

4 Ways to Encounter Christ in Prayer



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by [Kim Butts](#)

I recently came across the term “Christ-encountering prayer” through an article by Fred Hartley entitled, “A Praying Church Is a Missional Church” in [Prayer Connect Magazine](#). This concept grips my heart and had me asking the question, “What does Christ-encountering prayer look like in my life?” Heading to my trusty thesaurus, I came across some intriguing synonyms for “encounter” which stimulated some thoughts that describe ways to experience Christ-encountering prayer. Let’s take a look together:

Meeting – Prayer allows us to meet with Christ in the same way that Jesus met with the Father while on earth. He went to lonely, solitary places to key in on the voice of the One who continually instructed Him as He functioned in the realm of the flesh: “Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless *it is* something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner” (John 5:19). What would your prayer life look like if you sought the activity of God in all things? Perhaps we could frame our prayer something like this: “Father, I can do nothing apart from You! Help me to see what You are doing around me so that I can take part in the activity of Your kingdom!” There is another kind of meeting with Jesus that is happening all over the earth...as God’s people intercede for those who have yet to know Him, the Father is moving through dreams and visions. Many times in closed nations, the only missionary that can get through is a prayer missionary. Continually, there are reports of Muslims who are responding to Jesus because they have encountered Him in a dream or vision. “Lord Jesus, may the prayers of my heart for those who are lost go places I could never dream of going physically. May You send dreams and visions in response to my prayers so that Your glory will be known throughout all the earth!”

Come across – Sometimes, in the ordinary moments of our lives, we come across the activity of God. It isn’t an intentional seeking-after, but more of an awareness that there is something of spiritual significance that has crossed our path. If we are too busy to notice, we may never have any unexpected and serendipitous times of prayer. “Lord Jesus, help my spiritual eyes and ears to be continually aware of Your activity and Presence, so that whenever my heart comes across something that intersects Your purposes, I will be aware that Your Spirit is stirring me to seek Your face.”

Bump into – At first glance, I thought this was a lot like

“come across”; however, as I began to ask God what this might mean in a different context, I believe He gave me an interesting insight. Sometimes we casually come across something as we are aware of our surroundings and what may be up ahead of us...and other times we literally bump into a situation unexpectedly where prayer is needed immediately. Perhaps the most frequent occurrence of this is when a person is in need of a touch from Jesus that He wants to give through us! “Gracious Savior, when I bump into someone I know, or even a complete stranger, whose situation or life is in need of You, compel me to pray for him or her right then, knowing they may not be able to intercede in that moment for themselves. May I encounter You in them and minister to them as I would minister to You! Give me courage to step into their need and to connect their need with Your power so that they might also have a Christ-encounter.”

Grapple with (wrestle, struggle, grasp, grip) – Sometimes Christ-encountering prayer is difficult, and we question the pain or the suffering we or someone we are praying for may be experiencing. To encounter Jesus in the midst of hurt, sorrow or grief is to allow His heart to intersect our struggle even when we are arguing with God or trying to deal with things on our own rather than in His strength. Relinquishing control often comes as we place our difficulty on His altar and allow Him to move in response to our cries for help. “Lord Jesus, there are times in my life and in the lives of others when tough times come and we don’t know what to do, but our eyes are upon You! Let me encounter You in the midst of hard things. Thank You that I can grapple with You and that You understand that in my frail flesh I struggle – even when I know Your character is to work in and through every situation I encounter. May that reality continually sink in to resolve my fear and fill me with the hope found only in You.”

There are so many more ways to have Christ-encountering prayer! He lives in us and lives to intercede for us. Since

He is within us, His intercession becomes our own.

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Biography

Kim serves as the Executive Director of Harvest Prayer Ministries which she co-founded in 1993 with her late husband, Dave (1953-2022). Her ministry involves teaching/training and consulting as well as writing and developing resources. She is content coordinator for HPM's teaching platform, PrayerU.com and also compiles and edits HPM's free daily devotional, [Connection!](#) as well as [Prayer Tip Tuesday](#).

Kim has written multiple books and has published articles in a variety of magazines and publications. She is a member of America's National Prayer Committee and serves as President of Gospel Revivals, Inc. (Herald of His Coming).

Kim has a BA in Psychology and a Masters degree in Spiritual Formation and Leadership.

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