



Often times, prayer is a full out fight against the Enemy that we wage with God on our side by using His armor (found in Ephesians 6:10-18) to fight lies and darkness with truth and light. Ephesians 6:12 (NASB) makes it clear. "Our struggle is not flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places." James 5:16 (NIV) reminds us that. "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." Prayer works.

Prayer is also one of the ways we draw closer to God. It's so humbling that we have the honor of approaching the throne of our Heavenly Father and actually conversing with Him - and the best part is, He's listening and responding! We bring our praises, our joys, our requests, our hurts, our questions before Him and we watch things happen. We watch our relationship with God grow and strengthen. There's no secret formula or proper order of words to make prayer happen - skip the "Thee's and the "Thou's" if you wish. We simply talk to God because He loves us and wants us to involve Him in our lives- He'll do amazing things if we let Him.

If you're like me, it isn't always second nature to pray about everything, I mean, many people are in the habit of praying before they chow down on their food, but just about every other prayer time takes some level of discipline. We send sweet notes that say things like, "Praying for you!" to our friends and family, but when do we actually pray for them?

It's time that we Christians started being intentional about our communication with the Lord.

Here are three creative ideas to try out in your prayer life:

## 1. PICK PRAYER TARGETS

My friends and I decided to hold each other accountable on being deliberate with praying. We chose certain everyday activities and picked specific things to pray about while we do them. Here's a glimpse at what that looks like: when we brush our teeth, we pray for our pastor and church. When we do the dishes, we pray for our siblings. When we do laundry, we pray for our

parents. And, when we put on our makeup (or just get ready in the morning), we pray for our future husband. Picking prayer targets and keeping each other accountable has been a tremendous reminder to pray even as I go about my regular day.

## 2. WRITE A LETTER TO GOD.

I love good old-fashioned letters. Sometimes, I'll write God a letter in my journal. It helps me to get my thought down on paper and bring them into focus as I lay them before the Lord. Writing prayers and prayer requests, praises, and answers is also a good way to document the work that God is doing in your life. We can't deny that God loves us or is involved in our lives when we have clear (written!) proof that He is faithful.

## 3. MAKE A WEEKLY LIST.

Here's another idea that I tried: At the beginning of each week, I would make a list of specific prayer points for that week, and then each day (either as I set prayer time or in a quiet moment), I would go down the list praying for each specific thing. I listed all my siblings, my parents, two friends (I would usually pick different ones each week), my future husband, the future, and just about anything else I could think to pray for. It kept me on track with praying for specific, relevant needs.

Finally, don't forget to praise the Lord and thank Him for His blessings, His goodness, and Who He is! We should definitely pray about our needs instead of worrying. God desires to help us and draw us closer to Himself! But praying isn't the same as making a Christmas list. Just like we would converse with any friend, we bring our praise, our conversation, and our needs to the Lord and thank Him for always being there for us. Also, ask the Holy Spirit what His prayer list for you looks like! What does He want to pray about? He's the One sitting on the throne, after all. Pray a prayer to the God that we serve, and amazing things will happen.