



Life Principles Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God

A LIFE-CHANGING PRAYER

KEY PASSAGE: Colossians 1:7-14

SUMMARY:

How do you respond when people ask you to pray for them?

Do you reply with confidence? Or do you fear your prayers will be inadequate? In the first chapter of Colossians, the apostle Paul gives us a powerful model for intercession. It can be used to lift anyone up to the Lord—your child, your spouse, a family member, or a friend.

The prayer comes straight from the Word of God so we can be confident the Father will answer. When you ask sincerely and consistently, this life-changing prayer has the power to rescue others from all kinds of difficulty, hardship, and destruction. Of course, it does not guarantee a problem-free life for those you love. But through this simple prayer, God can use you to have an eternal impact on those around you.

SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLES:

What are the essential elements of this life-changing prayer? Ask God that the person would . . .

- **“Be filled with the knowledge of God’s will” (Col. 1:9).**

This first request is the foundation of this entire petition. Our heavenly Father desires to reveal His will to us. Every believer needs to know the Lord’s unique plans for his or her life, such as what career to pursue, whom to marry, and which job to take. The apostle Paul prayed for the early church to have “spiritual wisdom and understanding” (Col. 1:9). Christians need God’s

direction and perspective for almost every decision we make. Knowing the Lord’s will prevents us from wasting our time, talents, and treasure.

Parents sometimes pray with the expectation that God’s plans for their children will correspond to their dreams for a son or daughter. But spiritually minded young people need the opportunity to pursue His best for their lives. Allow your child the freedom to follow the Father’s direction even if it differs from what you had planned.

- **“Walk in a manner worthy of the Lord” (Col. 1:9).**

Ask God to help this person live his or her life in a way that honors His name. When we call ourselves Christians, the unbelieving world has a right to expect us to be different. Our conversation, character, and conduct should be pleasing to God. When people meet you, they also encounter our Savior. If you’re saved, the Lord Jesus Christ lives inside you through the power of the Holy Spirit. It’s His character that flows out of you as you relate to others. If you ask Him, He’ll guide you into right choices and convict you of sin. With His help, you can make a difference in the lives of the people around you.

- **Be “bearing fruit in every good work” (Col. 1:10).**

A Christian’s life should have an eternal impact. That means we need to make time in our schedules to serve the Lord. I want to challenge you to evaluate whether you are making a

positive difference in the lives of others. When your life comes to an end, what will you have accomplished? We have a responsibility to live so that our lives impact those around us. Some of the most productive people I've met are Wycliffe missionaries. They spend a lifetime hidden in a remote area, translating the Bible into the language of the indigenous people. Through their work, entire tribes hear the gospel of Jesus Christ and experience His forgiveness. Not all of us are called to be full-time preachers or missionaries. But God wants to show you how to use the talents and gifts He's given you for His glory.

■ **Be “increasing in the knowledge of God” (Col. 1:10).**

This request asks that the person would continue to grow in their relationship with God. Just as a married couple knows each other better after years and years together, we should also grow more and more intimate with the Lord. What are the practical steps to growing closer to the Father? The first one is to study Scripture. By reading the Bible, we learn about the character and ways of God. Second, apply what you learn. The Holy Spirit will teach you how to take it to heart. Third, take note of your choices. We all make mistakes, but it's wise to learn from them. You'll quickly see that it is foolish to disobey Him.

■ **Be “strengthened with all power” (Col. 1:11).**

Ask the Lord to help the other person lean on Him rather than his or her own ability. If you are interceding for a believer, that person has the strength of the indwelling Holy Spirit who enables us to do the Lord's will.

Let me give you an example. One Saturday, I was feeling miserable because of the spring pollen. My allergy medicine had not helped at all. I knew there was no way I could preach the next day unless something changed. Right before bed, I prayed, “God, You've laid a message on my heart, and I know it's Your will that I preach it.” I desperately needed His strength and healing. The next morning, I woke up feeling much better,

and I was able to preach without any problems. The Father loves to move on our behalf when we realize how helpless we are and cry out in faith for His power.

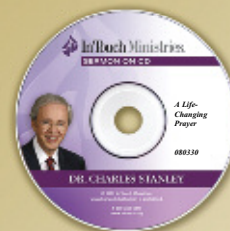
■ **Be “joyously giving thanks to the Father” (Col. 1:11-12).**

Pray that even in hardship, the person would be thankful. Why can Christians be joyful and grateful despite adversity? They trust that the Father will bring good out of suffering. God uses hardship to build character in the lives of His children. This prayer doesn't guarantee that every moment of our lives will be easy. But it will help us become more Christlike. We will grow in our patience for others. Our desires will be purified. And beautiful character has an attractiveness that never fades.

CONCLUSION:

I remember the time when an 11-year-old girl prayed for me. It was one of the most beautiful and powerful prayers I've ever heard from a child. She even had a Scripture reference for each request she made. This young lady was a prime example of how godly parents can influence their children. Not yet a teenager, she already has an awesome prayer life, a love for God, and a passion for His Word. And she is making an eternal impact.

Do you want your loved ones to have an intimate, powerful relationship with the Lord? Do you desire for them to serve Him passionately and faithfully? It all begins with prayer. Regularly lift them up to Him using Paul's words from Colossians, and then trust God to work in their lives in a mighty way. Your heavenly Father will be faithful to fulfill His promises. ✨



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