Christmas Ideas From Our Prayer Conference Speaker

By Cathy Cryer, Associate Prayer Pastor at Central

Looking for Christmas ideas for special people on your list? Who would have thought the guest speaker for our next Elevate Prayer Conference Friday, Feb. 7, would have some great ideas for you?

Mark Batterson, author of “The Circle Maker,” “Draw the Circle,” and “Praying Circles Around Your Children,” will speak to us in February about prayer and bringing it powerfully alive to bear on our loved ones and circumstances, culture and community.

But he also offered some great, practical, prayerful gift suggestions as I read through all three books. His purposeful approach to prayer in all of life -- even in gifting -- is why I encourage all Prayer Newsletter readers to **save the date now** and plan on hearing what he has to tell us in person on **Feb. 7**!

In the meantime, however, I’ll share a few ideas that really struck me for some special people in my life come Christmas. See if you have special people on your list who just might find these ideas perfect under their tree!

1. Buy a Bible for someone you love --- always a great gift idea. But go one step further and pray through that Bible those passages and promises of God that you know might be especially meaningful to the intended recipient. If they are going through hard times, underline and pray through those promises where God says He will never leave or forsake us. If they are about to be married, perhaps you reference blessings and prayers for blessings throughout the Bible, or the images of Christ and His Bride, the Church, or maybe references to what God intends marriage to look like among believers and stories of loving marriages in Scripture.

2. Pray about the special person, asking God to help you see him or her as He sees them. Then make a collage of words that describes them and their gifts and the ways you know God is using them in the lives of others, including you. Frame it and give it to them, explaining they have your love and prayers.

3. As you read through your Bible studies each day, think of the person on your gift list. Pray for them according to the passage that day and jot it down in a journal. Collect the prayers all this month and gift the journal of prayers for them come Christmas Day.

4. Pray about all the friends on your gift list, and even those you don’t normally “gift” at Christmas. Ask God to guide you if He intends you to be a prayer partner to any of them in the coming year. If a name comes to mind, start praying for that person as soon as God reveals it. On Christmas, give a card or a call that explains that you have been praying but you know that God loves specific prayers and has called us to pray as “two or three gathered together” and in many “one another” passages, and you’d like to offer to be a prayer partner with them or for

them anytime they have a prayer need…or set up a regular time to talk or text each week.

5. Batterson wrote this next idea mainly for a parent to do with a child, but it actually works for any two people in relationship, whether mentor and one being mentored, work friends, long-time neighbors, whatever. Set a special time to get together in a place where you will be able to talk freely. Prepare before that time a list of blessings you would especially like to pray over the person. There is power in offering a blessing.

6. If their name has an origin in the Bible, share with them in writing or conversation over a cup of coffee or peppermint ice cream just how that person, their story, faith, courage, or experiences, remind you of them. Or tell how the Biblical person inspired you to pray for them.

Registration for the Elevate Prayer Conference will be available soon, so watch for it on Central's Web site. Save the date now: Friday, Feb. 7, 2014.

Happy Shopping Through These Prayer Ideas!