

## The Bond of Prayer

When I was raising my children, I often prayed for them as I drove to work. When we were apart, especially when problems aroused my love and concern, prayer was a way of reaching out to them.

But one particular morning, I realized that when we pray for someone from our hearts, we relate to them on a deeper and more basic level than we usually do.

For instance, when I would pray for my kids during those growing-up years, I didn't think of them as children, or in terms of their sometimes-annoying, childish ways. I thought of them as souls, as fellow beings before God, as friends and equals. My greatest desire for them was God's highest good. I longed for them to know the same satisfying relationship with Him that He had planted in me. That is still my greatest desire and deepest longing for each of them.

As I pray for them, the bond between us is Christ's own love – His love active within me. I love God, and I love my children, and in prayer this love reaches out to both God and them, seeking to draw them together.

I believe that kind of prayer is an example of the teachings in Ephesians, chapters 5 and 6. There we are told that all of our relationships should be "in Christ": we react to others as if we are reacting to Christ Himself, and our love for Him is expressed in the way we treat others. Praying for others helps make this a reality. My love for Christ reaches out to embrace and include those for whom I am praying.

This is what He wants us to do, not just with our immediate families, but with others around us. He wants us to love Christ and love others enough that our hearts seek to draw them to Him, that they might share our relationship with Him. This often begins with prayer, but if our prayer is from the heart, we will love them through words and deeds as well.

In this way, Christ's love works to unite us all in Him – each one drawn to Christ, and each one drawing others to Him.

But the bond of prayer doesn't end there. Remember, Jesus prays for us. He mentions you and your loved ones by name, speaking with His Father heart to heart. If praying for others arouses your love for them, imagine what He must feel for you. Imagine how He seeks to draw you into His intimate relationship with His Father. Think of it: we have actually come to share in their love for each other.

As we let Christ live in us, His love can be the beauty of each friendship, each marriage, each family, each relationship. This is how He has planned for us to live. And eventually, His love will unite us fully with Him, with each other, and with all creation.

What a wonderful way to spend eternity!

*Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love.  
Love one another, just as I have loved you (John 15:9, 12, NASB).*

Hymn: [Prayer of Intercession](#)

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