 3, 1989, I was saved instantaneously.

But from 1989 to 2026, right now, present day, I am in the present part of salvation where I am being saved. This is what we call sanctification. The past tense of salvation is justification. The present tense is sanctification.

This is where God is setting me apart. He is conforming me to the image of His Son. He is making me useful to the Master. There should be a progressive sanctification where every single day we are progressively looking more and more like Jesus, until one day we breathe our last on this earth, wake up in eternity, and are forever saved. We are glorified with Christ.

What Jesus is praying is, "God, those You justify, I'm praying that You will one day glorify. I want them to be where I am." We know from Romans that Jesus' prayer is answered because those whom God justifies, He will glorify.

He's praying not just that we'd be in His presence. Look at what He says: "To see My glory." That's part of glorification.

I want you to think about this. The disciples didn't fully see the glory of God.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory.

— John 1:14

They beheld His glory, but it was a veiled glory. The inner circle got to see it for a moment on the Mount of Transfiguration. Matthew 17 says they fell on their faces before the Lord.

Moses got a glimpse of the back of His glory, but he had to be covered by the hand of God and hidden in a rock. That was the Shekinah glory of God. Nobody could see God and live.

But Jesus is praying that one day we would live with Him forever, be where He is, and see His glory. The greatest picture we have of this is Revelation 4. John puts language around an idea, an image, and he just uses the words he can think of.

He says it's like a rainbow. There are all these bright, bright colors. There are peals of thunder and lightning. He says the elders and the living creatures - I don't even know what that is - are bowing before the throne, and the angels are singing, "Holy, holy. Worthy is Your name. You are worthy to receive glory and honor and power."

That's the glimpse of the throne room of God, the glory of God. Jesus is praying that we would one day be there and see it. It's an amazing prayer that He prays here, that we would see the glory of God.

Notice in this intercession that Jesus only asks the Father to do what only the Father can do. Sometimes we pray and ask God for things that we can do. We can be the answer to the prayer we're asking.

Jesus prays, and He only asks God to do what He can do. Only God can protect from the evil one. Only God can sanctify someone in truth and make them more like Christ. Only God can bring true unity and oneness. Only God can glorify us, bring us safely home to be with Jesus forever and ever and ever, and allow us to see His glory. Only God can do that.

In this prayer, Jesus is asking the Father to do only what the Father can do.

The Father always hears the Son. Jesus says:

I knew that you always hear me.

— John 11:42

Do you know why? Because Jesus only prays what God wants. Jesus prays the will of God. When we pray the will of God, we can be confident that God hears what we want and that He will respond to our prayers.

Listen to 1 John 5:14-15:

And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.

And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

— 1 John 5:14-15

Two Takeaways

What's the takeaway? There are two as we wrap this up.

First, be thankful for the intercessory prayer life of Jesus. Be thankful that Jesus prayed for you, because your glorification is dependent on God answering the Son's prayer, and God the Father always answers the Son's prayer.

Be thankful for the intercessory prayer life of Jesus. By the way, Jesus didn't just pray for us way back in John 17. He's praying for you right now.

Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

— Hebrews 7:25

That's what Jesus is doing right now. He's praying for me and for you.

Paul would write:

Who is to condemn?

Christ Jesus is the one who died - more than that, who was raised - who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

— Romans 8:34

How much have we been saved from and delivered from that we don't even know about because we have an intercessor in Jesus praying for us? That is a glory hallelujah. That's amazing.

Not only do you have Jesus praying for you, but Paul would write in that same chapter:

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness.

For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.

And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

— Romans 8:26-27

When you don't know what the will of God is, you can take confidence that God the Holy Spirit in you does, and He's praying for you. You've got God the Son praying for you and God the Holy Spirit interceding on your behalf, living in you.

The first takeaway is to be thankful for the intercessory prayer life of Jesus.

Here's the second takeaway: If Jesus prayed for others, we should be praying for others.

The ministry of intercession is the greatest ministry that some of us could ever participate in, because you are working alongside God in the fulfillment and advancement of His kingdom rule and purposes as you pray. He works through the prayers of people.

Wesley Duewel was a minister who lived to be 99 years old. He died around 2016. He wrote a lot on revival. His chief book is **Ablaze for God**. Listen to what he said about intercession:

"God has a wonderful plan by which you can have worldwide influence. This plan is not just for a chosen few. It's for you. Through prayer, you can accompany any missionary to the remote reaches of the earth. Through prayer, you can contribute to the ministry of any pastor, evangelist, or church planter. Through prayer, you can take a suffering infant in your arms. Through prayer, you can touch the fevered brow in any hospital, mediating the healing love of Jesus.

"God has given you a way to make your presence count, a way to be a true partner in His kingdom's work, if you really want to be. There is no reason in the world why you cannot become so steadfast in your prayer life that Christ will count on you to help build His church. You can influence more people for God and have a greater role in advancing Christ's cause by prayer than any other way. It's not the only thing you must do, but it's the greatest thing you can do."

That's the ministry of intercession.

Practicing Intercessory Prayer

What does this mean?

Number one, pray for people by name. You want to be an intercessor. You're taking this workshop with Jesus, "The Power of Intercessory Prayer." How do you do it? Pray for people by name.

That's what Jesus did: "Simon, Simon, Satan wants you, but I have prayed for you."

What greater gift could you give someone than lifting their name to the Father? I'm looking across here, and I've got some of your names written in my Bible. When I come across a psalm, a proverb, or whatever it may be, your name is lifted up to the Lord. We can all do that.

Not only should you pray for people by name, but tell them. How encouraging is that? "I prayed for you today."

Someone did a study on the prayer life of Paul. He's mentioned praying or written out his prayer in his letters on 36 different occasions. They found that 80 percent of his prayers were for those he was leading, those with whom he had a relationship.

Of those 29 prayers for those he was leading, 12 are prayers of thanksgiving: "God, thank You so much for this person being in my life." The other 17 are prayers of intercession, where he's bringing their needs to the Lord. It's all about prayer.

I don't know how you do it, but take Sunday and make it different. Spice up your prayer life, all right? We spice up other parts of our lives. Spice up your prayer life.

On Sunday, pray for your church, members of your church, and your life group leaders. On Monday, pray for your family. On Tuesday, pray for the nation's leaders - local, national, and international leaders. Just divide it up. On Wednesday, "I'm going to pray for church planters." On Thursday, "I'm going to pray for my business and the people I'm working with."

You just divide it up. Pray for people and pray for them by name.

Number two, pray God's Word over them. Jesus' prayer was heard because He prayed the will of God. The will of God is the Word of God. When you pray the Word of God, you will, for sure, be heard.

If you say, "I don't know what to pray," pray the Lord's Prayer over them. "God, provide for them. Protect them." Take those seven prayers that we talked about in weeks two or three and pray them.

Pray John 17 over them: "God, I'm asking You to do what only You can do. Protect them. Sanctify them. Make them one. Is anything hindering their unity? Is there a lack of forgiveness? God, help them forgive. Help them be kind."

Whatever it is, pray for their glorification. "God, we know You're going to glorify them. Would You sanctify them? Make them more like You, because that person is not like You. All right, God, make them like You."

You pray for them. That's the power of intercessory prayer.

Number three, adopt a "pray now" lifestyle. Do you know what that means? When somebody says, "Would you pray for me?" you say, "Absolutely. Let me pray for you right now." Then you pray over them right then.

I'm looking at my sweet wife, Debbie. Some of y'all may think Debbie and I, every night, just hold hands, look each other in the eyes, have a devotion, and pray for an hour. No, we do not. I assure you.

I believe in snowflake prayers. Do you know what I mean? One snowflake won't make a difference, but a lot of snowflakes will shut down the Klein school district, man. That'll cancel school.

I want our home, our marriage, and our family to be full of snowflake prayers. "Hey, let's gather together. Let's pray. You've got something going on? Let's pray. There's a need right here? Let's pray. Let's pray for them."

You pray for people by name, you pray God's Word over them, and you have this "pray now" lifestyle.

Chuck Swindoll said, "I can think of few experiences more humbling than hearing the prayers of another on my behalf. When earthly concerns bear down on my shoulders and squeeze my temples, hearing someone carry my burdens to heaven is a relief I can barely describe. I feel understood. I receive confidence. I grow wiser. I find courage. I gain perspective. It's too bad we don't do this for one another more often."

I just want to encourage you, Champion Forest: Let's make this a place of prayer. When somebody says they've got something going on, let's pause and pray for it right there in our life group.

When we serve in a ministry, we're not just serving to serve. Let's pray for those in our ministry. We're filling up a box for Haiti. We're not just sending those boxes. We're praying over that box that God would use it to bring someone closer to Him.

Pray. Adopt a "pray now" lifestyle.

We've given a closing challenge each week. We've got the Lord's Prayer. We've added silence and sitting before the Lord, asking the Holy Spirit to shape us.

Here's your closing challenge this week: Ask God for two or three people you can pray for. Here's the prayer you pray for them: "Lord, I lift up..." and you fill in the blank. "I lift them up to You right now. Would You work in their life? God, would You accomplish Your kingdom purposes in and through them?"

Before you ever prayed, Jesus was praying for you, and He hasn't stopped. Let's go and do the same for somebody else. Amen.