

7 Ways to Pray in Difficult Times

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By Kim Butts

We all know that in good times, it seems easier to pray. Our prayers flow from a place of gratitude and peace, thankfulness and joy. Yet, in difficult or painful times, it is much harder to press into the Lord in prayer. We know in our heads that God is the place we should go whether our circumstances are good or bad; however, sometimes we can feel paralyzed with fear, doubt, anger, disbelief, sadness, uncertainty, and a wide range of other emotions depending upon the situation.

Sometimes, it is only out of the absolute desperation of our heart that we overcome the paralysis and run to the Father...even if that running involves no words at all. There are times when it is all we can do to come into His presence and just sit in our pain, loneliness, fear, or whatever emotion is overtaking us. But one amazing truth about God is that our hearts can cry out in the silence...and God still hears. This is a key principle of prayer that we must always remember: God is always there! He is present with us continually.

Be assured, His word says that He will never leave us or forsake us (Deuteronomy 31:6). He will not leave us in this difficult place unless we insist on staying there. If we seek Him with all of our heart, we will find Him (Jeremiah 29:13). He longs to comfort us and sit with us in the midst of our

trial. His will, plan and purposes are unfolding in His perfect timing even when it doesn't seem this way to us.

Here are some specific ways to pray during difficult times, as well as when any trial comes your way, and they will:

1. **Pray that God will be honored and glorified, whatever your circumstance, even if you have to suffer or go through a difficult time:** "...and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me" (Psalm 50:15). "In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith – of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire – may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed" (1 Peter 1:6-7).
2. **Love and pray for people who cause harm or suffering to you, or to others:** "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you'" (Matthew 5:43-44).
3. **Pray for God to show you what He needs you to learn in the midst of difficult times:** "He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way" (Psalm 25:9).
4. **Give thanks to God in the midst of whatever you are walking through:** "Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). **Important note:** He does not say to give thanks *for* your circumstances, but to give thanks *in the midst* of them!
5. **Pray that God will help you to be faithful instead of fearful when trials come:** "Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him" (James 1:12).
6. **Pray that God will help you to be a light in the**

darkness to those who don't yet know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior: "In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). When people see the way you walk through difficulty, they will want to know where you draw your strength from!

- 7. Give thanks to God because He has overcome the trials and troubles of the world:** "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

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