

Prayer Cards

Prayer cards¹ act as individual pictures that offer a practical way to remember what you are asking of God and what Scriptures you are applying to particular people, circumstances, or concerns. Prayer does not exist in a vacuum; it occurs in the complications of life.

From the prayer cards, stories will begin to emerge. Each prayer story will begin to shape how you observe life and how the Holy Spirit leads you toward loving, repenting, believing, obeying, and living. It is not a bad idea to simply ask the Spirit to train your spiritual eye and help you see his hand in your stories.

Start with Three to Four Cards

Begin by simply creating three to four prayer cards that you pray through every day. This will keep you from getting overwhelmed with too many cards. By starting simply, you will begin to develop your prayer habit.

Here are some suggested categories; you should feel free to use or create any that you want.

- *Family prayer cards.* One for each person in your family that you do not already have in your daily cards.
- *People in suffering prayer card.* Keep it general, even just their name on the card with “People in Suffering” at the top. It’s easy to get bogged down in medical details when you have many to pray for. The closer you are to the person or the situation, however, the more specifically you may want to pray
- *Friends prayer card.* List friends on one card, or create a card for each close friend.
- *Non-Christians prayer card.* Again, feel free to list them unless something is happening in such a way that you want to create a card for just one person.
- *Church leadership prayer card.* Your pastors, elders, deacons, staff, lay leaders, and so on. Feel free to list them by name.
- *Small group prayer card.* Friends in your small group at church, if you are part of one.
- *Missionaries prayer card.* Missionaries’ names, where they are serving, and what they are facing.
- *World issues prayer card.* Terrorism, abortion, military conflicts, your country and its leaders—anything that burdens you.
- *Work prayer card.* Projects, tricky procedures, major decisions, or key problems you are working on.
- *Repentance prayer card.* Sins that keep cropping up in your mind and life that you want help with.
- *Stewardship prayer card.* Use of time, talent, and treasure.
- *Thanking God prayer card.* Blessings you notice that you do not want to forget.
- *Worship prayer card.* Scriptures or quotes that help you honor your Father.

¹Este concepto es del apéndice del libro de Paul Miller: “A Praying Life: Connecting with God in a Distracting World”

Creating a Weekly Schedule Once you begin to accumulate prayer cards, it is helpful to sort them by day to avoid being overwhelmed. For instance...

Monday: family; Tuesday: the world; Wednesday: non-Christians, etc.

Making your Prayer Cards

Step one.

Write the person or topic on the card with the person's name. Take a moment to see that person in your mind's eye and think about the various areas in that person's life. Sometimes I go for a month or two with just a person's name on the card as I think about how to pray for him or her.

Step two.

Write down key words or phrases that capture what you are concerned about or what you want to ask for in that person's life. Don't just think about the person's immediate need (such as that a surgery would go well), but think about the big picture of that person's influence, character, calling, heart, faith, and so on. Remember, you have the privilege of praying big prayers of hope and specific situational prayers in their life. The order is not important.

I seldom write down answers, because I know the prayers so well, I know what God does. Some helpful questions to ask yourself might be:

- What are they facing?
- What is it like to be them?
- How do I feel about them in general and in this particular situation?
- What would I like to see the Spirit do in their heart and character?

Step three.

Now put the Word to work by asking what particular Scripture you want to see working in that person's life. (For a sample compilation of Scripture by category and topic, go to www.seeJesus.net/prayercards.)

Step four.

Pray for the person while jotting down a few words or short phrases that will help you remember what you are asking. Be concise: Keep it to one or two lines.