

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS 101

Pray for People

John 17:1-12

The Big Idea: Since Jesus **prayed** for the people close to him, so should **we**.

“I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours.” John 17:9

“My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.” John 17:15

Step One: In prayer, we **thank** God for the people in our lives.

“I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now...”
Philippians 1:3-5

- Our thankfulness increases our **love** and **appreciation** for people.
- Our thankfulness helps change our **attitude** towards people.

Step Two: In prayer, we ask God to **act** in the lives of the people we love.

- One of God’s core promises is that prayer **changes** things.

“So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.” Luke 11:9-10

- It is our job to use **asking prayer** to bring change in the lives of people we love. “Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Matthew 6:10
“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.” Luke 22:31-32

- When we pray for God to move in someone’s life, we can then **watch** with the eyes of **faith**.

Step Three: In prayer, we move past **worry** by entrusting the people we love to a **Heavenly Father**.

“Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you...” Psalm 55:22

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:5-7

- When we pray, we are reminded that the Father loves them **even more** than we do.
- When we pray, we can **trust** God’s desires, plans and purposes for that person.

The Bottom Line: As we learn to love the people in our lives, we need to use prayer as one of the **key skills** that makes that love real.

The Ride Home Question: Give an example of how prayer has helped your relational life.

Study Questions:

1. Read John 17:9 and 15. How does Jesus example of prayer for those close to him help challenge and instruct you in your relationships?
2. How would you evaluate your prayer life in the area of praying for the people you love? Do you do it well or poorly? When in your life have you been most faithful to prayer for the people you love?
3. Step One on the outline talked about being thankful in prayer for the people we are close to. Answer the following:
 - Do you agree that thankfulness in prayer will help you love and appreciate people more? Do you have a concrete example of that?
 - How might being thankful in prayer help change your attitude about a person? Do you have a concrete example of that?
4. Step Two talks about using prayer to ask God to make a difference in the lives of those we love. Answer the following:
 - How do the words of Jesus in Luke 11:9-10 challenge you when it comes to praying for the people you love?
 - Can you think of a time when your prayers have brought change in a person's life in a way that your face-to-face efforts could not?
 - What are some specific needs you see in the people you love that you need to pray for?
5. Step Three talks about prayer as a way of giving the people we love to the Heavenly Father's care. Answer the following:
 - How does giving people to God help you deal with worry?
 - How does the fact that God loves these people even more than you do help you? How can prayer remind you of that?
6. What has most challenged you out of this message? What do you plan to do as a result of that?