



# Praying for the Church

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I often hear people say, "We must pray for the church", but we must consider carefully as believers whether we see ourselves as separate from or part of the church! Let us fervently pray for the church of our Lord Jesus Christ with the same passion He has for His church, i.e. with love, care and respect. Let us be mindful of the fact that we as believers are all developing, and not everyone had the opportunity to be discipled and learn about basic Christian behaviour. May the prayer pointers below encourage you, as member of the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, to pray for your fellow believers to grow and mature according to Jesus' desire for them.

- 1. Souls.** A passion to pursue salvation of the unsaved in prayer, as Jesus did. (Luke 19:10).
- 2. Testify.** A passion to trust the Holy Spirit in seeking, finding and using every opportunity daily to share the love of Christ (note: not preaching and teaching) with people in our spheres of daily life. (Acts 1:18).
- 3. Whole-heart.** A passion to worship Father, Son and Holy Spirit whole-heartedly, in spirit and in truth. (John 4:22-24).
- 4. First love.** To lay aside everything that seems important but which has little or no eternal value. Let us live according to the values that were important to Jesus. First and foremost, let us love God with all our whole heart, mind, soul and strength. (Deuteronomy 6:5; Luke 10:27).
- 5. Christ-like.** Don't try to be 'spiritual' and don't try to be like someone else. Seek to be conformed into the image of Christ and to understand the mind of Christ (1 Peter 2:21).
- 6. Fearless.** Ask the Holy Spirit to set you free from all fear of man (pleasing others), and to be passionate about Jesus and a radical follower of Him. (Luke 9:23-26, 57-62).
- 7. Full of faith.** Repent of all unbelief the Holy Spirit shows you. Do not allow doubt and don't lose hope. Rather, grow strong in your faith, trusting God for great things. Make the Word your daily bread. (Romans 4:20-21).
- 8. Disciple.** Commit yourself to be a disciple of Christ. Be teachable, keep learning, studying the Bible and teaching others what Jesus taught. Be humble. (Matthew 28:19-20).
- 9. Fervent in prayer.** Repent of prayerlessness and the excuses you make that keep you from spending time in prayer, speaking to God. Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you how to pray and to strengthen you to pray. Be fervent in prayer. (Hebrews 4:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; 1 Timothy 2:1-2).
- 10. Bible.** Let us repent of preaching and teaching that only seeks to make people feel better by promising future success and prosperity. Rather, let us return to the foundation stones of Christ's preaching - He is the Living Word! May we preach about the hope of His calling that overrules the superficiality of living a 'nice Christian life'. (2 Timothy 4:2).

- 11. Encouragement.** Repent of criticizing and looking down on others. Instead, make a deliberate effort to look for opportunities to 'admonish' one another in the Lord in love. (Hebrews 10:25).
- 12. Surrender.** Repent of indulging in physical and emotional tantrums and soulish pleasures under the excuse that 'Jesus wants to bless us'. Rather, commit yourself to a lifestyle of fasting, prayer and daily surrender that subdues your body as a living sacrifice for the sake of His kingdom come on earth. (Romans 12:1-2).
- 13. Maturity.** Repent of partaking in strife, rivalry and negative activity that harms the body of Christ. Instead, steer away from such behaviour intentionally and grow into a mature son or daughter of God. Forgive unconditionally and be willing to suffer wrong. (Hebrews 5:12-14).
- 14. Selfless.** Repent of all covetousness, greed and selfish aspiration to advance your position in the eyes of others and to feel better about yourself. Willingly and intentionally, lay down your arguments, mindsets and opinions and your right to be right. We must no longer live for ourselves but for Jesus. (2 Corinthians 5:15).
- 15. Christ alone.** Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where you are still holding on to physical pleasure, valuing things and practices, and prizing them dearer to you (being emotionally attached to them or sentimental about them) than is beneficial for a godly life. Pray to be set free of loving the world and the things of the world. (1 John 2:15-17).
- 16. Without compromise.** Repent of excusing yourself for continuing to harbour grudges, not breaking bad habits or not ceasing secret sin. Pray for a greater purifying in your life so that together the multitude of believers may be a church without spot or wrinkle. (Ephesians 5:27).
- 17. Holiness.** Repent of the things you know the Holy Spirit is speaking to you about. Stop, turn from them, and choose to do what may be unpopular or difficult but what is right. Pray for an increase in holiness in your life, and in the life of the church. (Matthew 5:48; 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 7; 1 Peter 1:16).
- 18. Purity.** Repent of sensual images that come into your mind and refrain from entertaining such thoughts. Distance yourself from advertisements that feature half-naked people of the opposite sex. Switch off the TV or change channels when such images appear, or when even the slightest change towards immorality or sexual content occurs in the storyline. Pray for yourself and every Christian to be sexually pure in all your ways. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).
- 19. Fellowship.** Pray for the desire to fellowship with other believers in meaningful ways, exploring the Scriptures and building one another up in the Word and in your faith. Ask for a greater desire to gather together on Sundays and meet for prayer and Bible study during the week. (Hebrews 10:25).
- 20. Missions.** Pray for you and your church to support church members that enter the mission field. Adopt them by praying for them and supporting them. Pray for churches to cut back on their own budgets rather than to bring missionaries back from the mission field. (Acts 13:2-4; 16:5-10).
- 21. Empowered.** Pray for yourself and the church to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Pray for believers to witness every day in every place, ministering to and reaching out to the needy and carrying the light of the gospel into the market place. (Ephesians 5:18).
- 22. Thanksgiving.** Everyone faces challenges from time to time; no one is exempt. Pray for yourself and everyone in your church to grow in gratitude for everything, submitting everything to God. (1 Thessalonians 5:18; Ephesians 6:20).
- 23. Giving.** Resist long motivational sermons that aim to get people to give money in the hope of receiving something in return. Pray for believers guilty of the wrong motives for giving, to have a change of heart so that every believer gives to the Lord without expecting or demanding a return from God. Give to the causes in your church that serve the Biblical mandate of making disciples of all nations and caring for the poor and needy. Pray for the desire to give if you find yourself unwilling, and ask for people to give to the Lord cheerfully and liberally. (2 Corinthians 9:6-10).

**24. Honesty & forgiveness.** Do not cover up sins, but confess your faults, failures, and weaknesses to those you trust. (James 5:16). Test your heart to see if you hold any grudges, are critical of others, or have any unforgiveness in your heart. One way to test this is to ask yourself whether you can say of the person, "I bless them to be blessed even with answers to their prayers". Pray for the willingness to forgive one another and make restitution. (Matthew 6:14-15, Ephesians 4:29-32).

**25. Communion.** Pray for yourself and every person in the church to prepare their hearts before taking communion so that everyone partakes of the Lord's table in a worthy manner. (1 Corinthians 11:26-30).