

How To Pray for a Gang Neighborhood

If you are concerned and have a desire to see gang behavior decrease in your community, prayer is one strategy you can put into operation immediately. Every gang entrenched young person started out as a baby and is a member of someone's family. They were not born a gang member but chose that lifestyle for various reasons. They have the same needs as every youth growing up and can change by meeting Jesus Christ and receiving a new heart.

Satan mentioned to God that there was a hedge of protection placed around Job, his household, and everything he owned (Job 1:10).

- *Ask God to place a hedge of protection around youth to prevent them from joining gangs. Ask God to prevent youth from being used for Satan's purposes.*

David wrote that God would be a father to the fatherless, place the lonely into families (Psalm 68:5-6) and receive youth who have been forsaken by their families (Psalm 27:10).

- *Ask God to direct fatherless youth to godly families and to a church family that they can belong to.*

Solomon wrote that all children are born foolish (Proverbs 22:15) and are in desperate need of discipline. He said that a child left to himself will disgrace his mother (Proverbs 29:15). Many youth fail from a lack of counsel (Proverbs 15:22)

- *Ask God to act as a father who disciplines and counsels the young people who have been left to themselves.*

Solomon challenged his sons to give him their hearts or loyalty (Proverbs 23:26). By not wanting to be loyal or faithful to a family, young people's hearts will be stolen by someone else or given to the wrong person.

- *Ask God to prevent young people's hearts from being stolen by the wrong influences and that He would capture the hearts of those whose have.*

Solomon wrote that a wise man overtakes a city by pulling down the strongholds in which the people trust (Proverbs 21:22).

- *Ask God to cause youth with a gang mentality to lose hope in their strength as a gang and to feel weak and vulnerable.*

Abraham, Moses, and Samuel are three examples of individuals who interceded for those who were not in a right relationship with God. God told Ezekiel that He was looking for someone to "stand in the gap" (Ezekiel 22:30) and told Jeremiah to run throughout the streets of Jerusalem to find one person who deals honestly and seeks truth (Jeremiah 5:1) and He would forgive the city.

- *Ask God to use you to intercede and stand in the gap for the young people in the neighborhood you are praying for who have given themselves over to a gang mentality and lifestyle. Ask God to use your prayers of intercession to release his mercy and grace onto the lives of those separated from God.*

Jesus told us to pray for His will to be done and for His kingdom to come (Matthew 6:9-13). It is God's will or desire that all people be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (I Timothy 2:4).

- *Ask God to accomplish His will in the families you are praying for and that His kingdom's rule and influence would be felt in the neighborhood for which you are praying.*

The Holy Spirit used John the Baptist to minister in such a way that the hearts of the fathers turned to their children and the disobedient turned to the wisdom of the righteous (Luke 1:15-18).

- *Ask God to allow fathers to be ministered to in such a way that theirs hearts would turn back to their children and that disobedient children would turn to the righteous for wisdom.*

Jesus said that His followers are the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matthew 5:13-14).

- *Ask God to use you to preserve righteousness and hold back the spiritual darkness in the neighborhood for which you are praying.*

Luke wrote that the Lord opened the heart of Lydia to respond to Paul's message in Philippi (Acts 16:14).

- *Ask God to open the hearts of unbelieving gang members so they can respond to the truth that they already know.*

Paul wrote that the god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ (II Corinthians 4:4).

- *Ask God to open the spiritual eyes of gang members and allow them to see the glory of Christ and desire a relationship with Him.*

Paul said that his ministry was to tear down strongholds or false ideas and claims about God (II Corinthians 10:4-5).

- *Ask God to tear down the false ideas and destroy the evil mentalities that are being accepted by gang members.*

Paul taught that we as believers would struggle to stand our ground against the devil's schemes. He said there are spiritual forces at work in the heavenly realms and we are to take up His armor to stand firm (Ephesians 6:10-13).

- *Ask God to allow you to stand your ground as a believer so that the devil's schemes will not succeed in the neighborhood for which you are praying.*

HOW TO PRAY FOR A GANG

PRAYER GUIDE



"This is the confidence we have in approaching God, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us."

I John 5:14

Unsupervised youth who live in a gang neighborhood, grow up playing with others nearby and can turn into a "tagging crew" who plaque, tag, or draw graffiti. As they get older, gang members in the area sometimes recruit them through fear or threats. Other youth are looking for a new image and identify with a gang to feel protected or a part of something they consider to have more respect than their family. Some are only associating with the gang while others have officially joined it by being "jumped in" or initiated. Certain families have multiple generations involved in a gang whose children are born into it and grow up in that lifestyle.