

Plan To Be There During Important Life Events

Observation ~ Imagination ~ Creative Question-Asking

Important life activities often lead someone to a heightened spiritual sensitivity. And a lot of thought goes into being at the right place at the right time to love someone during these times by praying, listening, or sharing from your heart and life experiences. It's not a scientific process.

Instead, there's a lot of intuition involved. But you can increase the accuracy of your intuition by thinking about things ahead of time and trying to imagine where people are at. If you can look at life experiences and try to remember when you've been in a similar place and draw connections with other people you've known who've gone through similar things, you can often guess at what people might be thinking or feeling right now or where they're headed. This gives you much-needed time to think and pray about how you can most naturally, effectively, and appropriately walk beside people during these important times.

Here are some questions that you may want to consider as you prepare to walk beside your friends and loved ones.

A Person's Past

- What major life events happened in her past?
 - What emotions might they have caused?
 - What questions about God might they have created?
 - What questions about the church might they have created?
- What was their family's relationship with church like when they were growing up?
- What was their parent's view of God?
- Is there any cause in the person's past for feelings of guilt or shame?

A Person's Present

- What's going on in the person's life right now?
- What are the person's stated feelings and beliefs about God?
- What major joys and major sorrows has the person recently experienced?
- What are the person's relationships like?
- What is her relationship to the church?
- What other Christians are in his life?
 - What do those Christians say about God?
 - How do those Christians' actions affect his view of God?
- What opportunities exist right now to meet the person's needs?
- What stories from your life or from the Bible might be relevant to the person's life right now?

A Person's Potential Future

- What season of life will the person soon be entering?
- What difficulties or tragedies could occur?
- What joys might be on the way?
- What emotions may those things bring up?
- What questions about God might emerge?

Preparing for Major Life Activities

- How can you be praying for the person's past, present, and future?
- What can you do so that you will be able to stay aware of where they are at and how they are doing?
- What stories from your life or from the Bible might be relevant for what may be ahead?
- What investments in relationship can you make right now so that you are available to them later?