

# Care Through Prayer

## (Prayer Question)

How can we care and reach out to those around us by asking people if we can pray for their needs?

### Scripture

Read the following story and note down anything that stands out to you about Jesus' interaction with someone in need.

Mark 10:46-52 (Jesus heals Bartimaeus)

How does Jesus interact with this person?

What does Jesus ask him? Why do you think he asks this?

### Story

A guy from our church would often collect his kids from school and whilst waiting for them to come out of the classroom he would get chatting and make friends with the other parents. He was keen to care for these friends, including sharing the good news about Jesus with them. However, conversations didn't naturally get on to Jesus and he felt awkward about forcing the conversation that way. He wanted to engage spiritually with these friends but any sudden mention of 'prayer', 'Jesus' or 'church' seemed to produce awkwardness in his interactions. Another believer then encouraged him to ask the simple question 'Is there anything I can ask God to help you with?' To his surprise many people reacted well to this question and seemed touched that he'd asked them. Sometimes he'd pray for them there and then, and at other times he'd pray in private for them. Over time it was clear that some were really quite open spiritually and he was able to share something deeper about his faith and the good news of Jesus Christ with them. Some went on to regularly engage in Bible stories with him.

Why do you think the question 'Is there anything I can ask God to help you with?' was received better in this story than the man's previous mention of 'prayer', 'Jesus' or 'church'?

What has been your experience of seeking to engage people in spiritual conversations?

## Shape

The following isn't so much a shape, as it is a key question:

# **IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN ASK GOD TO HELP YOU WITH?**

This question asks people if you can pray for them but in a language that doesn't contain any jargon or any words that may be loaded with negative religious connotations for them.

Getting into the habit of asking this question with neighbours, friends, classmates, family members, etc., can lead to some great spiritual encounters as God answers their prayers.

Seeing who responds positively to this question can also give you an indication as to their spiritual openness. It is often an indicator that they are a Person of Peace.

## So What?

The following exercise will familiarise you with asking the question: 'Is there anything I can ask God to help you with?'

Get into pairs and role-play a normal conversation between friends, work colleagues or social club members. One of you play the believer and the other play a not-yet-believer. At some point in the conversation the believer is to ask 'Is there anything I can ask God to help you with?' and respond to their answer (assuming it is favourable) by praying for them there and then or committing to pray for them privately.

This may seem awkward at first but it will help you prepare for doing it in real life.

Now reverse the roles and do this exercise again. Then form a pair with another person and do it yet again! The more you practice this question in a role-play setting, the more prepared you will be to ask it for real. It will become second nature before you know it.

If you are already familiar with asking this question as a Missional Community, then head out and do it for real. Decide on an activity that will get you all out socialising with people who do not yet know Christ, e.g. a volunteer clean up. Get into conversations with others, make friends and at some point in the conversation ask them, 'Is there anything I can ask God to help you with?' Then pray for anything they ask for. Who knows what People of Peace you might find by doing this.

## **Grow Further**

### **Memory Verse:**

James 5:16

'Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.'

### **Other Bible passages:**

- Matthew 7:7-8
- Luke 18:1-8
- James 5:13
- 1 John 5:14-16

### **Other resources:**

*Care Through Prayer* - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W12pvE1Mnxs>