

The Power of Prayer

Stories from the Middle East

Shared prayer warms God's heart. This is true because God's goal for humanity is to unite us in Christ. Praying with Muslims is a way of inviting Jesus into the conversation, and praying with fellow believers strengthens our faith and love. The following stories are examples of the power of prayer:



Karen, a MECO worker serving in Lebanon with her family, describes situations where she has seen the evidence of God touching lives through prayer.

Praying for the lonely

Aroub* is a Muslim woman who has chosen to follow Jesus. Estranged from her husband, she faces the daunting prospect of raising her son on her own. The only work she can find is menial and poorly paid, and because of her faith her family will not help her. I see Aroub frequently and most times she asks me, "Are you still praying for me?" She claims my prayers encourage and sustain her. Praying with her elicits effusive gratitude from her. God has chosen to save Aroub and to live in her, and our fellowship together in Jesus brings me closer both to God and to one of His handpicked daughters.

"He remembered that brief prayer as a milestone of his journey to Christ."

Praying together in grief

My husband's father was diagnosed with cancer. Many people around the world prayed for him, but the prayers that meant the most were those of some Arab brothers who have lost their own fathers. Their pain mingled with ours. Although I felt far away from my father-in-law, I knew I had God's family around me.

Praying opens doors

An evangelical school in Lebanon employs many teachers from other religions. Daily staff prayers are open to all, and some of the Muslim teachers join with the Christians in asking God's blessings on the school and praying for the students. Praying together opens the door for candid discussions of spiritual matters, and teachers from a variety of backgrounds have begun to study God's word.

Praying as a family has impact

A Muslim boy many years ago visited the home of some Christian workers and stayed for lunch. He was impressed with the simple,

earnest, and relaxed way in which his host family gave thanks before the meal. As an adult he remembers that brief prayer as a milestone on his journey to Christ.

"Are you still praying for me?"

Praying softens attitudes


"You are a foreigner, and you are praying for our country? Wow!" It is tempting for expatriates to criticize and complain. Prayer is a far more constructive and humble alternative, one that affirms God's love toward and our solidarity with those we've been called to serve.

Praying demonstrates the reality of a relationship with the Lord

Samr* was teaching the Qur'an to a group of devout Muslim women. To illustrate the importance of the Qur'an she asked, "If God hadn't commanded us to pray, who would pray?" A chorus of answers came back from the women, in unison: "No one!" Ritual Muslim prayers are often viewed, even by very religious Muslims, as a burdensome duty. Yet there are many who make every effort to be faithful and sincere in their prostrations five times daily since they consider themselves God's slaves. Praying in eager trust can be a living demonstration to Muslims of an alternative relationship with God as beloved yet obedient children and as co-workers with Christ.

Praying focuses us on others needs

Sometimes I get tired of hearing the prayer call blasted out five times every day from local mosques. It feels as though someone is trying to brainwash me. Rather than grumble about 'noise pollution', some believers in lands dominated by Islam take the call to prayer seriously, and pause to pray that Muslims will meet the Lord Jesus. The prayer call becomes a reminder of the spiritual needs of the people around us, and our purpose for living in the Middle East.

Throughout the Middle East, people are talking with God, and God hears and answers. He's got excellent hearing! So wherever you are, you can join the conversation by praying for the people of the Middle East. There is indeed power and unity in talking to our Father! 



Action!

You can join millions of Christians around the world by participating in the largest ongoing prayer focus from August 11 - September 9, 2010.

Why not order a copy of the '30-Days of Prayer for the Muslim World' prayer guide?

Find out more by visiting www.30-days.net/order



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