

Praying for the felt needs of people

To pray for the felt needs of people, those things that people are struggling with from day to day in the 'real world', is one of the greatest privileges of Christians and one of the greatest opportunities to show people that we care for them and love them and that Jesus cares for them and loves them. Less than 10% of all people are at any given time ready for a conversation about Jesus Christ and their salvation, but nearly 97% of all people are at any given time ready that you can pray for them for their felt needs, problems and challenges that they experience at that specific point in time. Very few people will refuse a prayer and a prayer of blessing, especially if they have specific needs. This is also true for people from other religions like Hindus, Buddhists and Muslims. We want to encourage you to do this on a regular basis – pray for the felt needs of Christians and non-Christians with whom you have contact every day.

A few guidelines on how to do this:

1. Do not make it an issue. As you meet people and they share some of their needs, concerns, difficulties, problems, challenges, etc., simply offer to pray for them.
2. It is best if you can pray for them right there and then. Do not wait till you are at home before you pray. It is good for them to experience someone caring for them in prayer and it is good for you too, by having the courage to do so.
3. Ask the person if he or she would mind you praying for them and then pray a very simple prayer. Do it in a discreet way so that you do not embarrass the person. Do not pray in a loud voice and with much demonstration or many words.
4. When you see the person again after a day or a few days, ask how he/she is doing and whether there is any progress regarding the issue you prayed for. Maybe the door is open for you to pray with them again, or you can simply say that you will continue to pray, as the Lord leads you. At this point in time you can even give the person a Scripture verse to encourage him/her.
5. It is always good to pray a prayer of blessing when you pray with someone. Pray for God to intervene in the person's situation and ask God to bless the person. Often Christians are afraid that if we pray that God will bless someone we overlook their sin (in cases where people are living in sin). This is not so. When you pray that God will bless someone, you pray that God in His wisdom will come and convict that person of sin and that He will comfort, heal, re-direct and show them His ways.
6. So many people want to make use of such opportunities to 'lead the person to the Lord' (trying to save the person during or even before the prayer) – don't do it unless the Lord specifically directs you to do it. Just pray. God will work in His own way. People first need to experience genuine love and compassion before they will open up to the gospel of salvation. Most people only make a commitment to follow Jesus Christ after 8-11 positive contacts with Christians!
7. Make it a daily habit to pray for people. Listen to them. Seek out opportunities to 'apply' prayer to their felt needs.
8. You can also do more than just pray. When someone's car has broken down, offer to take the kids to school. If there is illness in the home, take some food or offer to do the laundry. There are just so many opportunities. We need to pray and do. Sometimes we cannot do anything for the person and then we just pray for them. At other times we can pray for them *and* do something that will show that we care for them.