

# THE PRAYER LIFE OF THE SPIRITUAL LEADER

March 18, 2006

## Session Two

Time: 10:15-11:30 a.m.

Topic: "Paul: The Apostle of Prayer"

Texts: Romans 8:26-27, 34; Ephesians 1:15-23; 3:14-21; 6:18-20; Philippians 1:9-11; Colossians 1:9-14; II Thessalonians 1:11-12; I Timothy 2:1-8; Philemon :4-6; I Thessalonians 5:17

Introduction:

***You can do more than pray after you have prayed, but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed.*** ~John Bunyan

### **I. Paul Tells Us about Our Divine Prayer Partners – Romans 8:26-27, 34**

- A. Our human **limitations** often hinder our praying and we honestly cannot muster the spiritual energy to pray, or we simply do not know what to pray for.
- B. God has given us the Holy Spirit to **intercede** for us when our human limitations hinder our praying.
- C. In this text the Spirit is not praying **through** us, but **for** us, and his praying is always according to God's **perfect will**.
- D. Paul tells us that our Lord Jesus Christ is at the right hand of God (the place of **authority**) and he is also interceding for us.

***If I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room,  
I would not fear a million enemies. Yet distance makes no difference.  
He is praying for me.*** ~Robert Murray McCheyne

### **II. Paul Prays for the Church**

A. Ephesians 1:15-23; 3:14-21

- 1. Paul had a **passionate** love for the Church of God.
- 2. Out of this deep and passionate love he prayed for the church to know God **intimately**.
- 3. He prayed that the church would be a place of **hope**.
- 4. He prayed that the church would be a place of **power**.
- 5. He prayed that the church would be **submissive** to Christ.

6. He prayed that the church would be a people of **love**.
7. He prayed that the church would **manifest** the **presence** of God in and before the world.
8. He reminds the church that God can **do more** in one minute than we can **do** in our collective lifetimes.

B. Philippians 1:9-11

*Abba Father, we pray that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that we may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ. We desire to be a holy people who are filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes only through Jesus Christ—we pray this to the glory and praise of Your name. Amen*

C. Colossians 1:9-14; II Thessalonians 1:11-12

1. Paul prays without ceasing that the Church of God will be filled with the knowledge of God's **plan** and **purpose** for her earthly mission (God's will). Why does Paul pray for this?

***God has instituted prayer so as to confer upon his creatures the dignity of being causes.*** ~Blaise Pascal

- a. He wants the church to live in such a way as to bring no reproach to the name and cause of Christ. In other words, so that we will live **pleasing** to God.
- b. He wants the church to be effective and productive in her kingdom mission. In other words, to be **fruitful** and to **grow** in spiritually healthy ways.

***Greatness is not measured by how many bodies are present and counted. Greatness is measured by how many hearts are sold-out to the radical mission of Jesus.*** ~Pastor Michael Slaughter

- c. He wants the church to have patient endurance. She is in a **marathon** and not a **sprint** and he doesn't want her to **give up**.
- d. He wants the church to experience the fullness of **joy** and **gratitude** as she lives out the will of God.

***Prayer is not a substitute for work, thinking, watching suffering, or giving; prayer is a support for all other efforts.*** ~George Buttrick

### III. Paul Commands the Church to Pray

#### A. Ephesians 6:18

1. Pray in the **Spirit**
2. Pray on all **occasions**
3. Pray with **spiritual alertness**
4. Pray for the **saints**

#### B. I Thessalonians 5:17

1. Pray 24/7

***When the Spirit has come to reside in someone, that person cannot stop praying; for the Spirit prays without ceasing in him. No matter if he is asleep or awake, prayer is going on in his heart all the time. He may be eating or drinking, he may be resting or working—the incense of prayer will ascend spontaneously from his heart. The slightest stirring of his heart is like a voice which sings in silence and in secret to the Invisible.***

~Isaac the Syrian

#### C. I Timothy 2:1-8

1. Pray for **everyone**
2. Pray especially for those in **authority**
3. Men of God are called to **lead** the way in the ministry of prayer
  - a. In the **home**
  - b. In the **church**
  - c. In the **community**

***It is possible to move men through God by prayer alone.*** ~J. Oswald Sanders

### IV. Paul Prays for a Disciple

#### A. Philemon :4-6

1. He **thanked** God for Philemon
2. He prays that Philemon will **actively share** his faith
3. He prays that Philemon will be **mature** in his faith

#### B. Six Ways to Pray for Others (From John Maxwell's book Partners In Prayer)

1. Pray that they know God's will for their lives
2. Pray that they will do God's will for their lives

3. Pray for spiritual productivity and prosperity in their lives
4. Pray for them to have growing relationship with Christ
5. Pray for spiritual power and strength in their lives
6. Pray for them to have good and right attitudes

## V. Paul Asks the Church to Pray for Him

### A. Ephesians 6:19-20; Colossians 4:2-4

1. Paul wants to have a **word** from God to give to people
2. Paul wants to communicate this word **fearlessly**
3. Paul wants to communicate this word to people who are **ready** to **receive** (“open door”) his message
4. Paul wants to communicate the mystery of the gospel of Christ **clearly**

### B. Five Challenges that Pastors Face (From John Maxwell’s book Partners In Prayer)

1. Loneliness
2. Stress
3. Feelings of Inadequacy
4. Depression
5. Spiritual Warfare

### C. Pastors Can’t Do Ministry and Mission Alone

1. Every Christian leader needs an Aaron and Hur to come alongside of them and **hold them up** in prayer.

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## Additional Notes and Discussion Questions