

Its all about Jesus: Prayer

Introduction

- **The story of Raymond Edman**
 - 60 years ago a young missionary staggered in from an Ecuadorian jungle. “he will be dead by morning” the doctor predicted. Edman’s wife died her wedding dress black to prepare for the funeral (must take place soon in the tropics). At that moment in Boston Dr. Joseph Evans interrupted a prayer meeting and said we must pray for Edmans. The group prayed until Evans called out Praise the Lord the victory is won! Raymon Edman recovered and went on to become president of Wheaton college and to minister for 40 years (The dress did not recover).

My entrance to prayer is Jesus Christ (1:3)

- No one is granted admittance to most events without a pass, ticket, or receipt.
- **God the Father does not listen to every prayer**
 - Truly the only one who can thank God, the Father is a child.
 - **Father**→ He is father of his community which professes this lord as the risen, exalted, and present Christ, using the words Lord Jesus Christ.
- **Why would the Lord not answer my prayer?**
 - Do you have iniquity in your heart? ¹⁸ If I regard iniquity in my heart,
 - The Lord will not hear. Ps 66:18)
 - If you ask with selfish motives. ³ You ask and don’t receive because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your evil desires.
- **But! If Jesus is your Savior, then God is your father. You have confidence knowing that the Father hears you!**
- **Enter his presence with confidence. Enter his presence through prayer often!**
 - **Remember: His kingdom come His will be done**

A Praying person is a thankful person (1:3)

- A thankful person is a praying person
 - Many years ago Northwestern U had a lifesaving team that assisted Lake Michigan boats. On sept. 8, 1860 the Lady Elgin foundeder near the campus and a ministerial student Edward Spencer personally rescued 17 people. The exposure to the elements destroyed his health and he was unable to continue school. Some years

later upon his death it was noted that not one of the 17 people he rescued ever came back to thank him (Hughes).

- **Thanksgiving is good for your soul**
 - Just like Thanksgiving Day is good for your stomach
- **Thanksgiving reorganized your priorities**
 - You have to thank someone!
 - “our favorite attitude should be gratitude” --Unknown
- **Thanksgiving helps you reflect on what you have not what you don't.**
- “the things we take for granted are dreams to many people” -- Unknown
- **Its all about Jesus: Thank Him Today! Am I thankful?**

My priority in prayer is a reflection of my faith (1:9)

- How do we know that Paul was a man of faith? Because he **prayed.... A LOT.**
 - In fact he didn't stop!
- We are prone to pray in emergencies but Paul prays continuously. Spiritual fortitude depends on regularity in prayer (NIV)
- **Praying regularly**→ Paul's asking has been regular, intense, focused, and intentional.
 - We do the things we love and we love the things we do.
- **Jesus modeled a prayer life to us:**
 - **Mark 1:35** Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, He got up, went out, and made His way to a deserted place. And He was praying there.
 - **Matt 14:23** After dismissing the crowds, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. When evening came, He was there alone.
 - **Luke 6:12** During those days He went out to the mountain to pray and spent all night in prayer to God.
- What a joy that in Jesus Christ we have uninterrupted access to our Father in prayer.
- Will you take a stand today and commit to life a life of prayer? Where your prayer has consistency, power, and intentionality?
 - We have at least three consistent prayer services weekly here.
- **Its all about Jesus → Let us pray and be people of prayers!**

I should pray often for others (1:9)

Praying regularly→ Paul's asking has been regular, intense, focused, and intentional. This stands in sharp contrast to the bland comment “ill be thinking of you” or “ill be praying for you.

- **When should we pray for others?**
 - Are you waiting for a major emergency?
 - Paul's prayers do not have him asking God to 'fix people' instead, he exercises "preventative maintenance (NIV).
 - CS Lewis writing to a friend Sister Penelope Lawson:
 - I specially need your prayers because I am (like the pilgrim in Bunyan) traveling across 'a plain called Ease.' Everything without and many things within are marvelously well at present"
 - You have been prayed for already today
- How should you pray for others?
 - Pray for a knowledgeable walk (1:9)
 - Pray for a worthy walk
 - Pray for fruit
 - Pray for a powerful walk (1:10)
 - The power that Paul prayed upon the church is immense, for "strengthened" was continuous, denoting a steady supply (Hughes).
 - And the strengthening is on God's own scale (glorious might).
- There is wonderful Joy to be prayed for and to pray for others.
- There is gospel power when we pray for each other.
- Its all about Jesus! Pray for someone today!

Conclusion

Jesus prayed for you the world !

This is eternal life:
that they may know You, the only true God,
and the One You have sent—Jesus Christ.

4 I have glorified You on the earth
by completing the work You gave Me to do.

Jesus prayed for you the follower

John 17:20 I pray not only for these,
but also for those who believe in Me
through their message.

21 May they all be one,
as You, Father, are in Me and I am in You.
May they also be one in Us,
so the world may believe You sent Me.

Who do you need to pray for today?

Do you need to be prayed over?

Will you commit today and say Lord: its all about Jesus and I want to be a person of prayer??

We thank God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray... Let us pray

- By sitting in your seat you are agreeing that you are right with God and do not today need to profess Him as Lord.
- Do you have a Savior Story?

Why does it Matter?

- We have been justified (made right before the Lord) and accepted
- We receive forgiveness (redeemed)
- We escape God's wrath (reconciled)
- We are adopted in to a new family
- We gain a new identity (New Creation)
- **Believe, Confess, Faith, Baptism**

Notes

- In Colossians a theme emerges: the absolute supremacy and sufficiency of Jesus Christ as the Head of all creation and of the church (Hughes).
- There is no book in the NT, including John that presents such a comprehensive picture of the fullness of Christ.

Col. 1:3 We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, ⁴ for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints ⁵ because of the hope reserved for you in heaven. You have already heard about this hope in the message of truth, the gospel

- **Father**→ He is father of his community which professes this lord as the risen, exalted, and present Christ, using the words Lord Jesus Christ.
- Perhaps Paul wants at the outset to anchor the person of Christ firmly to God the Father (Moo).
- This dedication to prayer is especially remarkable when it involves Christians whom Paul has neither evangelized nor, apparently, even visited (Moo).
- For Paul, the outworking of Christ is reflected in the love of the believer (Moo).
- Faith hope and love are mentioned numerous times in Scripture as a sort of “apostolic shorthand” for genuine Christianity. None of these qualities can be manufactured by man; they all come from God. (Hughes)
- Paul is very specific about the object of their faith, Christ Jesus (Hughes).
 - Generic faith has no intrinsic value in itself. It must derive its value from its object.
- When John Paton was translating the bible in the outer Hebrides, he searched for the exact word to translate trust. Finally, he found it: the word meant “lean your whole weight upon.” (Hughes)
- Joy naturally enlarges your hope and love.

⁶ that has come to you. It is bearing fruit and growing all over the world, just as it has among you since the day you heard it and recognized God’s grace in the truth.

- Paul makes two points: 1. The gospel has come to the Colossians just as it has to other people and 2. The gospel is transforming people and communities in Colossae just as it has in other parts of the world.
- Paul eloquently displays the universality of the gospel.
- Paul spends time celebrating the gospel’s success. What he was celebrating was its dynamic power and universality (Hughes).
 - **Have we lost the art of celebration?**

⁷ You learned this from Epaphras, our dearly loved fellow slave. He is a faithful servant of the Messiah on your behalf, ⁸ and he has told us about your love in the Spirit.

Col. 1:9 For this reason also, since the day we heard this, we haven't stopped praying for you. We are asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, ¹⁰ so that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him, bearing fruit in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God.

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- **The intent of the prayer is what appears in the iva-clause and only God can effect the fulfillment of this request (Lohse).**
 - Paul regularly moves from thanksgiving to petition. After giving thanks that the Colossians have responded to the gospel now Paul prays that they might continue on the course they have begun.
 - Knowledge → in Scripture knowledge of God's will is always connected with the command to follow God's will and to do it (Lohse).
 - Wisdom that excludes Christ or makes him subordinate is counterfeit (NIV)
 - A noteworthy feature of the prayer are the number of parallels with the thanksgiving section: since the day, thank, always, when we pray, understood, bearing fruit... growing (Moo, 92).
 - Paul's petition for the Colossians proceeds directly from his thanksgiving for them, as the connecting phrase for this reason makes clear.
 - Paul's prayer was a beautifully constructed tapestry that makes a perfect fabric for our own prayers (Hughes).
 - Paul's prayer for spiritual understanding tackled the gnostic problem head on. We cannot pray for others if we are not involved their victories or troubles (Hughes)
 - Paul puts no premium on ignorance.
 - **Praying regularly** → Paul's asking has been regular, intense, focused, and intentional. This stands in sharp contrast to the bland comment "I'll be thinking of you" or "I'll be praying for you."

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- The scriptures are our primary source of "knowledge" for the believer as they are studied in the power of the HS (Hughes).

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- Walk →
 - Used often in the OT and symbolic for one's conduct (Hughes).
 - The Hebrews saw an absolute connection between conduct and knowledge. True spiritual knowledge means action! (Hughes).
 - Any doctrine that isolates the believer from the needs of the world is not a spiritual doctrine.
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11 May you be strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for all endurance and patience, with joy **12** giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the saints' inheritance in the light.

The power that Paul prayed upon the church is immense, for “strengthened” was continuous, denoting a steady supply (Hughes).

And the strengthening is on God's own scale (glorious might).

The focus of the power is endurance (Hughes). How beautiful endurance and patience are when they are wedded in our life (Hughes).

In 1:12 give thanks here does not connect back to the giving thanks in 1:3. Rather, Paul is calling the community to join him in giving thanks (Lohse).

How else do we walk worthy? By giving thanks. Many

13 He has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son He loves.

14 We have redemption, the forgiveness of sins, in Him.

Illustrations

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Application

- If a doctrine lifts us so high that our feet cannot hit the ground it is false (Hughes).
- We must have a knowledgeable walk
- We must have a powerful walk
- We must have a thankful walk

- Praying regularly→ Paul’s asking has been regular, intense, focused, and intentional. This stands in sharp contrast to the bland comment “ill be thinking of you” or “ill be praying for you.
- We are prone to pray in emergencies but Paul prays continuously. Spiritual fortitude depends on regularity in prayer (NIV)
- Paul always praises and thanks God in his prayers
- Pauls’s prayers do not have him asking God to ‘fix people’ instead, he exercises “preventative maintenance (NIV).
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