

Divine Prayer Partners

Theme Introduction

When I announced my news to family and friends one Easter Sunday, I was puzzled by their response. As a six-year-old, I heard the story of the resurrection in my Sunday school class that morning, and for the first time the invitation to accept Jesus as Savior made sense to me. I eagerly raised my hand and told my teacher that, yes, I wanted to embrace the resurrected Jesus and His wonderful gift.

When everyone gathered in our home later for Easter dinner, I told my joyous news: "Mrs. Gillson saved me today."

I was confused by the laughter. I was not expecting hilarity over the significant faith moment in my life. And—to be fair—they did rejoice after the snickers quieted down.

It was probably years before I understood why everyone was so amused. I knew the decision I made was real and true, but I didn't get the terminology right. I was certain of my newfound salvation through Jesus; I just didn't know how to say, "Mrs. Gillson led me to Christ."

I unknowingly assigned her a misplaced role in my faith journey. Gratefully, my innocent declaration did not change the reality and power of my true salvation in Christ alone that day.

Identifying Roles

We know from Scripture that each member of the Trinity plays a unique role in relation to the other, including each one's role in prayer. It's not unusual to mix and match ways to pray that include addressing all of the Trinity.

Perhaps you are like me: I start out my prayer addressed to my Heavenly Father. Then at some point I switch to addressing Jesus with concerns for healing or restoration. Then I end by asking for the Spirit's power to be at work in all things. When I'm finished, I've managed to address all three members of the Trinity, but I'm not sure I'm on track with their assigned roles. It's not that I'm trying to invoke trinitarian theology—I just picture different members of the Trinity when I pray. And then I trust it all gets sorted out in the heavenly realms!

However, a deeper understanding of the Trinity's Divine Partnership with each other—and with us—will bring a richer prayer relationship. This issue of Prayer Connect explores that supernatural and eternal relationship—and includes ways we, as believers, are welcomed into this amazing partnership of prayer!

Dr. Mark Bird describes the unique roles of each member of the Trinity in salvation, and shows ways those roles translate to prayer. Although all of our prayers are ultimately directed to the Father (through Jesus and the Holy Spirit), Dr. Bird assures us that prayers addressed to other members of the Trinity are not discounted by this spectacular three-in-one mystery!

Alvin VanderGriend—describing the interrelated prayer activities of the Father, the Lord Jesus, and the Holy Spirit—discusses ways the believer intersects with that “cycle of prayer.” He highlights the role we play as active participants. In this issue we also include examples of trinitarian prayers that demonstrate the power of praying with full involvement of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Encouraging Partnership

Perhaps you've never explored the unique roles of the Trinity in prayer. We hope this issue encourages you to recognize the

joy and privilege of participating in this Divine Partnership. Your prayers, initiated by the Godhead, are destined to advance the Kingdom!

–CAROL MADISON is the editor of *Prayer Connect* magazine.