



### The importance of praying in a relationship

A while ago, a young woman wrote to me asking me for help regarding her boyfriend. They were having a lot of problems and arguing a lot. After a long conversation on Messenger I asked her if she and her boyfriend had the habit of praying together, she said no. For that reason, I recommended her to practice a special prayer for couples, facing the Lord during a week. At the end of that time, the girl contacted me again and she was happy because her relationship had improved and she and her boyfriend weren't fighting anymore.

But what happened? Why did the fighting suddenly stop? Because of a very simple reason... by introducing prayers in their relationship, they opened their hearts and God was able to act in their lives in a better way. It's interesting because the moment they let God act in their relationship they became stronger. As the book Ecclesiastes 4, 12 says "One can only be defeated, but two can resist. Besides a rope of three threads won't break easily" The couple became stronger and they achieved to overcome their difficulties. This is also known as the relationship of three, where there is she, him and God. This is an unbreakable bond.

### What happens with many couples?

It seems that many catholic couples don't practice spirituality in their relationships. Maybe they engage in a life of prayer and generosity, each one on their side but doesn't do it often in a couple. This can lead to many mistakes! Not praying during a relationship can lead to something good ending. Why? Because a relationship without prayer is not sustainable, it is that simple. Temptations are a lot and without prayer, nothing is certain. Hence, prayer becomes a need. Prayer will hold a couple during moments of proof.

The largest problem is that we do not associate prayer with being in a couple. As if they were different things but this is not supposed to be like that. For example, when a young person says they will access a seminar, he is invited to discern its vocation by praying. But when a girl says she wants to have a boyfriend, what do we tell her? We will give her all kinds of advice but few are spoken about the importance of prayers. Can you imagine a marriage without prayers? It is very difficult. It is like going to a war unarmed. You can trust your strength but facing an

emergency, what will you do? You will certainly need support for facing danger. This help is provided by prayer.

#### Discerning in a couple of relationships

Let's not forget that a couple of relationships is the preparation needed to live the vocation of marriage, and like every other vocation, it needs discerning. Prayer is indispensable for getting to know God's plan in that stage because one thing is to be around someone you like and another thing is to place our wishes in God's hands. He knows which person will be good for your life, hence, he can help you choose correctly. Likewise, he will express when a relationship is no good for us.

#### Testimonies of love and praying

A friend told me that ever since he was a kid, he started praying for his future wife. What do you think happened? He found a good woman and now he is happily married. Also, some of the best marriages I've known, have that in common: a lot of praying. The time before joining their lives together, they prayed a lot. Also, I know a couple who are my friends and they pray the holy rosary every day, without minding the distance because they live in different cities. Besides, they both have plenty of activities during the day and, nevertheless they are not impaired to pray. Therefore, I truly believe that love is demonstrated by praying. Can you imagine a relationship in which you could pray the rosary every day?

#### The happiness formula

With these experiences, I can share a formula to be happy: praying during a relationship is equal to having a good discerning and therefore, setting a good base for having an excellent marriage.

There is no doubt, prayer is key! Every time I see a couple I recommend them to pray because I've seen how God acts. He transforms people in love and acts with strength.

#### What happens if your boyfriend is an atheist?

The ideal would be to be in a relationship with a catholic person. But if it is the case, we would have to motivate the other person to have a deep encounter with God. This is important because it is a way of evangelizing and giving testimony. The truth is it implies a big challenge. Speaking of God and praying with a person who does not believe is not simple and it requires spiritual maturity. Let not be the case where the attitude of the atheist transforms the believer and he/she ends up confused.

On the other hand, trying to include God in a relationship can be a motive of a breakup. This is a reality. We must be conscious of all it implies. We are not saying it is impossible to achieve. Some marriages began like this and are successful, what we want to say is that if a person does not believe, this is not enough to exclude God from the relationship.

Benefits of praying during a relationship:

1. It helps to live in celibacy. Prayer is fundamental for not falling into temptations during the relationship. Saint Paul II used to say “If we want to keep celibacy in a world that considers crazy to love with God’s love, praying is indispensable”. Couples who don’t pray are more at risk than those who do and overcome difficulties. Prayer always holds them.
2. Strengthens Community with Christ. “Prayer is Christian since it is communion with Christ” CIC 2565. It is a fact that prayer makes us find God. Therefore, if that relationship does not make us believe in God’s love and does not encourage you to be more authentic towards others, we better find somewhere else because it is not doing you good. Authentic praying will always lead us to find God and men.
3. It encourages peace, trust, and harmony in the relationship. Anyone who aspires to a relationship with peace must pray. Our sins and weaknesses cause a lot of trouble. Pausing in a moment of crisis to pray helps a lot. As Saint Theresa of Calcutta used to say “The fruit of silence is prayer. The fruit of prayer is faith. The fruit of faith is love. The fruit of love is service. The fruit of service is peace”.

At last, do you imagine couples praying more? How would their lives be? Sincerely, I think their love would be more filled with God and wouldn’t have senseless fights. This would transform their love in prayer and their prayer in love.