

Praying for the People You Love

Go to War with the Mighty Weapon of Prayer
for Those You Long to See Come to Christ



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OUR
RESOLUTE
HOPE

As believers, our hearts long for those we love to come to Jesus and understand the glory of the New Covenant. We want desperately for them to live in the Grace and freedom that Jesus longs to give them. This is a great burden we carry—one that can break our hearts and spirits. What do we do when the people we love just don't seem to understand our message, or don't walk in it the way they should?

We should pray. But we need to pray very specifically.

In this ebook, you will discover how to pray for the people you love. And not just pray—but how you can go to war on their behalf with the mighty weapon of prayer.

If you follow *Our Resolute Hope*, you know that our marching orders come from Colossians chapter one. Where Paul marvels at the glory of the New Covenant—a mystery—which he tells us was hidden for ages but was now revealed in the New Covenant. He doesn't go on to tell us that we will get to go to heaven someday; he doesn't say that we now live under Grace; he doesn't say we have a new identity; he doesn't say we have freedom from the law; rather, what he marvels at is Christ in us, the hope of glory.

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I've meditated on this for many, many years, and I've wondered if Paul's strict Judaism heightened his awareness of this incredible mystery. Historically, the religion of Judaism was all about separation. Yes, it was about the *revelation* of the true God, but in the midst of this revelation of the true God who revealed Himself to the nation of Israel, He also revealed that He could not be seen. He could not be intimate with His people. In addition, there was a sacrificial system, in which there had to be bloodshed. And there was a veil with that sacrificial system that hid the Holy of Holies.

There was only one man who could go behind the veil and that was the high priest. He went with a sacrifice of blood or he didn't go at all. Along with that blood, he also went with bells on his garments and a rope tied around his waist. The reason for this was that if he brought undealt with sin behind that veil into the Holy of Holies he was a dead man and no one was going in to bring him out. They would listen for the jingling of the bells on the high priest's garments and if the time came when they no longer heard them, that rope around his waist would be used to drag him back out.

Separation. The Jewish people knew separation from God.

The covenant name of God, Yahweh, was so Holy to the Jewish people that they wouldn't even speak it when they were reading their Scriptures out loud. Instead of saying Yahweh or Jehovah, they would say "Adonai"—my mighty God. That is how much separation there was.

For Paul, coming to believe that this once separated God could now live *in* him was something that as a Jewish scholar he could never get over. And I don't think we should ever get over it either!

Paul finishes that incredible first chapter in Colossians this way, “*We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me*” Colossians 1:28-29 (NASB 1995).

“We proclaim Him.”

Let's hone in on that—he doesn't say we proclaim a new identity and he doesn't say we proclaim freedom. He says, “We proclaim *Him*.” All the other things are the fruit of a relationship with Him through His finished work.

We want people to know the finished work of Jesus Christ so that they can experience God intimately and then express God relationally to others. This is the heart we have for all humankind and it's especially the heart we have for our families and our friends, for everyone that we love. This is the burden we all share.

One of the problems we have is that while we teach this incredible message of the love and Grace of God to our loved ones, it sometimes just does not resonate with them. They tell us they don't have time for God, they don't believe in Him; perhaps they say they'll receive God when they're ready, or they question His very existence. Maybe they tell you that they just can't get past all the hypocrites they see within Christianity. The list of reasons and excuses truly goes on and on.

What I want to share with you is that I have come to understand that we not only need to *teach* people, we need to *pray* for them. You may think, “I already do that, Pastor Frank!” Well, I want to suggest to you that we pray very specifically for our loved ones with two very clear directives in mind as revealed in the New Testament by the Holy Spirit.

The first thing we should pray is for people to have revelation.

In John chapters 14 and 15, we read about the final night of Jesus' life. He tells the disciples that He's going away, that He's going to leave them, that He's going to the Father. At that point, Phillip asks that Jesus show them the father and everything would be fine. Jesus replies to him saying, “Oh, Phillip, Phillip, Phillip. Have I been with you so long and you don't get it?! If you've seen me, you've seen the Father!” Jesus had spent three and a half years teaching those 12 men! Later in these chapters, He tells them that it's better that He goes away because when He does, He will send another. This one that God would send, would not be “heteros” in the Greek, meaning another *different* from Himself, but rather “allos” meaning another the *same* as Him—the Holy Spirit.

Jesus goes on to tell His disciples these very important words about the One who would come, *“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you”* John 14:26 (NASB 1995).

It is crucial that we see that Jesus did *not* say that the Holy Spirit would bring to their remembrance what He had taught them. That’s what we would expect Him to say given that He had just spent three and a half years teaching them. But Jesus had incredible insight—the Holy Spirit would bring to their remembrance all the things that He had said, and the Holy Spirit would teach them all things.

My friend, Jesus was the greatest teacher that ever walked this planet. He was the Master Teacher—but even Jesus’ teaching, without the Holy Spirit, was just speaking and hearing—*not* teaching and learning. That’s why the disciples were constantly falling all over themselves. That’s why there was no real transformation in their lives until the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came into them and opened up their minds to understand as they had never understood before.

When it comes to the ones we love, we need to not only be mouthpieces of the Gospel but petitioners to the Spirit of God—praying specifically for the Spirit to give them revelation.

The word revelation means to *manifest*. It means to *unfold*. It means to *reveal* what was previously hidden. This was a dynamic issue in the mind of the Apostle Paul. I want to highlight for you what this great apostle did in Ephesians 1:3-14—he tells us that God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. This is what Jesus *has* done. It is finished. It is a stated fact. We do not have to search for this, nor do we have to pray for it or lay hold of it. It has been given to us, it is already ours.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him 10 with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory. In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory.” Ephesians 1:3-14 (NASB 1995).

In addition, Paul reveals some of the blessings we have received: we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, we were made holy and blameless, we've been adopted as sons and daughters, we're accepted in the beloved, we have redemption through His blood, we have forgiveness of all of our sins, we've been given wisdom and insight into the mysteries of God, we've been given the Holy Spirit as the down payment of our salvation and inheritance. These are just samples of the "every spiritual blessings" Paul spoke of. And again, he tells us that we *have* them, they are ours.

Then Paul does an interesting thing. Ephesians chapter 1 continues:

"For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and your love for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe" (verses 15-19, NASB 1995).

Instantly, Paul goes to prayer. He prays that the Lord Jesus would give them a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him and that the eyes of their hearts would be enlightened so that you will know the hope of His calling, the riches of the glory, His inheritance, and the greatness of His power towards you.

Did you just see that?

Paul says, "Here's what God has given us, now I pray that you will understand what God has given you."

Beloved, we can have yet not know that we have. It's like me depositing a million dollars in a bank account in your name and then never telling you about it. You'd be a millionaire but you wouldn't know it. Imagine one day I come to you and I tell you, "Hey, I put a million dollars in a bank account with your name on it—you're a millionaire!" It's done. You are a millionaire—it's a fact—but you look at me, shake your head and reply, "It's just unbelievable! I can't believe it." Not believing it doesn't make it *not* true, you're still a millionaire, but it's not doing you any good. There needs to be a confirmation of what you've just been told. Maybe you'll go down to the bank and check the account and then you'll have a revelation, a manifestation, an unveiling that you are now a millionaire.

Our revelations come through the Revelator—the Holy Spirit, and God is telling Paul to have us pray for those we love by praying for revelation for them.

Paul is a typical preacher at that point and in the middle of his prayer goes on a tangent and starts preaching! In fact, he doesn't come back to his prayer until chapter 3. Let's take a look at how he continues to see further how we can pray for those we love.

“For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen” Ephesians 3:14:21 (NASB 1995).

Paul prays once again that the Holy Spirit would grant them strength with power. When we ask for strength we're usually asking for the power to do something but this is very different... He's praying that they would have the power of the Holy Spirit so that Christ would settle down in their hearts through faith, and they would be able to comprehend the height, length, breadth, and depth of the love of God in Christ, which cannot be known without the Holy Spirit's revelation.

We are to pray for people to have the power of the Holy Spirit to understand how much God loves them.

When the people we love just don't seem to understand our message or don't walk in it the way they should, we need to pray that the Holy Spirit would give them the power to have revelation into how good and loving God is and all that He has done on their behalf. Isn't that wonderful?!

Next, we'll discover a second very important directive for us when it comes to praying for the loved ones we desire to see come to Jesus and to understand the glory of the New Covenant.

In 2 Corinthians 10, Paul writes,

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ” 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NASB 1995).

And there's our second directive.

I think a lot of people have strongholds in their life. Paul doesn't define what they are but I think what happens is that people walk in flesh patterns for so long that those patterns become confirmed in their life and in turn function almost like a fortress around their heart and mind. That leads to pride, it leads to defeatism, it leads to substitute sources of life.

When we have someone we love who is not hearing the message that we bring them, the second thing we need to do is go to war on their behalf with the mighty weapon of prayer asking the Holy Spirit to tear down the strongholds in that person's life that are keeping them from Christ. For example, we would say, "Holy Spirit, please show me the strongholds in my husband's life that are keeping him from Jesus." Or, "Lord, show me the strongholds my daughter has that are keeping her from walking in victory." And then wait, letting the Holy Spirit lay those strongholds on your heart and then taking those to Him, asking Him to tear those strongholds down.

Pastor, speaker, and author, Jack Taylor shared that he once had a woman come to see him who was burdened for her husband who was not a Christian. They had gotten married as unbelievers but then she had come to know Christ. He was a great guy; he attended church with her, he served on the committees, if the church doors were open and volunteers were needed he was there. He loved his kids, he loved his bride, he worked hard, paid his bills, kept his yard nice—he was simply a great guy. The wife came to Jack and said, "Pastor Taylor, I'm so burdened, he just doesn't receive Jesus." Jack, in his experience and wisdom, brought the idea of strongholds to her and said, "Let's covenant to pray and ask the Holy Spirit what your husband's strongholds are." They did, and a few weeks later they got together and the Holy Spirit had laid on their hearts that her husband had a stronghold of goodness.

You may be thinking the same as me, "What does that mean?" Well, that man was so good, he was such a great guy, that he didn't sense his need. And often, faith is born out of necessity.

Jack and the woman gathered some people together and started praying against that stronghold of goodness. After several weeks Jack was giving a message on giving. When he finished his message he was approached by the woman's husband who asked him, "What do I have to do to be saved?" During a totally unrelated message on finances, the Holy Spirit had received their mighty weapon of prayer and torn down the stronghold of goodness that had walled in that man's heart and mind. He tore down what was keeping him from faith.

I know you have a burden.

You carry a burden for your friends and family members, maybe for your children or your spouse. Perhaps for your neighbors, your coworkers, your boss. You have people that you love and care about, people that you long to see come to Christ. You also have a burden for those in your life that have come to Christ but aren't walking well. Today, instead of wringing your hands, instead of continuing to be greatly burdened—maybe to the point that it breaks your heart and your spirit—let's go to war! Gather a few friends around and bring the names of

those you love into the Ephesians passage. Praying first for wisdom and revelation, and second, against any strongholds that the Holy Spirit may show you they have in their lives.

Two directives.

We need to teach the Gospel. We need to proclaim it to every man and every woman. We need to exhort and admonish and call for a decision to receive Christ. But I believe we should also go to prayer because even the best teaching received in the human mind, or as 1 Corinthians calls it, "the natural mind," will never understand the things of God. We need the Holy Spirit to give an unveiling, we need Him to open the eyes of understanding, we need His power to break through our finite thinking, in order for us to think the thoughts of God and to receive His great love. We need to pray against the strongholds that are walling up the hearts and minds of those that are being kept from faith, asking the Holy Spirit to tear them down.

I hope you begin to pray and see much fruit from your prayers for those you long to see come to Christ. If you've been encouraged by this message, share this resource, tell your friends how they too can pray for the people they love, teach your children how to pray for those they care about so that we can unleash an army to storm heaven on behalf of the souls that we long to see come to Christ.

If you would like to go to war in prayer for your loved ones I have included a few sample prayers to get you started. The examples guide you in bringing the names of those you love into the Ephesians passage, praying first for wisdom and revelation, and second, against any strongholds that the Holy Spirit may show you they have in their lives. I pray this resource will be a blessing in your life, and the lives of those you love. Print it off, tuck it in your Bible, pull it out during your quiet time with Father, and wield the mighty weapon of prayer!

You are loved!
Pastor Frank

Praying for Wisdom and Revelation for the People I Love

Father,

I pray for _____.

I pray that You would give them a spirit of wisdom and revelation into the cause of Christ.

I pray that You would give them the power of the Holy Spirit to break through the way they think as a human being that they might think the way You think, Father. Please open their eyes to the incredible love You have for them—a love that goes beyond knowledge.

Now to you, Father, Who is able to do all things beyond what we could ask or think, I bring _____ to you for revelation.

Amen

Father,

I bring _____ to You because as You revealed in Your Word, I believe in my spirit that they have strongholds that have walled in their heart and mind, keeping them from understanding, embracing, and walking in the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work.

Father, I pray against their stronghold of _____.

I pray against their stronghold of _____.

I pray against their stronghold of _____ and any sense they have that they don't have time for You.

I pray in Jesus' name that You tear down those strongholds so that they might see the finished work and love that You have for them. May they humble themselves and receive Your love and enter into the life that brings freedom from sin and death.

In Jesus name,

Amen