

Praying for **FRIENDS AND** **LOVED ONES**

By Billy Graham

How to pray for friends and loved ones who need Jesus Christ in their lives

As Christians, we often pray for the sick, for each other, and for our nations. Many regularly pray for “the lost,” but we should also pray by name for specific “lost” people. In the familiar parable that Jesus told about the lost sheep (see Luke 15), the shepherd did not go out to see if he could find just any stray sheep he might come across. He went searching for a particular sheep. Pray that way for specific “lost” people.

We may pray that a person will find God, but Jesus said it the other way around—He said that He came *“to seek and to save the lost”* (Luke 19:10, ESV). Jesus does the seeking, and the Holy Spirit opens a person’s heart. That’s what we should be praying for.

One early convert to Christ was a businesswoman in Ephesus named Lydia, a dealer in fine fabric. The Bible says God *“opened her heart to respond to the things spoken”* (Acts 16:14, NASB). We may pray for someone to turn to God, but our efforts will have little effect and the person will not make a decision to turn without the Holy Spirit. There is no other way to get an unsaved person to respond. It took me years to understand this.

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Start With People You Know

- ➡ Look around and identify friends, neighbors, co-workers, fellow students, and family who do not know Jesus Christ as their Savior.
- ➡ Write their names on the list below.
- ➡ By praying for them—not once or twice, but persistently—you are taking the key first step toward reaching them with the life-changing Gospel.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Would you commit to connecting with one or two other people each week to pray fervently and specifically for those people in your life who do not know Jesus as their Lord and Savior?



20 Hopewell Way NE, Calgary, AB T3J 5H5
BillyGraham.ca • 1-800-293-3717
BillyGraham.ca/social

