

Praying for people with problems

By Ross Callaghan
<http://rosscallaghan.yolasite.com>

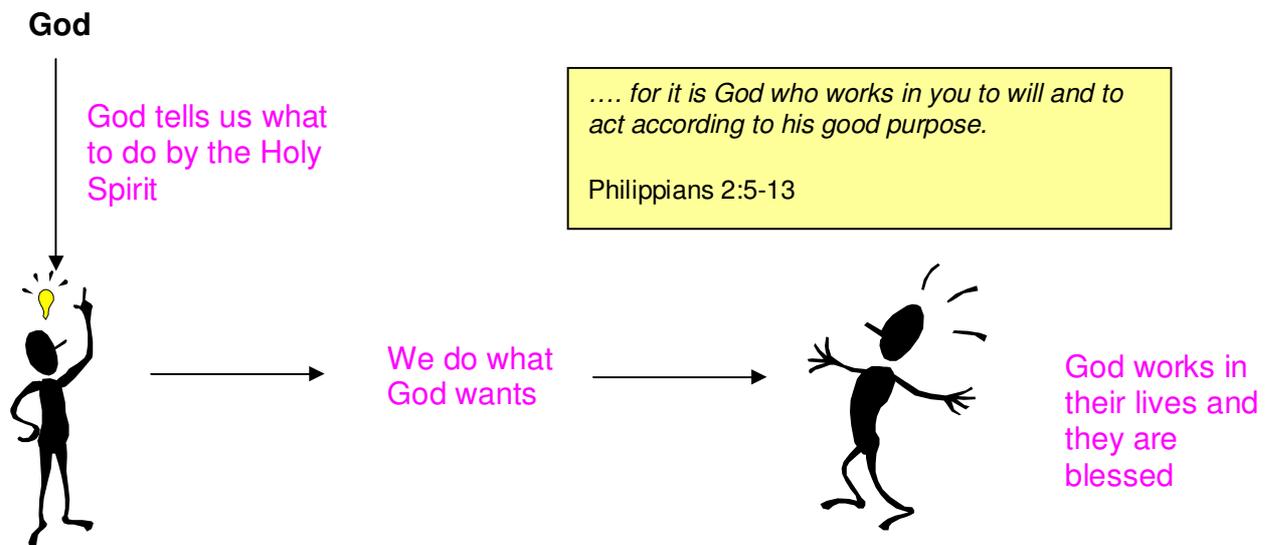
Jesus said we would do the same things He did, and even greater things:

I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things because I go to the Father. John 14:12

This means we will be involved with people in many different ways:

leading them to Christ	helping them in practical ways	teaching them
encouraging them	confronting them	feeding them
healing them	casting out demons	encouraging them
showing them the way to God	explaining life to them	being an example to them
loving them	guiding them	giving them wisdom
accepting them	trusting them	training them
challenging them	bringing in justice for them	serving them
proclaiming the Kingdom of God	helping them experience God's power	equipping them for ministry

Just like Jesus, God will work through us, by the Holy Spirit to bring life and blessing to others.



Sometimes this will involve praying for people who have significant problems.

Please note.

This doesn't make us equivalent to doctors, counselors, psychologists etc. We are not competing with the professionals; rather we complement them by adding an extra dimension: the power of God.

If someone has a problem they may be receiving help from a health professional as well as receiving spiritual help through you. It could be support, encouragement, empathy, care, practical help but most likely it will involve praying for them. Often the power of God will come into the situation and He will help sort things out

Case study: Acts 14:8-20

- The man had a need.
- The man had faith.
- Paul (in God's will) commanded the man to be healed, and he was.
- There was some misunderstanding about who had healed the man.
- This gave an opportunity to preach the Gospel.
- The Christians were persecuted!



What can we do to cooperate with God as He works in people's lives? How can we pray for people with problems in an effective way?

Be available

Often we feel ill-equipped, nervous, shy, un-prepared ... and perhaps try to stay away from situations where we could pray for people with problems. But remember God has done wonderful things in you through others. He has placed His treasures in you to share with others in need:

We have this treasure in earthen vessels to show that this all-surpassing power is from God, not from us.
2 Corinthians 4:7

Be available! Offer yourself to God, and to others, like Isaiah did: '*Lord, here am I, send me*'. Isaiah 6:8

A simple thing you can do in most situations is to **offer to pray** for them (then and there, or in an ongoing way). You'll be surprised how much people appreciate this!

God so loved
the world,
not just
Christians!

Recognise where your resources come from

God's power

God can (and will) do wonderful things through you by the Holy Spirit. Your resources are in Him!



I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Philippians 4:13

His wisdom, His power, His healing, His cleansing; His forgiveness, His love, His peace,

There are no limitations on God's power!

*Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to **his power that is at work within us**, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.* Ephesians 2:20, 21

The upward look

So be constantly in touch with the Lord as you are praying for someone. Ask God to show you what the real problem is and what to do. Keep seeking for His wisdom and power in the situation.

Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Isaiah 55:6

The Word of God

Share God's Word with them. The Holy Spirit takes words from the Bible and makes them come alive to the person bringing light and life. It's powerful!



The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Hebrews 4:12

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16, 17

The Scriptural look

Your experience and wisdom



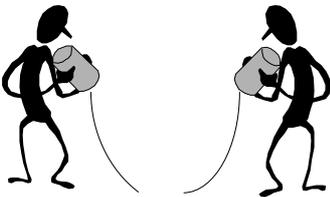
You'll also be bringing a lot of yourself into the situation. eg.

training	experiences	love
wisdom	understanding	compassion
empathy	resources	skills
concern	examples	knowledge
Bible knowledge	common sense	networks

The inward look

They will be much more open if they sense that you really care for them and want what is best for them. Love opens hearts!

Other Christians



If possible try to minister with someone else. (But to avoid confusion it's best if one is clearly leading the ministry and the other is supporting).

It's wise to keep your eyes open when you are ministering so you can easily keep in touch with each other.

If another Christian is there they can help when you don't know what to do. They can also protect you and the person being ministered to by confirming what is right or cautioning if they feel something is wrong.

The shared look

When you minister with another Christian:

- you can check things out with them (eg. *I feel xxxx. Do you feel that's right?*).
- you can get confirmation for a particular direction or action: *'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.'* Matthew 18:16
- you can check whether you both have a sense of peace. *You shall be led forth in peace.* Isaiah 55:12

Praying for people with problems

There are all sorts of needs and problems that people might have (eg. salvation, support, practical help, resources, counsel, healing, deliverance). Unfortunately there is no 'formula' to follow when praying in these situations! You have to trust the Lord, love the person and seek to do your best to help them.





Here are a few principles that might help as you pray for people with problems:

- **Ask the person what they would like prayer for**

Often it will be obvious. Sometimes, though, the answer you get may not be the real problem.

- **Clarify the situation**

Ask open questions, and listen carefully (both to their answers and to the Lord). Try to help them identify the real problem. Be open to the Lord for one of His gifts (eg. word of knowledge, word of wisdom, discerning of spirits. 1 Corinthians 12:7-11).

- **Identify the person's real need**

Hopefully they will confirm that it is their real need.

- **Check that you are the right person to be ministering to them**

There are some situations when you will not be the right person. eg. when you don't have the knowledge, experience, confidence, or support. In this situation pray for them, and explain that you will organise for someone else to minister to them. Make sure you do!

- **Wait on the Lord for an anointing and for direction on how to proceed**

The Holy Spirit may show you what is wrong, what to do, what they must do, etc. He does this by coming upon you with an anointing. You sense a lift in your spirit; perhaps a quickening of your heartbeat; maybe pins and needles..... and get a sense of what to say or do.

The anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit - just as it has taught you, remain in him. 1 John 2:27

This is when God's power, His direction, the Word of God, and your experience and wisdom all come together so you know what the real problem is and what to do about it. Do whatever God says!



- **Pray for them**

"Let's see what God can do in this situation".

Pray for them, and focus on Him as the solution to the problem. The direction is towards God, not towards the problem.

If God moves in their lives there may be some obvious reaction eg. peace, shaking, tears, anointing, screaming, groaning, laughter, falling over..... Flow with it. Let God do what He wants to do in the situation.

As you pray you may lay hands on them. There may a flow of power that you will notice eg. as warmth, tingling. The Bible warns: *Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands.* 1 Timothy 5:22
Make sure you are doing it to bless the other person.

- **Thank God for His blessing**

If God does something obvious thank Him for it! Even if there hasn't been some obvious reaction God will have given His love, peace, guidance, and it is right to thank Him for His goodness.

Don't put any condemnation on the person if there is no obvious difference. eg. *You should have done* Recognise that the Lord knows what is best in every situation. His will and His timing are always best!

- **Follow them up**

This could involve encouraging them, doing things for them, linking them with others, providing resources, bringing them to Church, teaching them, helping them..... and, of course, praying for them.

The goal is that they would become mature, whole and healthy followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. Colossians 1:28

God is powerful and, through you (and others), people can overcome their problems, and have their needs met.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. Ephesians 3:20, 21

Ministering to people with needs

Person with a need



Ask open questions
Listen carefully to them, and to the Lord



Identify the person's real need



Are you the right person to minister to them?

Yes No → Pray for them



Wait on the Lord for an anointing and for direction on how to proceed



Salvation	Support	Practical help	Resources	Counsel	Healing	Deliverance
Lead them to the Lord	Help them identify the support they need	Help them identify the practical help they need	Help them identify the resources they need	Help them identify the central problem	If given an anointing command them to be healed in Jesus' Name	If given an anointing command the spirit to leave in Jesus' Name
	Provide or organise the support they need	Provide or organise the help they need	Provide or organise the resources they need	Help them identify possible ways through	If not given an anointing pray 'Thy will be done'	If not given an anointing pray 'Thy will be done'
	eg. encourage them; visit them, allow them to express their feelings	eg. mow their lawns, bring in a budget adviser	eg. food, money,	Clarify what they will do next	Counsel them on how to maintain their healing	Counsel them on how to maintain their deliverance



Pray for them



Follow them up

eg. visiting, email, encouragement, discipleship, Bible reading, bring to Church, prayer, linking with others,



The person's need is met

Main ways God speaks/moves

Bible word of knowledge	Bible word of knowledge word of wisdom	Bible word of wisdom	Bible word of wisdom	Bible word of knowledge word of wisdom discerning of spirits prophecy	Bible word of knowledge gift of faith gift of healing gift of miracles	Bible discerning of spirits gift of faith
-------------------------	---	----------------------	----------------------	--	---	--

What you bring

testimony experience knowledge of Bible friendship	compassion empathy time encouragement	time resources networks	time resources networks	Bible experience wisdom openness to God	Bible compassion openness to God authority	Bible authority openness to God light
---	--	-------------------------------	-------------------------------	--	---	--