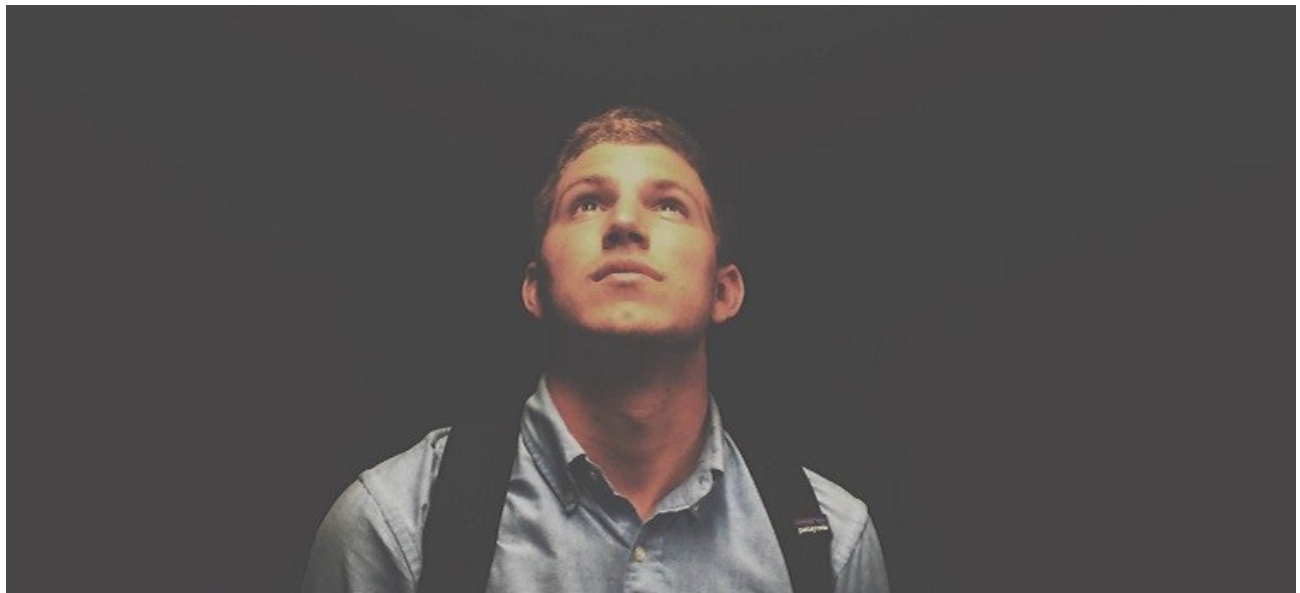


JANUARY 4, 2016

9 STRATEGIES THAT HAVE HELPED ME PRAY



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(#)

Many believers struggle with praying consistently, and I count myself among that number. Here are several strategies, though, that have strengthened my prayer life over the years. Maybe they'll help you pray as we begin a new year.

1. **Begin the day with prayer.** Before I get out of bed each day, I pray three simple prayers to direct my attention to Him:
 - “Lord, thank You for loving me today.” (John 3:16)
 - “Lord, lead me not into temptation; deliver me from the evil one today.” (Matt. 6:13)

- “Lord, teach me to pray today.” (Luke 11:1)
2. **Pray through the day’s calendar before going to work.** To be honest, I usually use my shower time to mentally review my appointments and pray for each one.
 3. **Pray with your spouse each day.** Regardless of when this prayer takes place, make sure it happens on a daily basis. Prayer intimacy is like no other intimacy.
 4. **Learn to talk to God all day long.** People who are just watching me might wonder with whom I’m talking throughout the day. It’s cool to carry on a conversation with God while driving, while walking across campus, or while running on the treadmill.
 5. **Use “break” times for prayer.** Think about it – if you use four 15-minute time slots to pray throughout the day, you’ve prayed as much as the “prayer warrior” who prays for an hour each day.
 6. **Have a daily prayer agenda.** I don’t pray for everything every day. I do, though, pray about these specific items each day:
 - my wife and believing family members
 - my non-believing family members and friends
 - my mentees and their families (by name)
 - missionaries celebrating their birthdays
 - an unreached people group (name found daily on my website)
 - my local church pastors
 7. **Have a weekly prayer agenda.** In addition to my daily prayer emphases, I pray for specific needs each day:

Sunday: my church

Monday: my students in class this week

Tuesday: my family members in ministry

Wednesday: missionaries (North American and international)

Thursday: my denominational entity leaders

Friday: my seminary administration and colleagues

Saturday: for courage and alertness to be a witness for Christ next week
 8. **Pray with people as often as possible.** If possible, begin and end a meeting in prayer. Pray with your children or grandchildren every day. End a phone call with a prayer. Send an unexpected email to friends, asking them for prayer concerns. If folks ask you to pray, do so immediately.
 9. **End the day with prayer.** If late night praying ends in your falling asleep, keep the prayer short—but still finish the day by focusing on God. If you’ve prayed throughout the day, a simple, “Thank You, God, for this day” is okay.

What other suggestions would you add? Let's help each other pray.

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