

## PRAYING FOR OTHERS

Ephesians 1:15-23

4/18/10

If you are like most people your prayers tend to focus around your needs and your interests.

To seldom do we thank God for what He has done for us, much less what He is doing in the lives of others.

In our passage this morning we see a Paul thanking God for what He has done in the lives of the Christians in Ephesus.

He then goes on to pray for them.

It is a prayer that we can use as a model for how we should pray for other brothers and sisters in Christ.

In Ephesians 1:15-16 we see Paul thanking God for two things that indicate the genuineness of the salvation of the Christians at Ephesus.

### 1. **Thank God For Other Christians 1:15-16a**

#### a. **Thank Him for their faith.**

Paul, of course, praised God for their saving faith.

**Ephesians 2:8-9** For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; <sup>9</sup> not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

We are saved by faith alone in what Christ did for our salvation.

But genuine saving faith is seen in how we live our lives.

Faith is obedient. Hebrews 11:7, 17, 24-26, 36-40

Faith perseveres. Heb 12:1-3

Faith is seen in good works. James 2:18

Faith is seen in love. 1 John 3:14

We should thank God for the evidence of genuine faith that we see being lived out in the lives of others.

**b. Thank Him for their love.**

How do people see our love? (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

Faith is seen in patience with others. 1 Corinthians 13:4

Love is seen in a willingness to forgive others.

Love is seen in unselfish acts of kindness. 1 Corinthians 13:5

**1 John 3:18** Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

You and I should thank God for what He is doing in the lives of others.

This includes indications of their growth in faith and love.

But in addition to thanking God what He is doing in their lives, we should:

**2. Pray For Other Believers 1:16b-23**

**a. Pray that they might know God better. 16b-17**

I believe that the greatest need of most Christians today is to better know God.

Too many have a very shallow understanding of God

Too much of what goes under the name of worship reveals a trivial understanding of what God is like and how we are to respond to Him.

Knowing God starts with a clear Biblical understanding of facts about God.

His attributes

His love, power, and righteousness

But knowing God involves more than knowing facts about God.

Knowing God involves a more personal understanding of God which is the result of drawing near to Him in life.

It comes from Bible study, prayer and reflecting upon Him.

It comes from obeying God and applying His word to your life and seeing that He is able to do what He says He will do.

It is a result of living with God and living for God.

Knowing God involves a deeper understanding of Him as you come to recognize God as your Father, Savior, Provider, Protector, Bridegroom, and Friend

**b. Pray that they might know the hope of God's calling.  
18a**

Our future hope:

A blessed hope Titus 2:13

A living hope 1 Peter 1:3

A hope which is sure Hebrews 6:11

Pray that you and others might understand our hope.

We have been called from:

Guilt to complete forgiveness

Slaves of sin to heirs of God

Worry, fear, anger and jealousy to peace and freedom

Disease and death to eternal life and heaven

God tells us that:

We will be with Christ

We are called the bride of Christ

We will reign with Him forever

**Romans 8:23-24** And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for *our* adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. <sup>24</sup> For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he *already* sees?

**Philippians 3:20-21** For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; <sup>21</sup> who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

c. **Pray that they might know the riches of God's inheritance. 18b**

**Romans 8:17** and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ,

*It is important to know the inheritance that you have in Christ.*

The late newspaper publisher, William Randolph Hearst invested a fortune collecting valuable art treasures from around the world.

One day Hearst found a description of some valuable pieces that he wanted to buy, so he sent his agent abroad to find them.

After several months of searching the agent report that he had finally found the treasures.

They were in Mr. Hearst own warehouse.

Likewise, many Christians have no idea of the treasure they have in Christ.

**John 14:1-3** "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup> "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup> "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and

receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also.

**1 Corinthians 2:9** but just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND *which* HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM."

**1 Peter 1:4** to *obtain* an inheritance *which is* imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

**d. Pray that they might know the greatness of God's power. 19-23**

**God's power is seen in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.**

No human power can accomplish this.

Only God's power could.

The same power that raised Christ from the dead and seated Him in the Heavens is the power of God to save sinners, answer prayers, and change lives

**The greatness of God's power in salvation**

**Romans 1:16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

**The greatness of God's power in giving us victory over sin**

**Galatians 5:16** But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

**The greatness of God's power in answering prayer and providing our needs**

**Ephesians 3:20** Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,

God is able to meet all our needs and enable us to face any circumstance He allows into our lives.

**21-23** Note the pre-eminence of Christ

Pre-eminent over all the creation for all time

He is the head, we are His body

We follow His lead so that we can do His work.

You and I should thank God for the change we see Him making in the lives of others.

For the outward expressions of their faith and love

We should pray that we and others grow in our understanding of God.

We should rejoice the person of our Savior Jesus Christ.

**Because of Christ there is hope.**

**Without Christ there is not hope.**

**John 3:18** He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

**1 John 5:11-13** And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. <sup>12</sup> He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. <sup>13</sup> These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.