

## HOW TO PRAY FOR EVANGELISM

We must not engage in a battle with the evil one without praying. To do so is foolish. All evangelism must start with prayer. Here are some practical suggestions to help you get started.

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### **PERSONALLY** – praying privately

Always have at least some non Christians among your own prayer points. Make up a short and simple list of people known to you who do not know Jesus.

Ask God to help you live a life which is consistent with your Christian profession. You may be the only sensible Christian that your non-Christian relatives, friends, neighbours or work colleagues know.

Pray that God's Holy Spirit will give them new birth and that they will turn in repentance and faith to follow Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.

Pray that you will be ready to "give a reason for the hope that is in you" and that you will not be too busy to help them should the opportunity arise.

A suggested prayer could be:

*Almighty God and Heavenly Father, I thank you that you called me out of darkness into the kingdom of your Son, Jesus. Please soften the heart of ..... and give them new birth. Change them so that they will clearly see how much you love them when you sent Jesus to die for them. Bring them to the point when they will repent of their sins, openly place their faith in Jesus and serve Him for the remainder of their lives. Amen*

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### **CORPORATELY** – praying with a couple of friends (preferably of the same sex), or in a small group

Any group of concerned friends, who are able to maintain confidentiality, can do this.

It is important for each of you to nominate 2 or 3 persons and to agree to pray for them and for the relationships you have with them. These small prayer meetings should be specific, to the point and regular (Weekly, Fortnightly or Monthly). They could commence with a short reading from a gospel or epistle without any comment or explanation. Simply pick up reading where you left off last time.

Here are some possibilities.

- A 15 minute prayer time mid-week, in the early morning, before work (at Macca's?).
- A 15 minute prayer time before/after training for your sporting team, or before/after church.
- Two friends praying over the phone.
- Join with 2 or 3 other Christians who live nearby and pray for your neighbours.

Prayer Points could be:

- That God will have mercy on us and that his Name will be honoured in our community by people yielding to the Lord Jesus.
- Your own holiness and the struggle to live as a faithful Christian in your family, neighbourhood and workplace.
- The ability to be sensitive to the different responses that non-Christians have to Christians.
- That God will use our own weak efforts to bring people to Christ.
- Helpful and appropriate events to which our non-Christian friends can be invited
- Our own readiness to commend the gospel no matter how awkward we may feel.

Remember that these prayer times are not gossip sessions. Neither are they another support group for Christians. Support is good, but these brief prayer meetings are specifically for evangelism.

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## **CONGREGATIONALLY** – praying in the church service or regular congregational meeting

(See the comments on 'Corporately' above)

Talk with your minister or pastor about praying for evangelism within the regular congregational meetings. Ask if specific mention could be made on any/all of the following points.

- That the church would be known for its "love for the saints and its faith in Jesus".
- That God's name would be honoured in the community
- That God would have mercy on the community and bring people to faith in Christ.
- That men and women would humbly turn from their sinful lives to be rescued from the wrath to come.
- That Christians would be good witnesses for Jesus in their daily lives.
- That the evil one would not draw people away to society's substitutes for God.
- That Christians would labour sacrificially to see the gospel proclaimed in their area.
- That Christians would learn more about their faith and how it impacts other religions.
- That churches might change their methods and programmes without changing the gospel.

Suggested prayers for congregational use:

*Almighty God and Loving Heavenly Father, we thank you for sending your son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to save us from our sins and to give us forgiveness and new life. Please pour out your Holy Spirit and turn the hearts and minds of those in our community to faith in Jesus. We ask this for the honour of your Name. Amen*

*Gracious Lord, we thank you for saving us. Please strengthen those who are preaching and teaching your Word in this area. Please open the minds of those who hear and help them to listen attentively to your Word so that they will repent and believe. Please bring many to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus. And give us courage that we might be faithful witnesses to Jesus. We ask it in His name. Amen*

*Dear God, thank your for your Word which brings new life. Please keep us from believing one thing in church but doing the opposite in our homes and community. Change and correct us, gently, so that we might be your faithful witnesses wherever we might go. Help us to know when to speak and when to keep silence as we follow the Master, Jesus. We ask this in His precious name. Amen*

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## RESOURCES

Peter O'Brien's Bible Studies from Ephesians at the 2006 CMS Summer School on prayer and the spiritual battle in which all Christians are involved is extremely helpful. Go to the CMS website [www.cms.org.au/branch](http://www.cms.org.au/branch) and download the full audio files to listen (No.7 is on this theme).

'Prayer and the Knowledge of God' by Graeme Goldsworthy is an excellent treatment of prayer and all Christians will profit from reading it. He particularly highlights how God wants us to pray as opposed to some of the ill-informed traditions that have grown up within the Christian community.

The 'Prayer Triplet' and 'Family Prayers' brochures from our Resource Catalogue are excellent.