

Praying for families in your local church.

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The Lord calls all believers to pray at all times in the Spirit ... and to be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for *all* the saints (Eph 6.18). What a privilege. But it may appear to be daunting and a bit impossible to pray for everyone in your local church. Where do you begin? How do you start? What could be a helpful guide to aid you in praying for your local church?

In what follows, I provide some ways to pray for the families in your local church. Pray for...

- 1. For marriages to be holy.** Consider praying for the marriages to be holy. This refers to the husbands and wives fulfilling and pursuing their God-given roles as laid out in Scripture. Pray for marriages in your church to be godly representations of the gospel of Christ. Pray for set-apart, other-worldly, heavenly-minded marriages at church.
- 2. For singles to be faithful.** Earnestly seek God in intercessory prayer for the singles in your local church to obey what Paul says of them in I Corinthians 7: to have undistracted devotion to the Lord (v.35). Pray that they would utilize their singleness for Christ's glory, to pursue the saints with selfless zeal and with relentless passion.
- 3. For widows to be disciples.** Pray for the widows in your church to pursue good works, to show hospitality, to serve the saints by selfless, foot-washing service, to assist those in need, and devote herself to every good work.
- 4. For retired to be disciplined.** Ask God on behalf of the retired men and women to live like Caleb with full strength and vigor for God, to take on great tasks and duties for Christ's sake, and to emulate Anna who worshiped constantly, fasted, prayed, and lived a life of gratitude (not grumbling and complaining!) to God. Pray for them to be busily disciplined and continually strengthened by God to do His work, with untiring energy, out of love for Christ.
- 5. For women to be submissive.** Seek God on behalf of the wives and young women to be submissive to their husbands, to be quiet (as opposed to boisterous and self-focused), gentle, obedient to authority, and to be sensible, pure, workers at home and to not dishonor the Lord but to adorn the doctrine of Christ in all respects.
- 6. For men to be humble leaders.** Plead boldly and persistently with God to raise men and cultivate in men a Christlike emulation so as to be humble, gentle and sacrificial leaders. Ask God for men to not be self-willed but self-effacing and others-focused.
- 7. For children to be obedient.** Pray for the young children to obey their parents in all things. Pray for the children to receive God's blessing and follow God's Word as they grow in godly homes and hear God's Word taught.
- 8. For teens to be Spirit empowered.** Appeal to God for young people to be Davids, young men devoted to God with hearts that follow Him and set God before them continually. Pray for more Josephs, young people fleeing from immorality (literally!) and living with paramount integrity, trustworthiness and love. Pray for young people to be like Jesus, totally about the "Father's business" in this present evil age in which we live.
- 9. For babies to become missionaries.** Seek the Lord boldly and open your mouth wide to the God who is able to do far more abundantly beyond what you think or imagine to raise up and grow the smallest of nursing babies in your church to be missionaries for Christ's work and service. O pray for men with an open map and an

open Bible who believe God's sovereignty and go with Spirit-empowered and evangelistic zeal to preach the gospel to the rough, the savages, the unreached, and unengaged peoples of the world. O God, amaze us for your glory!

10. For shut-ins to rest in Christ. Come to the throne of grace for those who are homebound in your church. Maybe there are the elderly who aren't *able* to leave their homes, maybe people in the final stages of cancer or a terminal illness. Seek the Lord on their behalf that they would rest in Christ and not be bitter, or angry, or resentful or pessimistic. Pray that those who find themselves confined to the home would rest in Christ and bathe in Scripture and reflect on and proclaim God's faithfulness.

11. For families to be little churches of worship. Plead earnestly that every home would be, as it were, a little church, earnestly and consistently about the worship of God in the home, led by the father, with the families gathered together to read the Word, sing God's praises, and pray together -- all for God's glory. Pray for the homes to be worship gatherings where God's blessing would rest upon those homes and where families would prepare in the homes for worship corporately with God's people.