

When All You Can Do Is Pray

*Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you...
(1 Samuel 12:23).*

Have you ever told a friend in need, "All I can do is pray", as if it would really be better if you could perform some action rather than JUST pray? Sometimes if you are near the loved one, it is possible to help in tangible ways - shopping, cooking a meal, picking up children from school, babysitting, cleaning their house, etc. Often prayer becomes an addendum to what we can DO. It is when we are not near the one we are concerned about, we might say, "All I can do is pray."

Lest you think that praying is secondary or not enough, hear the testimonies of these men of God.

George Mueller

George Mueller, a 19th century English evangelist and founder of orphanages, was known to have kept a detailed journal of his prayers. One page was devoted to his prayer and another to the answer. Over his lifetime, he calculated that fifty thousand of his requests had been answered.

R.T. Kendall

I have been conscious of many people praying for me over those twenty-five years. One gets a sense of being borne "on eagle's wings." All over Britain, I had total strangers say to me, "I pray for you every day," or "I pray for you every Saturday evening - or Sunday morning." This was almost overwhelming. I sensed a sovereign overruling of grace and prayer more times than I can count, which enabled me to prepare and preach sermons. I attribute this to the prayers of God's people.

Notice that R.T. Kendall (who served as pastor of the great Westminster Chapel for twenty-five years) did what he could to prepare his sermons and followed through with his commitment to preach them. It was the prayers of others that gave him the sense of being borne "on eagle's wings."

Bill Gaither

When we're on the road we usually have about fifteen people on stage with us. I'm sure they get tired of my calling them all around before the concert every night and hearing me say, "Focus, focus. Why are we doing this? Let's remind ourselves again why we do this.".... One night I simply said, "Let's pray," and didn't close until the usually vocal ones had finished praying and there had been enough awkward silence to start bringing out some of the others.

When you wait, you are often rewarded. From here and there came heartfelt prayers from some who had always let someone else do the praying in the past. And the longer I waited, the more open and sincere and vulnerable the prayers became. Soon people were confessing bad attitudes, frustration, impatience, homesickness. Something was happening. We were getting our eyes on Jesus, and God was pointing out our failures. We were drawn close in a special way, and the concert that night was

one of the best we'd had in a long time. How much better that is than a hastily called minute of prayer where somebody thanks God for the opportunity and asks Him to bless us. That's okay, but it's not enough. We have to be broken before Him and focused on our purpose.

Bill Gaither and his team had prepared for their performance. They had written the music, rehearsed it and done all they could do to honor the Lord with their talents. It was their time in real prayer that brought a freshness to that's night's performance and a new closeness to each other.

Wesley Duewel

Dr. Duewel, missionary to India for nearly twenty-five years and the author of numerous books on prayer and missions, states:

Your prayer for world harvest can be more effective today because God in His sovereignty is coordinating world trends to make rapid fruitfulness available to His children. If we will put priority on prayer and obedience, this can be earth's greatest harvest time. Not every Christian is called to go. Not every Christian is able to make a substantial financial contribution to the work of Christ's kingdom. But there is no limit to what any Christian may accomplish through prayer!

Oswald Chambers

Consider, with Oswald Chambers, the importance that Christ places on prayer.

It is Christ . . . who also maketh intercession for us . . . The Spirit . . . maketh intercession for the saints. Romans 8:34, 27. Do we need any more argument than this to become intercessors— that Christ “ever liveth to make intercession”; that the Holy Spirit “maketh intercession for the saints”? Are we living in such vital relationship to our fellow men that we do the work of intercession as the Spirit-taught children of God?

John Bunyan

Both John Bunyan and A. J. Gordon have been credited with saying, "You can do more than pray after you have prayed, but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed."

The Apostle Paul

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus". "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (Philippians 4:6-7; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

God is the only One who can accomplish what is really needed. The best thing you can do is pray.