



# Life Principles Notes™

## A Life-Changing Prayer

### Summary:

**How do you respond when people ask you to pray for them?** Do you respond with confidence? Or do you fear your prayers will be inadequate? In the first chapter of Colossians, the apostle Paul gives us a powerful model for intercession. It can be used to lift anyone up to the Lord—your child, your spouse, a family member, or a friend. Because the words come straight from the Word of God, we can be confident the Father

will answer it. When you pray sincerely and consistently, this life-changing prayer has the power to rescue others from all kinds of difficulty, hardship, and destruction. Of course, it does not guarantee a problem-free life for those you love. But through it, God can use you to have an eternal impact on those around you.

**Key Passage:** Colossians 1:7-14

### Scriptural Principles:

What are the essential elements of this life-changing prayer? Ask God that the person would . . .

#### 1 “Be filled with the knowledge of God’s will” (Col. 1:9).

This first request is the foundation for the rest of the prayer. Our heavenly Father desires to reveal His will if we listen to Him and obey. Every believer needs to know the Lord’s unique plans for their lives, such as what career to pursue, whom to marry, and which job to take.

The apostle Paul prayed for the early church to have “spiritual wisdom and understanding” (Col. 1:9). Christians need God’s direction and perspective for daily decisions as well as major ones. Knowing the Lord’s will prevents us from wasting our time, talents, and treasure.

If you’re a parent, don’t expect God’s will to correspond to your dreams for your son or daughter. Over the years, a number of young men have told me, “I believe that God is calling me to preach, but I know my mother and father don’t approve.” The good news is that most parents support their son’s decision in the end. Parents, spiritually minded young people need the opportunity to pursue God’s best for their lives. Allow your child the freedom to follow the Father’s direction even if it differs from what you had planned.

#### 2 “Walk in a manner worthy of the Lord” (Col. 1:9).

Ask God to help this person live his or her life in a way that honors the Lord’s name. When we call ourselves Christians, the unbelieving world has a right to expect us to be different. Our conversation, character, and conduct should be obedient to God.

When a person meets you, they also encounter our Savior. You might ask, “How does that work? I don’t physically look like Jesus.” No, but if you’re saved, the Lord Jesus Christ lives inside you through the Holy Spirit. It’s His character that flows out of you as you relate to others. If you ask Him, He’ll guide you into right choices and convict you of sin. With His help, you can make a difference in the lives of the people around you.

### 3 Be “bearing fruit in every good work” (Col. 1:10).

A Christian’s life should have an eternal impact. That means we need to make time in our schedules to serve the Lord. I want to challenge you to evaluate whether you are making a positive difference in the lives of others. When your life comes to an end, what will you have accomplished? We have a responsibility to live so that our lives impact the lives of those around us.

Some of the most productive people I’ve met are Wycliffe missionaries. They spend a lifetime hidden in a remote area, translating the Bible into the language of the indigenous people. Through their work, entire tribes hear the gospel of Jesus Christ and experience His forgiveness. Not all of us are called to be a full-time preacher or a missionary. But God wants to show you how to use the talents and gifts He’s given you.

### 4 Be “increasing in the knowledge of God” (Col. 1:10).

This is a request that the person would continue to grow in their relationship with God. Just as a married couple knows each other better after years and years together, we should also grow more and more intimate with the Lord.

What are the practical steps to growing closer to Father? The first one is to study the Word of God. By reading the Bible, we learn about the character and ways of God. Second, apply what you learn. The Holy Spirit will teach you how to take it to heart. Third, observe the consequences of your choices. We all make mistakes, but it’s wise to learn from them. You’ll quickly see that it is foolish to disobey God.

### 5 Be “strengthened with all power” (Col. 1:11).

Ask God to help the other person lean on Him rather than their own ability. If you are interceding for a believer, that person has the strength of the indwelling Holy Spirit. He enables us to do the Lord’s will.

Let me give you an example. One Saturday, I was miserable because of the spring pollen. My allergy medicine had not helped at all. I knew there was no way I could preach the next day unless something changed. Right before bed, I prayed, “God, You’ve laid a message on my heart, and I know it’s Your will that I preach it.” I desperately needed His strength and healing. The next morning, I woke up feeling much better, and I was able to preach without any problems. The Father loves to move on our behalf when we realize our helplessness and cry out in faith for His power.

### 6 Be “joyously giving thanks to the Father” (Col. 1:11-12).

Pray that even in hardship, the person would be thankful. Why can a Christian be joyful and grateful despite adversity? He or she trusts that the Father will work a blessing through suffering. God uses hardship to build character in the lives of His children. In other words, this prayer doesn’t guarantee that every moment of our lives will be problem free. But it will help us become more Christlike. We will grow in our patience for others. Our desires will be purified. And beautiful character has an attractiveness that never fades.

## Conclusion:

Recently, an 11-year-old girl prayed for me. It was one of the most beautiful and powerful prayers I’ve ever heard from a child. She even had a scripture reference for each request she made. This young lady was a prime example of how praying, godly parents can influence their children. At 11, she already has an awesome prayer life, a love for God, and a passion for His Word. And she is making an eternal impact.

Do you want your loved ones to have an intimate, powerful relationship with the Lord? Do you desire for them to serve Him passionately and faithfully? It all begins with intercession. Regularly lift them up to Him, and then trust that God will work in their lives in a mighty way. Your heavenly Father will be faithful to fulfill His Word. 🙏

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