

PRAYER GUIDE

Praying for your marriage and your spouse is a fantastic way to improve your marriage. We've put together this prayer guide hoping that you will see greater intimacy by practicing regular prayer for your spouse! Some key areas in marriage for seeking God's help and direction in prayer are detailed below:

COMMUNICATION

So often in marriage, we get into a "communication rut" by having the same conversations about the same things over and over. It may seem like a given, yet so many couples struggle in this area. We need to talk—with words—to one another. Daily heart-to-heart conversation is the cornerstone of true intimacy. Nothing replaces face-to-face conversation. Let's give our spouse our best attention, not a halfhearted glance while busy with a device.

Getting in the habit of talking regularly and having fun conversations where you continue to learn more about your partner helps build a foundation for the harder conversations that will inevitably pop up as you do life together.

Pray for a heart that yearns to listen and understand. Pray that God would help you see how to be pursuing your spouse through better communication. Then put this into practice! Ask your husband or wife how you could be communicating more deeply or more lovingly.

INTIMACY

God created sex. He created love. He created life. He created you, and He has a beautiful plan for your life.

The first picture of sex and marriage the Bible paints for us tells us that the couple was naked but felt no shame. This is a beautiful image of the vulnerability, trust, honesty, transparency, and intimacy that should create a healthy foundation for every marriage. God wants a husband and wife to be "naked" physically, spiritually, and emotionally with one another.

Sex isn't just a physical act; it's a sacred, spiritual act as well. Pray for a heart that longs to truly honor and please your spouse in the bedroom, and ask God how you could be loving him or her better. Then ask your husband or wife! This is a great time to practice communication.

WORK

Whether you're a stay-at-home parent or a successful businessperson, there will always be something else to do, some accomplishment or task left to pursue. But your spouse doesn't just want a bigger budget next year. He or she doesn't just want a perfectly prepared dinner every night. Your spouse wants you.

If you want your marriage to thrive, you must be willing to put your partner above your responsibilities in and out of the home. What "trophies" do you need to throw away to remind them and yourself what matters most? Your spouse and your kids should always know that there is no trophy on earth that you value more than you value them.

Pray that the Lord would help you see where you've been prioritizing things over your spouse. Confess these areas to God and to your spouse and ask for forgiveness. Pray that the Lord would help you prioritize your spouse over everything else.

FINANCES

So much marital stress can be traced back to financial stress. Whether you're rich or poor, developing a unified financial plan with your spouse can bring freedom and peace to your marriage. Jesus taught more about money than He talked about heaven and hell. He knew that a healthy view of money would be vital to developing a healthy view of life and marriage.

Summing up the Bible's many teachings on money into one statement could be, "Money is a good servant, but a poor master." If there's not peace in your marriage regarding finances right now, make a plan of action to start in a new direction. Pray that you would want to honor God with what He has given you to steward. Pray for a spirit of unity on how to spend money with your spouse. Don't live beyond your means. Refuse to allow financial stress (whether pressure from a lack of resources or greed from an abundance of resources) to rob you of joy and contentment. Work together to create goals for debt reduction and generosity. Ask God to show you ways to create a legacy for future generations through your finances, your faith, and your love for one another. Thank him for the providing what you have currently and ask him to bless you with more so that you can be a blessing to others.

MINISTRY

Am I making a difference? This might be the most important question you can ask yourself. No matter where you might be in your faith, God designed each and every one of us with a significant purpose on earth. Whether our contribution is big or small, each of us has something good to offer the world. We want to know that all the time and effort we put into our family, friendships, churches, charities, ministries, and work are achieving a greater purpose and making the world a better place.

As Christians, we know that anything we do that glorifies the Lord is eternally worthwhile and that serving together is also a great way to deepen your relationship with your spouse. If you aren't currently serving anywhere, pray that God would bring up opportunities for you and your spouse or your whole family to make a point of serving Him together.

For another resource that can help you develop a stronger bond with your spouse, check out *7 Days to a Stronger Marriage* by Dave and Ashley Willis.