



Prayer and the laying-on of hands for a sick family member

By Brother David Jardine

Prayer in the Family

I have just recently begun to discover how exciting and how powerful prayer in the family can be. So when I am asked to go and pray for someone who is sick at home, I request that as many members of the family as possible come along. I then invite them to join me in prayer and the laying-on of hands. Normally people would be very shy about this, but when I assure them that I will do all the praying out loud they are usually happy to co-operate. They simply have to support me in silent prayer, inviting the peace of God and the power of God and the healing of God to come into their sick relative.

The Power of Group Prayer

Jesus said, “If two of you agree on earth about any request that you have to make that request will be granted by My heavenly Father”. I think Jesus was saying that if a group of people pray, and there is a spirit of unity in the group, that prayer can be much more powerful than when someone prays alone. This has certainly been my experience when family members have joined me. Asking them to pray silently with the laying-on of hands has been the key. I then ask them to try to meet every day, if possible, to pray for their sick relative in this way. Normally they can do this on a daily basis, whereas I can only come occasionally, especially if I have to travel a distance.

Children's Prayers

It is good if some children in the family can join in these times of prayer. Children are much more trusting than adults, and their prayers can often be very powerful.

Why the laying-on of hands as well as prayer?

Because this was one of the methods of ministry used by Jesus. In the ministry of healing we believe that when we pray the power of God is released, and when we pray with the laying-on of hands the power of God is released in a special way.

How should we lay on hands?

Normally hands are placed gently on the person's head, or on their shoulders or arms. Indeed, if there is a large group of people praying, and the person is sitting or lying, hands may be placed gently on many different parts of the body. The laying-on of hands can also be applied directly to the affected part of the body, provided this is not a cause of embarrassment.

Praying at the same time every day

It's a good idea if the family can manage to pick the same time every day to pray. Then they can invite friends to join them at that time wherever they happen to be. I usually suggest that, if possible, they go for ten to nine in the evening, to ten to ten, in order to avoid the news on

television. Friends praying in the background at this time can be a very powerful support.

Effects of this type of prayer within the family

It can help to bring the family closer together. Also on occasions, when some family members may have drifted away from Church and possibly from God, this can be a spiritually renewing and uplifting experience for them.

Special occasions for the family to join in prayer

1. When someone is dying it can help to create a real atmosphere of peace if the family are prepared to take it in turns to pray silently at the bedside.
2. When the wife is pregnant, she and her husband can join daily to pray with the laying-on of hands for the unborn child. Research has shown that this can benefit the child's health and also help to give a more peaceful nature in later life.
3. Children with special educational needs and disabilities - if the family are prepared to pray on a daily basis for any of the children who have special educational needs and disabilities, in two or three years this can bring a great improvement for welfare and quality of life. God has a special love for children (Matthew 19:14), pray His blessings over them.

Silent Prayer

The key to all this type of prayer that I have been discussing is that it is done silently. In the Western World we are very shy about praying for one another in the family. But when we know that we do not have to pray out loud—we just have to lay on hands and silently invite the peace of God and the power of God and the healing of God to come into the person—that can help us to lose our inhibitions. And the benefits in body, mind and spirit can be enormous. So put aside your shyness and get on with praying for anyone in the family who is sick.

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