



The Way to Oneness

Building the Daily Habit of Praying Together



21

Welcome to Your 21-Day Journey to Oneness Through Prayer

Welcome to a journey that has the power to transform your marriage—not by adding more to your schedule, but by anchoring your relationship in the one thing that matters most: **prayer**.

This 21-day devotional resource is designed to help husbands and wives grow closer to God and each other by making prayer a daily habit—*together*. Whether prayer together is something new or something you've drifted away from, this is an invitation to reconnect, refocus, and recommit to walking in unity as one.

Prayer isn't just a spiritual discipline; it's a relationship builder. When you pray together, you're not just speaking to God—you're softening hearts, building trust, restoring intimacy, and inviting His presence into the everyday moments of your marriage.

For husbands, this is a call to lovingly lead. For wives, it's an opportunity to walk beside your husband with encouragement and grace. For both of you, it's a chance to align your hearts with God—and with one another.

This resource was made possible by the contributions of **21 couples** (us included) who deeply believe in the power of prayer, love marriage, and know the importance of a Christ-centered relationship. These couples have walked through their own struggles, victories, and seasons of growth—and they've come together to share wisdom, encouragement, and their hearts with you.

Additional Resources

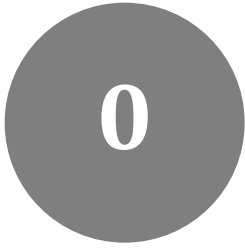
At the end of this devotional, you'll find resources to help you build unity in your marriage—offering practical advice and support as you pursue oneness.

Why 21 Days?

Research and experience both tell us it takes **21 days to create a habit**. New rhythms don't form overnight, but with consistency and purpose, they become a natural part of our lives.

These next three weeks are about forming more than just a habit—they're about cultivating a lifestyle of prayer and spiritual connection in your marriage. Each day builds on the last, and with every small step, you're laying a foundation that can strengthen your relationship for years to come.

To kick off this journey, you'll find **two devotionals for Day Zero**—one written for husbands and one for wives. This intentional design sets the tone for unity, helping each of you see your role, your value, and your shared purpose. As you begin this journey, may these first words draw you both closer—to God and to each other.



Praying To-Get-Her

“Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way...”

1 Peter 3:7 (ESV)

Reflection: Men, if there’s one habit that can change the climate of your marriage, it’s this: pray daily with your wife. Not just near her. Not just for her. But with her. Out loud. Together. When you pray together, you’re not just going through a spiritual motion—you are drawing close to her heart. You’re praying together, yes—but you’re also praying to-get-her:

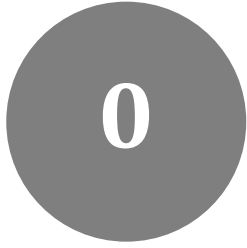
- To get her heart.
- To get her perspective.
- To get her hopes, fears, and dreams.
- To get her closer to Jesus... and you closer to her.

Daily prayer becomes the bridge to understanding her better, serving her more selflessly, and loving her more intentionally. It’s in those sacred minutes—sometimes awkward, often powerful—that walls come down, trust is built, and intimacy grows. We men are called to lead. Not with force or dominance, but with humility, courage, and spiritual strength. Ephesians 5:25 tells us to “love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.” That begins with prayer. You may not always know what to say. That’s okay. Start small. Hold her hand. Invite God into your day, your struggles, and your marriage. This 21-day journey isn’t about being perfect—it’s about being present.

Prayer: Lord, help me lead with love. Help me pursue my wife’s heart through prayer. Give me the courage to start, the humility to listen, and the wisdom to lead. Draw us closer to You and to each other. Amen.

Challenge: Pray with your wife. Out loud. Keep it simple. Even 60 seconds matters. Let her know you’re committing to this journey—with her, and for her.

Contributed by Joe DeGeare



Walking Beside Him in Prayer

"Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.'"

Genesis 2:18 (ESV)

Reflection: From the very beginning, God created you with intention and purpose; to be a helper suitable for your husband. Not lesser. Not secondary. But a beautiful complement...his partner, encourager, and companion in life and in faith. One of the most powerful ways to live out that role is through daily prayer together.

Praying with your husband may feel new, or even a little awkward at first. That's okay. This isn't about perfection, it's about presence. When you pray together, something deeper happens: hearts soften, walls come down, and spiritual intimacy grows. You have the opportunity to help him not by pushing or pressuring but by lovingly coming alongside him. Sometimes your quiet strength and willingness to pray will give him the courage to lead spiritually. You're not just supporting your husband, you're standing with him, shoulder to shoulder, inviting God into the center of your marriage. Prayer isn't just something we do. It's a way we live, love, and grow—together.

Prayer: Lord, thank You for the gift of my husband. Help me to lovingly support him as we grow in prayer together. Give me peace where I feel unsure, and grace to encourage him with kindness. Teach us to walk in unity and love, with You at the center. Amen.

Challenge: Take your husband's hand today and pray with him. Keep it simple. Be present. Trust that even the smallest step is a big one when God is in it.

Contributed by Denise DeGeare



Encountering Christ Together

And it came about, when He had reclined at the table with them, that He took the bread and blessed it, and He broke it and began giving it to them. And then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him; and He vanished from their sight.

Luke 24:30-31 (NASB)

Reflection: What do you recognize first about a person? Their build and height? Their features and hair? Maybe you know their voice, or even their gait? What about how they pray? What defines you as a married couple? Your house? Your children? Your years together? Your careers? What about how you pray together?

After walking miles on the road to Emmaus with Jesus, listening to the most amazing Old Testament lecture of ALL time, it wasn't until they were home, sitting with Him at their table that these two disciples recognized Jesus, their Lord. It wasn't a planned dinner party but if they had not invited Him in, we would not have this story. They were at the end of their day, and at the end of their hope, and yet in strong agreement, they sought more time with Him, asking Him to stay.

Then, after hours of not knowing Him on the road, suddenly they did at the table. Maybe He had them at "Abba", but maybe it was the look on His face as He looked up in prayer and then across the table at them giving them the bread when they finally recognized Him. For certain it was an Ephesians 3:20-21 encounter with Him who is able to do far more than we imagine. What an amazing experience to have shared!

Prayer: In strong agreement, pray Psalm 63:1-4 aloud together, substituting "OUR" and "WE"

O God, you are OUR God; WE earnestly search for You.

OUR souls thirst for You; OUR bodies long for You in this parched and weary land where there is no water.

WE have seen You in Your sanctuary and gazed upon your power and glory.

Your unfailing love is better than life itself; how WE praise You!

WE will praise You as long as WE live, lifting up OUR hands to You in prayer.

Challenge: Does your prayer life together leave room for revelation? Is there expectation on your part to get up from prayer changed? To adjust your plans? What do you see that primed this couple for this encounter with Christ?

Contributed by Kappie and Blake Coffee

2

Is God First?

Your word is a lamp to my feet, And a light to my path.

Psalm 119:105 (NKJV)

Reflection: Marriage is a gift from God and a lifetime commitment. A commitment that can be one of your greatest joys and bring you such love and peace IF you will first choose to prioritize your life, by putting God first, family second and career third. In other words, nothing should come before God. All married couples understand that there will be disagreements, if we're not careful our disagreements can turn into full fledged arguments. It's never good when two people are mad at the same time, so in our marriage we've agreed to not let our disagreements escalate. So instead of both of us arguing or disagreeing on something, we decided to do what God wants us to do. Turn the problem over to him, wait patiently and continue in prayer together until we receive an answer and can come to a mutual agreement. This implies a prayer life where both spouses are mindful of each other's spiritual well-being and treat each other with respect and understanding. We start our prayers together by honoring God first, then we ask God to bless our marriage and each other, so that we may be a light for others. Pray about everything, nothing is too trivial for our God.

Prayer: We are especially partial to The Lord's Prayer. This is the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples when they were learning to pray. It's a beautiful prayer that says so much.

Challenge: Discuss practical ways you are or can, put/putting God first individually and also as a couple..

Contributed by Cathy and Dennis Watkins

3

Prayer of Surrender

And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

Matthew 10:38 (ESV)

Reflection: Have you ever tried to change your spouse?

For me, it's been more times than I can count. But every time I go to prayer, God gently reminds me: "Start with yourself." Why? Because we are not called to change people—that's God's role. What He desires most is personal transformation in each of us. He is far more concerned with shaping our hearts than using us to shape someone else's.

In Matthew 10:38, Jesus says, "Whoever does not take up their cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me." Many people think surrendering is hard—and it can be, especially when we try to do it in our own strength. Denying ourselves, picking up our cross, and letting go of control feels impossible when we're relying on ourselves.

But surrender becomes much easier when we truly understand who God is and who we are. We forget how weak we are. We assume we're in control. We act as if God can't handle our issues. Yet Scripture reminds us that we are sinners, weak and in need of a Savior. And it reminds us that God is powerful, loving, and nothing is impossible for Him.

So, ask yourself: Do I want to trust myself—full of selfishness, sin, and mistakes—or do I want to trust the One who is perfect, loving, and all-powerful? When we recognize our position before Him, our desire shifts. We stop trying to change our spouse or our situation, and instead, we start surrendering to the One who can change everything.

Would you consider surrendering 100% of yourself to Him today? He's inviting you—not to strive harder, but to lay it all down and trust Him fully.

Prayer: Dear Father, thank You for being so powerful, yet so loving and accepting. You are inviting me to surrender my life for the glory of Your great name. Help me, Father, to let go. My faith is weak, but You are strong. I want to give You all of me today—holding nothing back. You are worthy of my life. Thank You, Jesus, for loving me and dying for me. Do in me whatever brings You the greatest glory and honor. Not I, oh Lord, but You. Thank You, Jesus, for using me. In Your name I pray, Amen.

Challenge: Spend a few minutes reflecting on one area of your life you may not have fully surrendered to Jesus. Share this with your spouse, and then each of you pray for the other regarding that area.

Contributed by Faye and Simon Lee

4

You Can Do It So Let's Go!!!

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)

Reflection: I remember when Crystal and I first got married in February 1982, the feelings of inadequacy I had, on how to lead my new wife, in our walk with the Lord, was to say at the least, overwhelming.

What do I do? How do I do it? I really didn't seem to have a clue and I think I got stuck in quicksand, for many years. Maybe you have felt that way or feel that way too.

It almost sounds funny now because our normal is to pray together and read together every day. It's something that has truly transformed our marriage and our relationship with Jesus Christ. Our marriage is vibrant even after 40+

Daily, MAKE TIME to read this devotional together and then take some time to pray together. There is so much to pray for and talk to God about. Pray for each other, for your family, for your friends, for your church, for our country and the lost. The list is endless, and the more you pray together the more God will give you insight on who to pray for.

Our intention is to do this every single day, and it has truly transformed our marriage. No more guilt, no more feeling inadequate, but just strength and power that we are becoming more and more one together, in our walk with Jesus Christ. We don't fight against each other anymore, we fight for one another! If I/we can do this, you can do this too!

Prayer: FATHER, thank you for our marriage that we would walk in oneness and unity of spirit, in the name of JESUS CHRIST. HOLY SPIRIT guide us today in everything we do and may we put YOU first together. Thank YOU that we first seek the kingdom of GOD and YOUR righteousness and all those things would be added unto us. Matthew 6:33.

Challenge: Spend a few minutes talking about what spiritual leadership means to each of you. Discuss how the husband can lead more effectively and how the wife can support and encourage those efforts.

Contributed by Crystal and Mike Green

5

Praying for the Next Generation

I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.

Genesis 17:7 (NIV)

Reflection: When I asked my wife, Dolly, what we prayed most about together, she immediately said “our kids!”.

Can anything drive us to our knees more than our kids? Do you remember when your first child was born? Do you remember holding that newborn and having the thought: “Now I have a better understanding for how God feels about me!”. You instantly love that little bundle of joy. You would do anything to protect them. You want the best for them all the days of their lives. As parents, you play a role in their lives that no one can fully replace. You are their biggest cheerleader.

What is the best thing you can do for them--Model godly behavior, perhaps? For sure. However, we would argue prayer is also important. It’s hard to conceive of, but God loves our children even more than we do!

We have many models of parents praying for their children in the Bible. Abraham prayed for his son, Ishmael (Gen. 17:18). David prayed for his son, Solomon (2 Sam. 12:16). Job prayed for his sons (Job 1:5). Hannah prayed for her unborn son, Samuel (1 Sam. 1: 9-28).

Dolly and I have been the beneficiaries of the prayers of the generations before us. Dolly has five generations of pastors on both sides of her family. My father was also a pastor and we have had believers in our family as far back as I know our family tree. This did not happen by accident. Each generation prayed fervently for the next that they might follow Christ. God hears our prayers and honors them when they align with His will.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for the gift of salvation you have given us, please turn our children’s hearts toward you that they might pursue you today.

Challenge: Pray specifically, and by name, for your family members and others in the next generation. Lift up each child, grandchild, niece, nephew, and young person in your life, asking God for their growth, protection, and wisdom.

Contributed by Dolly and Jeff Thomas



Where Do We Begin

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, 6so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 15:5-6 (NIV)

Reflection: Neither of us are particularly bold. We are convicted, and we have a strong faith in the Lord; but other than praying with our children, we have tended to have our own personal relationships with God over the three decades that we have been married. As we have gotten closer to God through intentional prayer, we have seen that He is the light, and it has brought us greater peace and joy in life. Through encouragement by a respected friend, I was encouraged to pray together with my spouse. At first the thought was a little daunting, as is anything new that you are not accustomed to. How will I approach this? Where do I begin? How will this work? But as we began to pray together, we learned more about one another, drew closer together, and I feel our love is stronger than it has ever been. We help to remind one another of our thanksgivings, we hear what is most pressing on our hearts (where we may ask the Lord for direction or help), and we help one another get closer to God, the true light. As we have talked with other friends that pray together with their spouses, they all share our same experience – that it has brought them closer to their partner, and it has strengthened their marriages. We would like to offer our encouragement to you – give it a shot, don't be discouraged, and we think you will welcome the results in your marriage. "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."- Ephesians 5:31. Praying together reinforces your unique oneness; and just as prayer brings you closer to God, praying with your spouse brings you closer to them!

Prayer: Holy Father, thank you for bringing the two of us together, in marriage. Let us lift each other up, to live faithfully, in accordance with Your will and plan. Bless our wonderful life together, and always bring us closer, through good times, and bad. Open our hearts, and enable our faith, to grow through faithful prayer together. I ask this in Jesus' holy name, Amen.

Challenge: Reflect on an area you would like to be closer with your spouse. Share those desires with each other and commit to specific actions.

Contributed by Denise and Brett Mears



Daily New Beginnings

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:1 (ESV)

Reflection: My wife's favorite part of the day is, without a doubt, the morning. Regardless of how difficult, disappointing, or even mundane her day may get, each one, technically, is a new beginning. And nothing reminds her more of this truth than an early morning run. She wakes up in the a.m. before the sun has even peeked over the horizon. Quietly, she creeps downstairs for a quick stretch before lacing up her shoes, and then she's off. The crisp air, the all-encompassing quiet and stillness—everything hums with potential and possibility. She returns home about the time the rising sun paints the sky with pastel oranges and blues. Along with the electric colors, the sun also brings hope. The promise of something new. Another beginning. Another chance for her best day yet. The God who brings the sunrise today is the same God who spoke the first sunrise into existence. He is a God of new beginnings, and for those who run after Him, He grants each of us new beginnings.

As you read about how God chose to bring about the very first beginning, you'll see He did so by speaking it into existence. "And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light" (Genesis 1:3). With just His words, nothing became something—a clear demonstration of the level of power and authority His words carry. If invited to do so, what could God speak into existence within our lives and marriage? Anything is possible with Him (Matthew 19:26). This is why my wife and I pray together before heading to work. In about ten minutes, we share what's on our minds and hearts with each other and the Lord. Then we wait for the God who spoke creation into existence to speak to us.

Prayer: Thank you, Lord, for being a God of new beginnings and second chances. As you have done for me, help me to offer forgiveness and new beginnings to my spouse when they ask for it.

Challenge: Tell your spouse one thing you need prayer for, but make it something you could never do on your own. Offer up a God-sized request.

Contributed by Kandace and Eric Ballard

8

Rooted in God's Love

And behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

Matthew 3:17 (ESV)

Reflection: Marriage, like anything in life, must be rooted in something. We still remember the pastor who led our premarital counseling emphasizing the importance of justification—not as a burden, but as a gift. Every day, he would preach the Westminster Catechism to himself, not out of duty, but as a reminder of God’s unwavering love. He did this not just on difficult days but on good days as well, anchoring his heart in the truth that his standing before God was not based on his efforts, but on Christ’s perfect love.

He shared with us today’s passage, pointing out that before Jesus began His ministry or faced any trials, the Father declared His love: “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.” Jesus did not have to prove Himself to receive the Father’s love—it was freely given. In the same way, our marriages are meant to be built on this unshakable foundation of love.

God’s love is not contingent on our performance. It is not something we have to earn. Instead, it is the very thing that empowers us to love each other well. When we know we are fully loved by God, we can extend that same love to our spouse—not just when things are easy, but in every season of life. Over the past 13 years, our marriage has been a journey of learning to love each other through the lens of God’s love for us. As we grow, raise children, and face life’s ever-changing circumstances, this truth has been our steady foundation.

When we live in the security of God’s love, we are freed from the need to prove ourselves. Instead, we can pour out grace, patience, and forgiveness—not from a place of fear, but from a place of abundance, knowing that God’s love sustains us, equips us, and calls us to love one another well.

Prayer: Father, help us to see each other as You do. Let our marriage be rooted in the incredible love You pour out on us. Fill us with a deeper understanding of our identity in Christ, and grant us surrendered hearts to walk with You each day. Amen.

Challenge: While facing each other and holding hands, take turns expressing appreciation for the other beginning with “I love you because....”

Contributed by Meaghan and Jamie Hampton



Trust in the Lord

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6 (ESV)

Reflection: Tears were streaming down my face as I explained to Jon that we didn't have enough money to pay our mortgage this month, and we were also behind on the electricity and credit card bills. "How much do we need exactly if we add it all up?" he asked. I punched the numbers and came up with the total; just shy of \$1500. "Then that's what we will pray for...\$1500 exactly...God knows our needs and He will provide." So we both bowed down to our knees on the cold tile floor in the office and we began to pray together as we could hear the kids were distracted by the cartoons in the living room. I said, "Father God, you know exactly what our bills are, you know exactly what the due dates are, you even know the extensions of those due dates, so we are begging you, in the name of Jesus Christ, to please provide for us \$1500 to help us pay these bills." Jon chimed in with a very similar prayer asking the Lord specifically to give us \$1500 and proclaiming our faith and complete trust in Him. Prov 3:5-6 had always been our life verse, and this was just another example of us living it out.

There will be trials in life and marriage, and the Lord will call us to stop trying to figure it all out on our own, but instead, put our complete faith and trust in Him during those seasons. And as we learn to simply trust, we will see miracles and His mighty hand at work.

3 days after that prayer an unexpected check arrived in the mailbox. Can you guess how much it was for?... \$1500 exactly. God hears, He sees, He knows, and He provides.

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, we come to you specifically asking for your help with this difficult situation (name your need to Him.) We believe that you see us right here where we are and you truly want to help us navigate through this. We specifically pray for (ask God to fill your need whatever it might be - financial, healing, etc.) believing that you will answer. We trust you completely.

Challenge: As a couple, find an area where you've been relying on your own strength—perhaps a financial decision, a family issue, or a career choice. Discuss what it would look like to intentionally surrender that concern to the Lord.

Contributed by Teresa and Jon Harper

10

Table for Two: How Hard Times Brought Us Together

Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Romans 5:3-5 (ESV)

Reflection: One year, everything seemed to go wrong all at once. We were both dealing with grief at the loss of loved ones, health issues, and frustrations in our work. Worst of all, both of our kids were experiencing significant struggles that we didn't know how to navigate. And, to be completely honest, we weren't doing so well in our marriage, either. All of these external problems exposed some serious shortcomings in our relationship. To put it bluntly, we weren't particularly fond of each other then.

That's when we started something new: a weekly breakfast out. We both love breakfast food, and I had Fridays off. So we would drop the kids at school and head out for pancakes, bacon, and coffee. Some of those "breakfast dates" were emotional because of the stuff we were going through at the time. Carrie would sometimes end up crying. Today, I laugh when I imagine what would happen if we ran into any of the waiters who served us back then. They'd probably say, "Wait...you guys are still married?"

Yes, we are. And we still have that weekly breakfast date (These days, it's much more enjoyable). And believe it or not, I thank God for that horrible year. Not just because it gave us this great tradition of breakfast out. But because it taught us to lean on Him in prayer (at the time, we didn't have anything else!). It also taught us to work together, to talk things through, instead of coping in our own separate ways. And it made our love stronger.

We're no experts, but this much we've learned: Pancakes are better when they're hot off the griddle. And marriage is better when you've gone through hard times together.

Prayer: Father, when we face trials, help us to stick together, to support each other, and to trust you more. I pray that hard times would bind us closer together, and closer to you. In Jesus' name, amen.

Challenge: Tell each other about a time when God used painful circumstances to grow you.

Contributed by Carrie and Jeff Berger

11

Unbreakable - Strength in Prayer

Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Ecclesiastes 4:12 (NKJ)

Reflection: Carrie and I spent the first 11 years of our marriage like many other Christian couples. We were busy with kids, working, and keeping a home. Our priorities seemed to follow that order. We were devoted church members and counted our faith as something very important, but we weren't really living that out. At this time, we prayed separately and did not read our bibles much. The only thing we did together regarding our Christian walk was attend church. Outside of that we enjoyed being together as a family and with each other. We spent time with extended family and friends sometimes. Mostly, however we worked, studied, and were parents.

All that time we would say that we would pray for each other but what we didn't do is join in prayer as husband and wife. How much stronger could we have been had we started praying together aloud? Today Carrie and I pray together out loud each morning then read a chapter from our bible together! We are growing in our faith together and we are there to lift each other up and cover ourselves with the power and love of our Lord Jesus Christ through combined prayer. There is nothing that we do not face TOGETHER now. We are closer as a couple and continue to grow together each day.

A rope made of three strands of cord is quite strong. Individually each strand is not very strong but wound together it is very strong! Consider the three strands in a rope like this. One strand is you and the other is your spouse. Pretty strong together but add the third strand which represents God, and it becomes unbreakable! Place God at the center and wrap your marriage around Him and see what it does for your relationship.

Prayer: Father, we thank you for bringing us together and we ask your blessings upon us. Thank you for the gift of prayer and put in us the desire to pray together and for each other daily. May we have open hearts to hear your will for us and the wisdom to obey. With all praise to You we lift our hearts in Christ's precious name. Amen.

Challenge: Read Ecclesiastes 4:12 together and reflect on what it means to include God as the "third strand" in your marriage.

Contributed by Carrie and Charles Wadley

Prayer and Spiritual Warfare

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Ephesians 6:10-12 (NIV)

Reflection: I would love to tell you that we have always been consistent in praying together as a couple. But honestly, prayer has been more of an individual spiritual discipline for both of us. We do pray and we do pray for each other, but rarely out loud together.

But there was a season after we lost our baby boy 17 weeks into pregnancy that praying together became more of a necessity for us. After delivering, holding and burying that baby, it was probably one of the darkest seasons of our marriage. Not only were we grieving differently and struggling to find common ground but Haley was experiencing continuous nightmares reliving the delivery and loss. It got bad enough that she asked Brad to begin praying for her every night before she went to sleep. Slowly the nightmares subsided, but we have never been more tangibly aware of Satan's attacks on our marriage and spiritual wellbeing. And in many ways, we realized we had allowed him to get his foot in the door.

Prayer is such a simple gift that we have been given, a tool to remind us and tell God that we can't do it on our own, an open door of communication with our Almighty Savior. Let's be aware that Satan hates marriage. He will do anything and everything to drive a wedge between you and your spouse. Let's also remember that we are not each other's enemy, and let's not give Satan a foothold into our relationship. Finally let's not wait until we are at the end of ourselves to go to the Throne of Grace together!

Prayer: Father, God, help us to remember that the battles we fight as a couple are not against each other. But against the spiritual forces of evil in this world. Help us to be aware of Satan's attacks but also know that we belong to you, our marriage belongs to you, and you will not abandon the good work you have started in us. Teach us to seek you and go to you together. In the wonderful name of your Son, Jesus, we pray. Amen.

Challenge: Pray together and ask God to reveal any areas of your marriage where you may have allowed Satan a foothold into your relationship. Discuss steps together of possible changes that need to be made.

Contributed by Haley and Brad Smith

13

Prayer That Saved a Ministry

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6 (ESV)

Reflection: Early in our MarriageTeam ministry, we faced a discouraging setback. We had scheduled a coach training, but only one couple signed up. At the time, we charged \$99 for 24 hours of training, and it seemed that price was very reasonable. Disheartened, we attended a marriage conference in August and decided to skip a session to pray about our dilemma.

As we prayed, Autumn heard the Lord speak clearly: "Offer the training for free." She hesitated, reasoning, That may be a good idea, but Alan won't accept it. However, when she shared what she had heard, Alan was also praying for an answer was ready to listen. Though uncertain that was the real key, we trusted that God was leading the ministry.

We acted in faith, offering the next training at no cost. By late September, 20 couples had signed up. That moment of obedience and trust became a turning point for the ministry, and MarriageTeam has continued to thrive ever since.

Marriage is filled with moments that require trust in God's direction, even when it doesn't make sense. When couples seek the Lord together, He provides wisdom and guidance beyond their own understanding.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help us trust in You with all our hearts, even when we don't see the way forward. Teach us to seek You in our marriage, knowing that Your plans are greater than our own. Give us courage to obey Your leading and faith to walk in Your provision. May our marriage be a testimony of Your faithfulness. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Challenge: Understanding that trusting the Lord is paramount, choose on an area where you are struggling as a couple. Through prayer, ask God for wisdom then discuss what it might look like to be obedient to God—even if it challenges your understanding.

Contributed by Autumn and Alan Ray

14

Peace in the (Marriage) Storm

He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

Mark 4:39 (NIV)

Reflection: "Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Peace, be still!' And the wind ceased and there was a great calm." – Mark 4:39

Marriage is full of beauty—and storms. Parenting pressures, financial strain, unmet expectations...they can stir up conflict and create emotional distance. But just as Jesus calmed the storm with a word, He offers a peace that surpasses all understanding (Phil. 4:7), even in the middle of marital tension.

When my husband and I reach a standstill—where emotions run high and resolution feels impossible—we anchor ourselves in truth: God is for our marriage. He is for our unity. He gives wisdom, and His Word is our shared compass.

We pause the conversation, identify what we're actually disagreeing on, and agree to pray separately for at least 24 hours. During that time, we each ask God for humility, unity, and the insight to see where we need to change. Time in prayer often softens our hearts and realigns our perspective, allowing us to move forward—not as opponents, but as a team.

Peace doesn't always come instantly. But rhythms of prayer interrupt conflict and invite the Prince of Peace into our process.

Prayer: Lord, when storms rise in our marriage, remind us You are in the boat with us. Help us seek You first. Calm our hearts and guide us in unity, humility, and grace. Amen.

Challenge: The next time conflict arises, take a 24-hour pause. Each of you spend that time in prayer, asking God to reveal your part and lead you both toward unity.

Contributed by Anna and Danny Panter

Reflection: We are at the stage of life where we can pray together as we arise in the morning. We like to pray in each other's arms in bed before we start the day. Jesus said that where two or three are gathered together in His name, He is there with them in Matthew 18:20. Genesis 2:24 says that the man is to hold fast to his wife, and they become one flesh. So, when we pray together, we are unified as we pray, and Jesus is with us. As we pray, we are unified in worshipping Him.

In the worship of God, we include Jesus and the Holy Spirit. First, we praise God for who He is. We thank Him for providing such a great salvation when we do not deserve it. We thank Him for allowing Jesus to leave the glory of heaven to come to earth.

We then pray to and thank Jesus for coming to earth to show us how to live, to die for our sins, to be buried, to be resurrected and to go back to the Father. We ask forgiveness for the fact that our sins were the nails that caused Him to die. Next, we thank Jesus for sending the Holy Spirit to live within us.

We then pray to the Holy Spirit. We ask forgiveness for the times we ignored His bidding and did what we wanted. We then ask Him to form Jesus in our lives so others will see Him and not us.

We continue our prayer with thanksgiving and intercession. We thank God for His many blessings we do not deserve. After salvation, the greatest blessing is the gift of each other. Then we intercede for our church staff, our family, our friends, our nation and those who are sick. We always prayed as Jesus did in the garden that God's will be done and not what we wish He would do.

We end our prayer dedicating ourselves to whatever He has for us to do that day. When we begin the day in this manner, the day always goes smoother.

Prayer: Lord, grant unity with you and each other. Use us this day in any way You want.
Amen

Challenge: Brainstorm on ways you and your spouse can serve together understanding that serving others as a couple strengthens your bonds

Understanding = Unhindered

Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

1 Peter 3:7 (ESV)

Reflection: There are few things in life more frustrating than feeling hindered. We despise being hindered by traffic, insufficient funds, physical limitations, etc., but what if something sacred could be hindered? According to 1 Peter 3:7, our very prayers can be hindered. Peter speaks directly to husbands with this sobering command: “Live with your wives in an understanding way..., so that your prayers will not be hindered.” In other words, God pays attention not just to how we talk to Him but to how we treat those closest to us. A man can be strong in faith, active in ministry, and bold in prayer, but if he’s dishonoring, ignoring, or invalidating his wife, those prayers may go unheard.

So, how can a husband ensure his prayers don’t go unheard? In part, they must become a student of their wife’s life, to truly study them. This means studying not just their likes and dislikes but their burdens, fears, needs, and hopes as well. It’s about intentional empathy - listening without trying to fix, serving without seeking credit, and loving sacrificially even and especially when it’s not easy.

Although truly paying attention to your wife isn’t always easy, the consequences of a husband failing to live with their wife in an understanding way are sobering because God is watching how husbands treat their wives. Disrespect, harshness, and neglect don’t just hurt marriages, they damage a husband’s spiritual connection with God. A husband’s relationship with their spouse affects their relationship with our Savior. Therefore, for prayers to be unhindered and the marriage to be a source of peace and harmony, couples are encouraged to diligently work at understanding and honoring each other and the God-given gift of marriage.

So today, ask yourself: Am I understanding? Am I showing honor? What kind of spiritual atmosphere am I creating in my home? Because God cares—and your prayers depend on it.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for hearing our prayers. Please help us to honor you and the gift of marriage you have given us. Please point out anything in our marriage that offends you. Please keep our relationship to you and each other as strong as possible. Thank you for loving us and listening to us. Amen.

Challenge: Take (or retake) a helpful relationship assessment. Helpful free online assessments can be found at Five Love Languages: <https://5lovelanguages.com/quizzes> & Seven Primal Questions: <https://www.primalquestion.com>

Contributed by April and Shad Purcell

17

Strength in Unity

Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

Ecclesiastes 4:12 (NIV)

Reflection: In the journey of marriage, challenges are inevitable, but the strength to overcome them lies in our unity. Throughout our marriage my spouse and I have faced many challenges (loss of parent(s), financial setbacks, parenting challenges, etc.). All of these bring a range of emotions and struggles. Through our prayers, we not only found comfort but also renewed our commitment to each other. We realized that our bond was not just between the two of us, but with God as the third strand, making us stronger and more resilient. Ecclesiastes 4:12 confirms this truth. When we invite God into our relationship, we form an unbreakable cord that can withstand any challenge. Prayer is essential both individually and as a couple, it allows us to align our hearts with God's will and strengthen our marriage with His love and direction.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank You for the gift of our marriage. Help us to come together in prayer, strengthening our bond with You and each other. May our marriage be a reflection of Your love and grace. Guide us through all challenges and keep us aligned with You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Challenge: Individually identify a specific challenge you are currently facing. Share this challenge with your spouse. During your designated prayer time, each partner should pray for the other person and the challenge they have communicated.

Contributed by Val and Doug Lyles

Reflection: My wife and I live in Denver, Colorado. Our house faces the west and has a beautiful view of the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains. On most mornings, I will go outside in my bare feet and place them on the grass (or snow) of my front lawn. While I ground myself upon the earth, I will take a moment to gaze at the majestic landscape before me, seeing the snow-capped peaks and the lush green hillsides. As I marvel at such beauty, I will recite Psalm 121:1 out loud as a prayer of declaration and praise.

I remind myself that the Lord is the creator of everything good and beautiful in this world. I acknowledge the hard things in my life and marriage and ask the Lord for help to overcome. I rejoice over the fact that the same God who is the sovereign ruler of the universe cares for me and will provide all that I need for every circumstance I face. I lift my eyes from the circumstances of this world and cast them to Jesus, the author and perfecter of my faith.

When I am finished, I take a deep breath, turn around, and head inside to continue my day. I've learned that a simple 1-2-minute moment provides me the perspective and attention I need for the day. My life, my marriage, and my family are all under the jurisdiction and supervision of the Lord. He is the all-knowing, all-powerful, all-sufficient God who will provide for all my needs, and I can trust him for everything. I lift up my eyes daily to see where my real help comes from.

Prayer: Lord, marriage in this world is difficult and challenging. We can often get stuck in the struggles and sufferings that we encounter in life. Thank you for the beautiful reminder through creation that you are our Helper. You are the God who cares, provides, and protects us. May we be a couple that continually looks up in dependence upon you. Please supply us with your grace, wisdom, and courage in abundance today. We ask this in the precious and powerful name of Jesus, Amen.

Challenge: Together, take a few minutes to reflect and identify an area in your life where you feel spiritually stagnant. Then, take turns brainstorming ways to overcome this and move forward.

Contributed by Jennifer and Christopher Schultz

Praying for Children in Difficult Season

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

Psalm 1:1-3 ESV

Reflection: One of the most difficult seasons in our marriage was when our high school aged daughter went off the rails for reasons that we were not aware of at the time.

It was during this agonizing pressure packed season that we prayed these specific verses over her life as a desperate plea before God.

God was faithful to not only reveal the heartbreaking issue we were dealing with, but more importantly bring about complete healing and restoration in her life and relationships. God literally took our daughter from darkness (death) to light (life) and He has the ability to do the same for your children as well.

These verses remind us that who we surround ourselves with matters greatly. We are also encouraged that when we delight in God and meditate on His word, He provides an anchor for our soul that yields fruit in our lives and causes us to prosper in ALL seasons!

Prayer: Blessed is (your child's name).

who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
 nor stands in the way of sinners,
 nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
 2 but (your child's name) delight is in the law of the Lord,
 and on his law (your child's name) meditates day and night.
 3 (your child's name) is like a tree
 planted by streams of water
 that yields its fruit in its season,
 and (your child's name) leaf does not wither.
 In all that (your child's name) does, he/she prospers
 In Jesus Name – Amen!

Challenge: Considering the children, grandchildren, or younger individuals with whom you maintain a relationship, contemplate discussing effective approaches for imparting spiritual guidance and wisdom to them.

Contributed by Nikki and Todd Stewart

Trust the Process

...Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease...For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you.

Jeremiah 29:1-12 (ESV)

Reflection: In 2013, Philadelphia 76ers general manager Sam Hinkie talked about the “process” being more important than the “outcome.” A pop-culture phenomenon began as the phrase “trust the process” became the mantra of those Philadelphia 76ers. Professional and college sports teams, established corporations, start-ups, non-profits, and even individuals began operating by that mantra.

During a difficult time in our marriage, we needed to trust the process. God had plans for us individually and as a couple that we were not aware of for some time. He had plans for us, and at just the right time God revealed those plans to us in a powerful and humbling way.

During that difficult time, we sought the Lord together in prayer, we sought the Lord together on our own, and we asked others to pray alongside us. However, we did not neglect the current reality. In the waiting, while trusting the process, we remained faithful to the Lord, faithful to each other, and faithful to the things he had called us to up to that point.

Our waiting for answers, direction, and an answer from the Lord is somewhat like the Israelites’ experience in Jeremiah 29. At that point in their history, they were exiled, away from each other and their homeland. It was a very difficult time for them to say the least. However, God remained faithful to His people and reminded them of the plan and purpose He had for them. The Israelites were to remain faithful and prayerful as they waited for their restoration. As you encounter similar difficult times, stay faithful and keep praying!

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for Your faithfulness during difficult times. Help us to remain steadfast in our obedience to You and our faithfulness to the tasks You’ve called us to. Help us to trust You first and foremost in all that we do. We pray this in Jesus’ name, Amen.

Challenge: This week, pray for each other. Share with your spouse one area of your life where you can become more faithful or obedient to God, and pray over your spouse for what they share with you.

Contributed by Candice and Alan Armstrong

The Way to Oneness - and Joy

Complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

Philippians 2:2-3 (ESV)

Reflection: We're living the dream! Retired, traveling the US in our motorhome, how could it be better? Except when two broken people drive, eat, sleep, and play in a very small space, it doesn't take a whole lot for tensions to turn into turmoil. What each of us individually "want" becomes paramount then we must "fight" for our way...forgetting God's way. It happens to all of us, our human hearts shout "I deserve" instead of "how can I serve?" And with this heart posture, the enemy finds fertile soil to sow seeds of disunity and discord that kill, steal, and destroy (John 10:10). We're left wondering "where is the joy?"

In Philippians, Paul shows us what joy looks like. He instructs the Philippian believers to be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full agreement. That's a tall order in any relationship...and more so in marriage. But, Paul doesn't offer the destination: joy, without also showing us how to get there. Paul's roadmap to joy has only one route: humility

Consider how different our interactions with our spouse would be if humility were the central posture of our hearts, rather than the familiar "my way" struggle. For Joe and me, consistently praying together, inviting the Holy Spirit's presence to guide us, and trusting in Christ are essential practices that help us discover and remain in this place of humility.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, We come before You today, grateful for the gift of our marriage. It's a precious covenant, and we ask for Your divine protection over it. Guard our hearts and minds, Lord, from the seeds of disunity and discord that can so easily take root. When frustrations arise or selfish desires emerge, help us to recognize them quickly and turn to You. Infuse our marriage, we pray, with profound humility. Remind us daily that true joy is found not in getting our own way, but in selflessly serving one another, just as Christ served us. Soften our hearts, humble our spirits, and help us to truly "count others more significant than ourselves". In Jesus' name, Amen.

Challenge: Each week, ask your spouse, "What's one thing I can do for you this week?" Write it down and post it in a visible spot—and commit to getting it done.

Contributed by Denise and Joe DeGeare

Additional Resources

Re|engage - <https://www.reengage.org>

- Re|engage brings couples together to learn about God's design for marriage and apply biblical principles for building a healthy relationship.
- Additional resources (articles, videos, etc) on multiple and various marriage subjects

MarriageTeam - <https://marriageteam.org>

- Personalized, couple-to-couple coaching to help improve marriages through better communication, conflict resolution, and developing a more intimate relationship

Hope Restored Marriage Intensive - <https://hoperestored.focusonthefamily.com>

- 3-5 Day Intensive Counseling at an All-Inclusive, Resort-Style Destination
- Christ-Centered, Proven Christian Marital Therapy with a 95% Satisfaction Rate
- Distraction Free Experience Facilitated by Compassionate, Responsive Staff

Relationship Assessments:

- Five Love Languages: <https://5lovelanguages.com/quizzes>
- Seven Primal Questions: <https://www.primalquestion.com>
- Focus on Marriage Assessment:
<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/themarriageassessment/>

Book Study - Sacred Marriage: What If God Designed Marriage to Make Us Holy More Than to Make Us Happy by Gary Thomas - <https://garythomas.com/books/sacred-marriage/>