

HOW TO PRAY FOR YOUR HUSBAND

(AND WHEN NOT TO)

www.JulieKGillies.com

The “Not To” Part (or, What I Learned When I Stopped Praying for My Husband)

Years ago God clearly told me to stop praying for my husband. And as contrary to scripture as that probably sounds, I did.

For about a year I did not utter a single prayer for him. And while I'm certainly not advocating that you cease praying for your husband (or anyone), I do believe that God sometimes leads us to do things that don't necessarily make sense initially. However, when we are led by the Holy Spirit and trust the Lord instead of leaning on our own understanding (see Proverbs 3:5), God moves.

Not praying for my husband for one year turned out to be the beginning of a breakthrough...for me. During that time, I learned:

My heart was truly selfish and self-centered. At the time, every prayer I prayed for my husband revolved around wanting something for myself. God not only wanted to expose my selfishness, He wanted my prayers for my husband to come from a pure heart--one that desired what God desired. He wanted me to pray according to His will, not mine.

My motives were often wrong. I had a picture in my mind of what I wanted my husband to be, and by golly, I was going to pray until that happened. Now part of that was good, because my husband did not yet know the Lord. And although God desired for my husband to give his heart to Him, my motives in praying for his salvation were more about how it affected my life instead of my husband's spiritual destiny.

I was immature. Because of this, when I prayed and did not see or sense change, resentment built. I didn't have an accurate understanding of God's timing, or appreciate that He often works behind the scenes. I also needed to grow in grace, allowing time for my prayers and the Holy Spirit to soften my husband's heart, instead of demanding that he get with the program now.

My reactions were sometimes completely wrong. Too often, I allowed my husband's bad reactions to trigger mine. And while God did not want my husband's words or actions to hurt me, the Lord gently showed me that my responses were just as wrong. It was incredibly difficult to apologize for reacting wrong when I felt that my husband's actions were far worse, but that's not how God saw it. I was the believer, and I was called to be like Jesus.

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The year I spent not praying for my husband allowed me to completely shift my focus away from his inadequacies and instead focus on the Lord and the work He was doing in my own heart. It also relieved the pressure I had placed on myself to personally usher my husband into God's kingdom. Yes, God uses our prayers, but He goes where we cannot go--into the heart-- and ultimately He does what we cannot do--brings godly change and transformation.

While not praying for someone (especially your spouse) for a year is probably unusual, that year turned out to be exactly what I needed, and I'm convinced my husband was spared untold distress. I learned serious respect for the Lord's ways and developed a deep desire to pray in agreement with Him--even when that meant not praying for a season.

When it was all over, my prayers started up again, only now they emerged from an entirely different perspective. Armed with a drastically changed perspective, attitude, and heart, I eventually began to pray for my husband again. When it was all over, my prayers started up again, only now they emerged from an entirely different perspective. God's.

And as long as I draw breath, my prayers will thus continue.

Below you'll find several scripture-based prayers to help you pray for your husband. May God strengthen, comfort and encourage you as you pray.

From my heart to yours,

Julie Gillies

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His Walk

Father, I pray that _____ will walk not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of mockers. But _____'s delight shall be in the law of the Lord, and on this law _____ shall meditate day and night. _____ shall be like a tree planted by streams of water which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf shall not wither, and everything he does shall prosper. (Psalm 1: 1-3)

Enable _____ to consider well the paths of his feet and let all of his ways be established and ordered aright. Cause him not to turn aside to the right hand or to the left, but to remove his feet from evil. (Proverbs 4: 26-27)

May _____ walk so as to please and gratify You, God (1 Thessalonians 4:1) May he walk, live, and conduct himself in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to You and desiring to please You in all things, bearing fruit in every good work and steadily growing and increasing in the knowledge of God. (Colossians 1:10)

Enable _____ to walk and live habitually in the Holy Spirit—responsive to and controlled and guided by the Spirit; then he will certainly not gratify the cravings and desires of the flesh. (Galatians 5:16) May _____ look carefully how he walks, living purposefully and worthily and accurately, not as the unwise and witless, but as a wise, sensible, intelligent man. (Ephesians 5:15)

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His Mind and Thoughts

Lord, Give _____ a desire to willingly cast his cares upon You, committing and trusting them wholly to You. Cause _____'s thoughts to become agreeable to Your will, and so His plans will be established and succeed. (Proverbs 16:3)

As a man thinks in his heart, so is he, Lord. Help _____'s thoughts of himself be accurate, balanced, and true. (Proverbs 23:7) May _____ be constantly renewed in the spirit of His mind, having a fresh mental and spiritual attitude. (Ephesians 4:23)

Lord, give _____ the mind of Christ, and hold the thoughts, feelings, and purposes of His heart. (1 Corinthians 2:16)

I pray that _____ will not be conformed to this world, but that he will be transformed and changed by the entire renewal of his mind. (Romans 12:2)

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Wisdom

Father, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, so I pray that the reverential fear and awe of the Lord will fall on _____ so that he can walk fully in wisdom. (Proverbs 9:10) I ask that _____ not be vague or thoughtless or foolish, but that he understands and firmly grasps the will of the Lord. (Ephesians 5:17)

Cause _____ to make his ears attentive to godly wisdom, and incline and direct his heart and mind to understanding. (Proverbs 2:2) May skillful and godly wisdom enter into his heart, and knowledge be pleasant to him. (Proverbs 2:10) I pray that _____ will be not wise in his own eyes, but that he will fear and worship the Lord, and turn entirely away from evil. (Proverbs 3:7)

I pray that sound wisdom and discretion will be life to _____, and a gracious ornament to his neck. (Proverbs 3: 21:22) May _____ hear instruction and be wise, and not refuse or neglect it. (Proverbs 8:33) Cause him to be a wise man who stores up knowledge in his heart. (Proverbs 10:14)

Help _____ learn to sense what is vital, and approve and prize what is excellent and of real value—recognizing the highest and the best, and distinguishing the moral differences. (Philippians 1:10)

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, grant _____ a spirit of wisdom and revelation—of insight into mysteries and secrets—in the deep and intimate knowledge of Him. (Ephesians 1: 17)

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Love

Father, May _____ be rooted deep in love and founded securely on love. Give him the power to grasp the breadth and length and height and depth of Your love for him, that he may really come to know—practically, through experience—the love of Christ, which far surpasses mere knowledge without experience. May _____ be filled unto all the fullness of God and become a body wholly filled and flooded with God Himself. (Ephesians 3: 17-19)

I pray that everything _____ does will be done in love, true love to God and man as inspired by God's love for us. (1 Corinthians 16:13) May the love of Christ control, urge and impel _____, (2 Corinthians 5:14) and may he always walk in love. (Ephesians 5:2)

Enable _____ to love me, his wife, as he loves his own self (Ephesians 5:28), and may his love abound yet more and more and extend to its fullest development in knowledge and all keen insight. (Philippians 1:9) Cause _____ to increase and excel and overflow in love for all people. (1 Thessalonians 3:12)

Thank you, Father, that Your love has been poured out in _____'s heart through the Holy Spirit Who has been given to him. (Romans 5:5)

Help _____ to love You, Lord, with all of his mind and heart and with his entire being, and with all of his might. (Deuteronomy 6:5) Thank you, God, that your love for _____ never fails. (1 Corinthians 13:8)

Finally, Lord, give _____ the desire to seek, inquire of the Lord, and may _____ crave You and Your strength, Your might and inflexibility to temptation, and seek and require Your face and Your presence continually, forever more. (Psalm 105:4)