

4 Ways to Use Your Eyes in Prayer

When I was a young mom with four kids under the age of six, I felt guilty that my prayer life didn't measure up to what I thought it should look like.

Looking back now, I realize God just wanted *me*. He wanted to be with me. He wanted me to call out to Him—to need Him, to enjoy Him, to talk with Him, to share my heart with Him, to have a relationship with Him.

It wasn't about the doing—but the being. He cared more about my heart than my words, time, or acts of service. He affirmed this in 1 Samuel 16:7 when He spoke to Samuel: "The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

I love the way the Bible refers to our heart having eyes. (See Ephesians 1:18.) It helps me understand prayer when I think of using my eyes to look at God, myself, circumstances, and God's ability to do the impossible. Here are four practical ways we can use our eyes in prayer:

- Look up. Look at God. Praise Him for who He is. Look at His attributes and His character. When we start with a

focus on God, He becomes greater and our circumstances become much smaller. Praise defeats the enemy.

- Look within. Look at my sin and confess it. The only way to be filled with the Spirit is to empty myself of me. There is something powerful about confessing our sins out loud.

- Look around. Look at all the things around you to be thankful for (past, present, future). We can't be anxious and thankful at the same time. Look back at the specific things you prayed for and thank God for answering in His perfect way.

- Look out. Look at Jesus standing before you, saying, "What's on your heart today? Who are you worried or concerned about? Where do you need My help?" He wants us to ask Him. Use Scripture. Put your name, or the name of someone in need, right into the verse below. Be specific. Believe Him. Your faith is what pleases God and moves Him to action.

Join the apostle Paul in this prayer for the eyes of your heart to be fully engaged: "I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.

I pray that *the eyes of your heart* may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you"

(Eph. 1:17–18, emphasis mine).

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