



Really Mean It When You Say You'll Pray

I was richly blessed and encouraged this week by an article written by Phil Ware, editor of Heartlight online magazine. Phil's devotional message was about three things we say to others when they are in need that might seem to be throw away lines, or even might come across as hurtful. I'm going to share part of the first subject with you, since in our Wednesday p.m. Bible study we are considering prayer right now.

Phil's three statements are:

- ***I'm prayin' for you.***
- ***It's all a part of God's plan.***
- ***You know everything works together for good.***



In future articles I might address the other two, but for this one let's address saying that we'll pray for someone. I've done it myself countless times. I've said I'll pray for someone, but not ever followed up with them to let them know I really did. Phil said this: *"Few things are as essential as our intercessory prayer for others who are hurting. However, this statement can feel like a throwaway slogan when the wounded friend doesn't know for sure that we are genuinely praying for them, and certainly when that friend doesn't know what we are praying for them. To keep our promise from merely being a throwaway slogan, we can do several things to bless them that are personal and encouraging."*

He suggested that we might: 1) Physically touch our friend and pray for them immediately so they know what we prayed and that we prayed. 2) That we could send the friend a note or email telling them when we prayed for them and what we prayed. 3) We can tell them that we will pray for them at a certain time every day, and ask them specifically what they would like for us to pray.

Phil said that Paul gave wonderful examples of such prayers. "When we follow his example, our slogan becomes more than a vague promise. We transform it into a partnership of grace — a commitment to support them regularly in their struggle to regain their hope and balance in life as we invite our Father in heaven to intervene. " Let's endeavor to pray for others in this caring, grace-filled way! —Keith