



# THE PRAYER CLOSET

Encouraging & Equipping Believers In  
Prayer

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## PRAYER AND PAIN

**Pain.** It's an inevitable part of life. You will experience it. And those around you will experience it. The world is full of hurting people – people whose hearts and lives have been touched with all kinds of adversity and suffering. You will even find hurting people in the church. The preacher Phillips Brooks once remarked that there is a broken heart on every pew.

The pain that people experience comes in a variety of forms. It stretches from the mildly annoying frustrations of life to the heartbreaking tragedies that alter the course of a life. Financial struggles, sickness, death, marital and family problems, job stress and change – you could go on naming numerous sources that bring hurt into the lives of people.

How do you help someone who is hurting? Through the years of serving in churches, I walked with numerous believers through all types of suffering. From the hospital room to the funeral parlor, from my office to their backyard, from the sanctuary to their living room, I've stood with, cried with, and attempted to minister to hurting people. Throughout those times, I felt inadequate. I tried to speak words of comfort. I labored to show them love. But it all seemed to fall short of what was needed. I learned that prayer was

crucial for hurting people. Of all the things that I did, prayer released God's grace and power into their lives. Through prayer, I could make a difference in hurting lives.

When people are hurting, they need to be ministered to. They need love. They need comforting and encouraging words. They need to be surrounded by people who love them. Yet, above all things, they need fervent and faithful prayer.

Prayer is not a quick fix nor is it a sure cure for the pain that people go through. But is God's way of making a difference in their lives. It is God's method for enabling them to experience His strength, help, and healing. No effort on our part can substitute for the life-sustaining and transforming power and grace that is released into a hurting person's life through prayer. We should seek to love and minister to the hurting. Yet, prayer is the crucial key for touching and helping those who hurt. For this reason, we will look at praying for the hurting in this issue of *The Prayer Closet*.

### The God Of Compassion

Why is it so important to pray for the hurting? It is because we serve a God who is full of compassion. Our God is concerned for

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#### "NEW ADDRESS & PHONE NUMBER"

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hurting people. His heart goes out to those whose lives have been shattered.

The Word of God declares that God is compassionate. He cares about the hurting.

*"But You, O Lord, are a God full of compassion and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth" (Psalm 86:15).*

*"The LORD is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and great in mercy. The LORD is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works" (Psalm 145:8-9).*

*"Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:22-23).*

*"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God" (2 Corinthians 1:3-4).*

*"Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord – that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful" (James 5:11).*

Did you notice how the Bible refers to God?

- Full of compassion
- Good to all
- His compassion does not fail
- Compassion is fresh and new every morning
- Father of mercies
- God of all comfort
- Comforts those who are in trouble
- Very compassionate

The Word teaches that God has pity for the hurting. He is the God who is moved by the suffering of people. The Bible shows us that He has a heart for those in pain.

This is the reason why praying for hurting people is crucial. When you pray for someone who is suffering, it moves the heart of God. He releases His power and grace into

their lives. He touches their lives in unique and mighty ways. He provides what is needed and blesses them.

### Prayers For The Hurting

The following are prayers that you can pray for hurting people. These prayers are based on the Word of God. You can use them with confidence and expectancy. You can use these or develop your own from them. The key issue is to make sure that your praying is based on the Word of God. These prayers can be applied to people who are hurting for any type of reason. If you pray fervently and faithfully, the God of compassion will move and touch their lives.

Father, I pray that the suffering that \_\_\_\_\_ is going through will create a path to You. I ask that \_\_\_\_\_ will seek You with all of his/her being at this time. I plead that he/she will see You and find You in the midst of his/her pain. Meet his/her spiritual needs (Jeremiah 29:13).

Father, I ask that \_\_\_\_\_ will see how much he/she needs You. During this time, show him/her that You are his/her greatest need. I pray that as the deer pants for the water brooks, so \_\_\_\_\_ would long for You. I ask that \_\_\_\_\_ would hunger and thirst for You (Psalm 42:1-2).

Father, during this time, I ask You to build \_\_\_\_\_'s faith. Enable \_\_\_\_\_ to trust You implicitly. I plead that \_\_\_\_\_ would not sin by charging You with doing wrong or being unfaithful (Job 1:20-22).

Father, I ask You to place people into \_\_\_\_\_'s life who will encourage and minister to \_\_\_\_\_. Raise up people who will be able to minister comfort and healing to him/her. Reveal Your compassion to \_\_\_\_\_ through these people (2 Corinthians 1:3-4).

Father, I plead that \_\_\_\_\_ will cast all his/her care on You. I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ will not be weighed down with anxiety, doubt,

worry, or frustration. Reveal to \_\_\_\_\_ that you care for him/her (1 Peter 5:7).

Father, I ask in the name of Jesus that You would protect \_\_\_\_\_ from the schemes of the enemy at this time. He is a crafty and hateful enemy who will attempt to use this pain for his own devious and spiteful purposes. I pray that You would put a hedge about \_\_\_\_\_ and protect his/her mind at this time. Grant him/her the strength to resist the lies and the temptations of the devil (1 Peter 5:9).

Father, I plead that \_\_\_\_\_ will experience Your strength. I pray that You would sustain him/her with Your mighty power. When \_\_\_\_\_ as if he/she cannot go on, fill him/her with the strength to cling to You and to walk faithfully with You through this adversity (Psalm 29:11).

Father, I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ would taste and see that You are God. I plead that \_\_\_\_\_ would take refuge in You and experience Your richest blessings. I ask that the bitterness of this adversity would make You taste sweet to \_\_\_\_\_. Let this adversity teach \_\_\_\_\_ how great and good You are. Increase \_\_\_\_\_'s understanding and experience of You during this time (Psalm 34:8).

Father, I ask in the name of Jesus that \_\_\_\_\_ would wait for You. I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ would be strong and wait for You. Deliver him/her from impatience. Fill him/her with trust and the ability to wait on You (Psalm 27:11).

Father, I pray that You would be a shield around \_\_\_\_\_. I ask You to defend and guard \_\_\_\_\_'s heart and life. I plead that You would lift up \_\_\_\_\_'s head, delivering him/her from discouragement, depression, and despair (Psalm 3:3).

Father, I ask that the joy of the Lord would be \_\_\_\_\_'s strength. I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ would experience abounding, unceasing, and

rich joy through You. Flood his/her life with Your joy (Nehemiah 8:10).

Father, Your Word says that You are close to the brokenhearted. Father, \_\_\_\_\_ is hurting. I pray that You would cause him/her to sense and know Your presence. I ask that Your presence would strengthen and comfort. Your Word also says that You save the crushed in spirit. Father, \_\_\_\_\_ has been crushed. I ask You to deliver him/her. Set him/her free from the pain that he/she is now experiencing. Grant him/her Your grace and sustaining power (Psalm 34:18).

Father, \_\_\_\_\_ is downcast and disturbed. I ask in the name of Jesus that \_\_\_\_\_ would put his/her hope in You. I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ will yet praise You as his/her Savior and God (Psalm 42:5).

Father, I pray that Your Word would be \_\_\_\_\_'s delight. I plead that \_\_\_\_\_ would turn to Your Word and immerse himself/herself in it. I ask that You would strengthen and preserve \_\_\_\_\_ through Your Word (Psalm 119:92).

Father, I ask that Your Word would be a lamp to \_\_\_\_\_'s feet; I plead that Your Word would be a light to \_\_\_\_\_'s path. Speak clearly and powerfully to \_\_\_\_\_. Grant him/her the guidance that he/she needs (Psalm 119:105).

Father, I plead that You will fill \_\_\_\_\_ with the peace that passes understanding. I pray that this peace will guard his/her heart and mind from anxiety, fear, frustration, and discouragement (Philippians 4:7).

Father, Your Word says that You are the God of hope. I plead that You will fill \_\_\_\_\_ with hope. Cause this hope to sustain and encourage \_\_\_\_\_. Fill \_\_\_\_\_ with all joy and peace through his/her trust in You. I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ will overflow with hope by the power of Your Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13).

Father, I ask that \_\_\_\_\_ will be patient in the midst of his/her adversity. I pray that

\_\_\_\_\_ will be submissive to what You want him/her to do. Open \_\_\_\_\_'s heart to make the changes and take the steps that You desire during this time (**James 1:2-4**).

Father, I plead that You would grant \_\_\_\_\_ the wisdom to use the adversity that he/she is going through. Deliver him/her from making hasty conclusions or taking spiritually immature actions. Fill him/her with wisdom that he/she might submit to You and grow during this time (**James 1:4**).

Father, I ask that \_\_\_\_\_ would humble himself/herself before You. Set him/her free from pride. I plead that he/she will be submissive to You and will trust in You. Pour out Your grace on \_\_\_\_\_ (**James 4:6**).

Father, I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ will draw near to You. I ask that \_\_\_\_\_ will seek You with all his/her strength. O God, respond by drawing near to them. Let them sense clearly Your presence (**James 4:8**).

Father, I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ ask for Your help in this time. I plead that \_\_\_\_\_ will seek You and find You and Your strength. I ask that \_\_\_\_\_ would knock and the door to hope, peace, and growth would be opened to him/her (**Matthew 7:7**).

## Becoming A Vessel Of Hope For The Hurting

The Word of God tells us that we are to share the comfort that God has given us to others (**2 Corinthians 1:4**). God blessed us and encouraged us when we suffered and struggled. Now we are to take that comfort and encouragement and share it with others. Our God desires that we become vessels of hope for those who are hurting.

The following are some guidelines to help you become a vessel of hope for those who are suffering:

- ✓ *Ask the Holy Spirit to make you sensitive to the pain and struggle of others.* In order to minister to the

hurting, we must be aware of their pain. Too many times we fail to see the struggles of others because of our own concerns and the hectic pace of life. Pray that the Holy Spirit give you insight into the suffering of others.

- ✓ *Pray for a servant's heart.* It takes a servant's heart to minister to the hurting. When you deal with hurting people, there are no quick fixes and no easy answers. Hurting people need love, compassion, and time. Only a servant can provide those things.
- ✓ *Call on the Spirit to provide verses of Scripture that you can share with those who are hurting.* Our words mean little in times of pain. Yet, the living and eternal Word of God can sustain and encourage those who hurt. Pray that the Spirit will give you Scripture and insights that you can share.
- ✓ *Remember that people have different levels of maturity.* One person may be able to bear incredible amounts of adversity. Another may not be able to stand much. Don't ever make light of a situation in which someone is struggling. It may not look like much to you or to others, but it is a major struggle for the person. Be humble and willing to encourage believers in the midst of their struggles.
- ✓ *Write down the lessons that you learn in the midst of your suffering.* God has much to teach us in the midst of adversity. It is crucial that you journal or at least record what you learn when you suffer. This will help you not to waste these times. And you can use it to share with others when they are struggling.
- ✓ *Pray that your church will become a vessel of hope.* Call on God to make your church a place where those who are hurting can find love, acceptance, and hope. Ask Him to remove anything that would keep your church from being this.

## Breaking Unhealthy Soul Ties

An unhealthy soul tie is a relationship that is built on manipulation and control. It is when a person controls and manipulates another by either direct or indirect influence. By "*direct*" influence, I mean that the person determines to control and manipulate the other person. It is an intentional, planned control. One person intentionally sets out to control and manipulate another.

By "*indirect*", I mean that the person manipulates and controls the other by his or her influence without any forethought. In this situation, the person's influence is so strong that the other person is controlled and manipulated by his or her ideas and opinions. The person may not consciously be trying to control and manipulate. But his or her influence has brought this about.

An unhealthy soul tie is established when a person blindly follows another and must depend on that person for guidance and help. Whether intentional or not, the person exercises powerful influence over the other. That person is bound to the other, developing an unhealthy dependence on him or her.

An unhealthy soul tie can develop in any type of relationship. This kind of relationship can develop within families. They can be formed in friendships. They can happen between husbands and wives, boyfriends and girlfriends.

When a person has an unhealthy soul tie, some of the side effects are:

- A loss of individuality
- A loss of self-confidence
- An inability to make decisions for oneself
- Anger and bitterness when confronted about the relationship
- Doubts about what one believes and the way that he/she should live
- An unwillingness to consider that there is a problem with the influence of the person
- Exalted view of the person who controls and manipulates
- Exclusive relationship with the person who controls and manipulates (Will only consult with

this person about decisions, situations, feelings, etc. and with no one else)

These are some of the side effects of an unhealthy soul tie. These warning signs point to the fact that there is a troubled relationship.

How can an unhealthy soul tie be broken? The following are some suggestions on how to pray when you see someone who has developed an unhealthy soul tie.

- (1) *Pray that this person will see that there is a problem (John 16:7).* When an unhealthy soul tie develops, the person does not realize it. They may sense that something may not be right but they do not realize the depth of the problem. Ask that the Holy Spirit will deeply convict the person about the unhealthy soul tie.
- (2) *Plead that this person will hunger for God and will develop his/her relationship with Him (Psalm 63:1).* Pop psychology calls this type of problem "codependency." But it is more than a psychological problem; it is a spiritual problem. That is why I call it an "unhealthy soul tie." It is first and foremost a spiritual problem. What pop psychology call "codependency," the Bible calls "idolatry." When someone lets another person have this much control in his/her life, it is idolatry. The person has turned this manipulator/controller into his/her god. That person must repent and seek God. Pray that this person will pursue God with all his/her being. Plead that this person will learn to trust God above all others.
- (3) *Ask that this person will immerse himself/herself in the Word of God (Psalm 119:105).* This person needs guidance from God. The place where he/she can find that guidance is in the Word of God. Call on God to create within the person a passionate desire for the Word of God.
- (4) *Pray that this person will develop keen discernment (Proverbs 2:6).* Many times an unhealthy soul tie develops when a person lacks discernment.

Another person is able to control and manipulate because the person lacks the discernment and courage to make decisions on his/her own. Because of his/her lack of discernment, he/she must depend on another to tell him/her what to believe and how to live. Ask that this person will develop discernment and will be able to make wise decisions.

- (5) *Pray that this person will see the foolishness of allowing someone else to control and manipulate his life (Romans 14:9; Matthew 22:37). God alone deserves the priority in our lives. He alone has the right to guide us and control our lives.*
- (6) *Ask that this person will see through the hurtful and unwise counsel of others (2 Samuel 15:30-31).*
- (7) *Plead that God would raise up people around this person who can give him/her godly counsel (Proverbs 12:15).*

The following is a prayer that you can use to pray for the breaking of an unhealthy soul tie:

*Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, through the power of His blood and cross, I ask You to sever the unhealthy soul tie between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. I ask that You would have mercy on and forgive \_\_\_\_\_ for allowing this unhealthy soul tie in his/her life. If it is possible, salvage and rebuild this relationship and transform it into a healthy one. Yet, if this is not possible, I plead that You would end this relationship. Grant \_\_\_\_\_ the strength and grace to sever the relationship. I ask You to cut \_\_\_\_\_ free from \_\_\_\_\_ physically, emotionally, and spiritually. I plead that You would cleanse and purify \_\_\_\_\_'s mind, body, and spirit. Open his/her eyes to this unhealthy soul tie and lead him/her to repent of this unhealthy relationship. I plead that You would bind \_\_\_\_\_'s heart and mind to You and You alone. I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ will love You with all his/her being and will seek You for guidance and help. Enable \_\_\_\_\_ to build his/her life on Your Word and Your guidance.*

*Father, I pray that You would fill \_\_\_\_\_ with Your Holy Spirit so that he/she may walk in Your abundant grace and mercy. I ask that Your love would fill all the dark and lonely places of \_\_\_\_\_'s life. I plead that You would meet all of \_\_\_\_\_'s needs—physically, emotionally, spiritually, mentally, and financially. I ask in the name of Jesus that \_\_\_\_\_ would know how much You love \_\_\_\_\_ and how special he/she is to You. Amen.*

## Salt And Light Praying: Abortion

Abortion is a moral and spiritual cancer that is destroying the soul and the foundation of American society. It has taken the lives of millions of babies. It is destroying the glorious and exalted position of human life that the Bible teaches. It is encouraging promiscuity and immorality. It is making America ripe for the judgment of God.

Because of these things, Christians must make a stand. We must do everything that we can to end abortion. We must support pro-life organizations. We must make our convictions known to our legislators. We must provide alternatives like crisis pregnancy centers and adoption. We must do everything in our power to have an influence in this matter.

Yet, we must not only make a stand; we must also go to our knees. We must pray and seek God for an end to this evil. We must plead with the Judge of the earth to intervene and stop the senseless killing of babies.

The following is a prayer guide that you can use to pray against this evil. I would encourage you to make this a regular part of your prayer life. On a regular basis, plead with God to root this evil out of our society.

- ⇒ Ask God to change the hearts of legislators; pray that they will stand against abortion (**Proverbs 21:1**).
- ⇒ Plead that God would have mercy on those involved in the abortion industry (**Lamentations 3:22-23**). Ask God to convict them and to bring about a change of heart concerning this evil.

Pray for a repentant spirit and a changed heart.

- ⇒ *Pray that God would remove the profitability of abortion (1 Timothy 6:10).* Money is the root of many evils. This is true of abortion. Money fuels this industry. Ask that it will be drained of its profitability.
- ⇒ *Plead with God to stir the church to prayer and action (Matthew 5:13-14).* Ask that the church will take a stand against the evil. Pray that the church will hate this evil and will work to bring it to an end.
- ⇒ *Ask for a spirit of sexual purity in this nation (1 Thessalonians 4:3).* The promiscuity and immorality of this nation has provided the market for abortion clinics and facilities. Call out to God and plead for sexual purity in this nation. Pray that this nation will hate and repent of its fornication.
- ⇒ *Pray that God will pour out His grace and mercy on those who have had abortions (Psalm 147:3; Matthew 11:28).* Abortion inflicts traumatic wounds on women. Ask God to have mercy on them and grant them grace. Plead for their healing and restoration.
- ⇒ *Ask that this nation would come to realize again that life is the gift of God (Psalm 139:13-16).* Pray for a change of heart in this nation. Ask for a return to the glorious and exalted view of life that the Word of God declares.
- ⇒ *Plead with God to bless and help those who are providing an alternative to abortion (Philippians 4:19).* This includes pro-life organizations and crisis pregnancy centers

## Prayerwalking Around An Abortion Clinic

According to an NBC special on Roe v. Wade, there are at least 4,000 abortion clinics or facilities currently operating in the United States. Because of this, believers should be prayerwalking around these places. We can be on the scene without causing a scene. By

prayerwalking we can make a difference. You could prayerwalk on the street in front of or across from the facility. You could prayerwalk around the block where the facility is.

The following is a prayer guide that you can use to prayerwalk around these facilities. As you prayerwalk, be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. He can provide you with insights to pray. This prayer guide is offered to help you get started. It is based on the acrostic "C.L.O.S.E."

**C**onviction – Plead that God would convict the workers concerning this evil; that He would convict those who are contemplating abortion to turn from it; that He would convict those who support abortion to change their position.

**L**egislators – Ask God to change the hearts of legislators concerning abortion. Pray that they will support bills and actions that protect life, marriage, and abstinence.

**O**pportunities – Pray that those who are contemplating abortion will see that there is the opportunity to choose life. Ask that they will know and understand that there are alternatives to abortion. Plead that they will see that there is a way of escape from this evil (1 Corinthians 10:13).

**S**piritual needs – Call on God to meet the spiritual needs of all involved. Ask that they might seek and receive forgiveness, healing, grace, hope, and mercy from God. Plead that they will repent and turn to God.

**E**nd – Ask God to bring an end to this evil. Pray that the services of this facility will end. Plead that there will be an end to the promiscuity and immorality that feeds the abortion industry. Ask for an end to this disrespect of human life.

## Blessing Your Church

**Numbers 6:22-27** contains a blessing that you can use to intercede for your church. I would encourage you and challenge you to

pray this for your church on a regular basis. You can take each phrase and use it as a petition to our heavenly Father.

**"The Lord bless you"** – Ask God to pour out His richest blessings on your church. Pray that you will receive and use those blessings for His glory and the advancement of His kingdom. Ask Him to remove anything that would hinder His blessing your church.

**"Keep you"** – Pray that God will protect your church from the schemes and actions of the evil one. Plead that the devil's work against and in your church would be thwarted and destroyed.

**"The LORD make His face to shine upon you"** – Plead that God's presence will be sensed and felt in your church. Pray that people will be attracted to your church because of His presence.

**"Be gracious to you"** – Pray that God will grant your church the power to reach your city or community. Ask that He will stir your church and will enable you to be a force for righteousness throughout your area.

**"The LORD lift up His countenance upon you"** – Ask that God would manifest His power in your church. Pray that lives would be transformed by the power of God.

**"And give you peace"** – Plead with God to grant all the believers with His peace. Pray

that the church will experience peace, working and living in harmony and unity together.

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