

Couple Prayer Ideas

EPC Sem 22

Praying together can be very challenging. Prayer has often been a very private and personal experience, and working out a way to share praying together as a couple can feel strange to begin with. But it is worth working at, as prayer can truly bind us together in God's love and invites us into a special place of intimacy with each other and with Him.

The Importance of the Holy Spirit

God's Holy Spirit helps us to know what to pray for and how to pray together. Be open to listening to how the Spirit wants to work with you both to grow your own intimacy with each other and with God.

The Importance of Praise

Praise is so central to our relationship with God. It changes our perspective on God, and on the perspective we have about our lives and experiences. Praising God together is one of the easiest places to start to strengthen our spiritual connection with each other.

If your spouse doesn't feel ready to pray with you yet

- ♥ Show them gentle kindness, it is the Holy Spirit's job to prompt, not ours to push.
- ♥ Prayer is a way of showing concern for others. Ask your spouse what they would most like you to pray for them and then only pray out loud what they have requested.
- ♥ Do all you can humbly so that your behaviour cannot be interpreted as spiritual superiority. Avoid behaviour which can then leave your spouse feeling discouraged, as this can distance you from each other. Remember that the aim is for spiritual intimacy.

Confession

- ♥ Prayers of confession may be best made privately until you feel ready to share together.
- ♥ If your offence has been against your spouse, then praying for forgiveness from God in their presence may be quite healing.
- ♥ Be careful that your prayers are not used to hurt each other, and be aware of the importance of praying humbly, so as not to spiritually 'intimidate' the other person.
- ♥ There may also be a place for confessing with each other about the wrongs we have done to others, and being accountable to each other for working with God to find new ways to relate to others.

Questions to think about and perhaps talk about together:

- ♥ What are my concerns about praying together?
- ♥ What might be my spouses concerns about praying together?
- ♥ What might help make it easier for me to pray with my spouse?
- ♥ What might make it easier for my spouse to pray with me?
- ♥ How might God use prayer to help us grow closer to Him and to each other?

Silent hands prayer

This is one of the simplest of all prayers. Talk for a few minutes about each of your prayer concerns, praises and thanks. Then hold hands and silently pray for the other person. Squeeze hands after a few moments and say 'amen' together. It can feel so good to know that someone else is praying for us.

Sentence prayers

Prayer only needs to be simple. We can feel guilty if our minds drift during other people's long prayers! Just try praying one sentence at a time, and then let the other person pray once sentence. You could be guided by the ACTS (Adoration, Confession, Thankfulness and Supplication) model of prayer and pray one or two sentences each for each section of your prayer together. As you get used to the idea, you can pray one sentence at a time, but increase the amount of sentences you pray under each section.

Prayer book

Keep a journal of thankfulness to God. At the end of each day think of everything you want to thank God for and write it in a small diary.

In the morning, write down together the concerns you each have for the day that you would like the other person to consider in their prayers for you.

Prayer notice-board

Use a pin board or magnet board (even a fridge door will do!) and create a prayer notice-board, with a collage of prayer requests, praising thoughts, thanks, cards, photos, texts, answers to prayer, and any other clippings. If you like being creative – make a beautiful scrapbook of prayer together.

Use apps to create visual prayer lists

Create and share a mindmap of networks for prayer. Apps like XMind (www.xmind.net) are free. Put something like 'My network for prayer and empowerment' in the central space and create networks for your family, work, church, special prayer, outreach etc around with the names of those you are praying for. Share this with your spouse.

Conversational prayer

These are like sentence prayers in that you pray a few sentences at a time and then stop and let the other person pray. Try to follow each other's ideas and link your prayers together as if you were having a conversation with each other and with God.

Prayer cards

Buy some index cards in four different colours:

e.g. Yellow – Praise; Blue – confession; Green – Thanks; Pink – Prayer

Take a few cards each and write different sentence prayers according to the colour-coded theme of the card. Lay them out together on the floor in rows of different colours and then take it in turns to read the cards out aloud as you pray together. Alternatively, lay them out and read them silently together whilst holding hands. Or shuffle the cards and deal them into two piles. Take a pile each and arrange them into a prayer sequence. Read each prayer aloud to each other.

Blessings on each other

Try praying a simple blessing on each other when you part and meet and get up and go to bed. Create your own words and traditions for doing this – such as kissing each other on the forehead or hand before you say the words. Or creating a special blessing gesture or signal so that you can secretly bless each other, or show that you are praying for each other.

Try Numbers 6:25, 2 Corinthians 13:14, or 1 Thessalonians 5:23 for starters.

Pray for specific things for each other, and other people

Try and be as specific as possible when you pray for each other, and rejoice together when prayers are answered, even if the answers were not what you were expecting or hoping for. It can be helpful to take a broad and eternal perspective on answers to prayer at times, and to keep in mind that God works all kinds of things that look messy to us into His beautiful plans.

Prayer reminders

Carry a small thing with you that reminds you to pray for each other when you are apart, such as a button, piece of ribbon, or small, significant and symbolic item.

Prayer times

Pray for each other at a certain time of the day every day, by setting an alarm on your watch, mobile phone, or electronic diary. Perhaps you could text or email each other your prayers, or even try praying together as an online MSN conversation.

Prayer 'consequences'

Write out your prayers on pieces of paper and pass them back and forth, adding a sentence at a time and folding over the top of the page. Follow the same sequence of themes and prayer requests and then read each prayer out as you pray together. Each prayer has then been created by both of you.

Daily prayer menus

Instead of praying for your entire prayer request list every day, it might be helpful to group your prayer request lists in some way, and pray for one category at a time. So you might pray for your family members one day, colleagues and work issues the next day, overseas issues and workers the next day, then local church and community issues, etc.