

## Prayer As Participation

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I have been listening to the book, "Praying Like Monks, Living Like Fools" by Tyler Staton, pastor, and national director of the 24-7 Prayer USA. In Chapter 7, *The Middle Voice--Pray as Participation*, Tyler Staton says that the assumption of prayer is that God's action always precedes my request. In other words, the aim is not to get God in on what I think he should be doing. Rather, the aim of prayer is to get us in on what God is doing, become aware of it, join it, and enjoy the fruit of participation.

Staton quotes author Eugene Peterson describing this type of prayer as praying in the middle voice. "When we pray in the middle voice, we neither manipulate God (active voice) nor are manipulated by God (passive voice). We are involved in the action and participate in its result but do not control or define it (middle voice). Prayer takes place in the middle voice." Tyler Staton goes on to explain how prayer as participation is about joining together in active partnership.

Contemplating this from the perspective of a parent, I realized that there is much more for me to discover about cultivate this partnership.

Relationships are not built on process, but on partnerships. When we pray in partnership, we focus on becoming aware of how God is already working in our

lives and the lives of our families. Participation prayer involves surrender, realizing that I am not in control or in a position to demand. Through surrender and authentically sharing every part of myself as a parent--my victories, my worries, my challenges and my hopes--I can gain clarity, perspective, and the power of synergy with our Heavenly Parent.

I remember when my boys went from the small Character Education preschool through 8th grade where I taught and saw them on a daily basis to a large Catholic high school, I was worried how they would handle the transition. Even though I hadn't heard about parental participation prayer, I prayed that they would find the kind of friends that would support the values--kindness, integrity, honesty and loyalty--that lead their dad and I to choose The Principled Academy as their first educational experience.

If you haven't thought of prayer in this manner, I encourage you to explore praying from the middle voice. Here are some prayer phrases for you to reflect upon:

- God, I pray that your love and kindness can be exemplified through my interactions with my spouse and my children.
- Today, I pray that my child can find the kind of friends that will bring out the best in him or her.
- Heavenly Parent, I know that my son/daughter is struggling right now to know where they fit in. I pray that they can have experiences today that help them see their own goodness.
- God, sometimes it is really hard to understand what is going on with my teenager. Open my eyes so that I can see him/her from your point of view.
- I know that it is hard for me to admit when I am wrong. Show me how to find the right words to say I am sorry and work towards loving my children unconditionally.
- Heavenly Parent, my adult son/daughter and their spouse seems to be having a difficult time right now. Give me insight into how I can lovingly support them without taking sides.
- Sometimes I really don't know what to say to my young adult son/daughter. I pray for wisdom in how to find ways to support and show my love and care.

"Praying Like Monks, Living Like Fools":

[www.amazon.com/Praying-Like-Monks-Living-Fools/dp/B09YBJDZYD](http://www.amazon.com/Praying-Like-Monks-Living-Fools/dp/B09YBJDZYD)

24-7 Prayer USA: [www.24-7prayerusa.com/](http://www.24-7prayerusa.com/)

To purchase my book on

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