

Prayer Emphasis Pt. 4 (Pauline)

Pastor James Foley – Shared Sunday, January 26, 2020

Main Theme – Beginning the New Year w/ a Series on Prayer – Pt. 4 Highlights ‘Pauline’ Prayers

WORSHIP & PRAYER

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Special Events**
 - Potluck Supper – Taking Place TODAY After Service
 - Men’s Ministry – Saturday, February 8, from 9–10:30am
 - Women’s Ministry – Tuesday, February 11, from 6:30–8pm
- **Annual Business Meeting**

My thanks to those who participated in the Annual Business Meeting. Congratulations to Taran Long and Jo Anne Lane for their reelections to the Board. Allow me a moment to introduce the Board /Leadership Team: a) Deacons – Jo Anne Lane, Taran Long, Elysia Phelps & Robert Pickett; b) Trustee – Ron Phelps; and c) Treasurer – Tracey White.

MORNING OFFERING

At this time, I want to call forth our ushers.

-Thank you for your faithfulness in giving to the Lord/His work
-Your giving fuels the work of Christ in and through this church

May the Lord bless you as you give! May you experience His faithfulness in kind!

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- **CHILDREN DISMISSED FOR CHILDREN’S CHURCH**
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INTRODUCTIONS

As always it is wonderful to see you. I look forward to these moments of corporate worship and instruction. I pray that you are ready to receive what the Lord has for you as we enter into a New Year! Please have your Bible at the ready and be prepared to take some notes.

SETTING THE STAGE

FYI – Last Sunday morning we examined the PRAYER life of the apostle PAUL. i.e., We began to consider the items/elements that Paul prayed for in a RECURRING manner. In summary, we noted that Paul regularly prayed for the following:

1) Wisdom and Knowledge

Paul prayed for believers to both understand the Word (K) and know how to apply it (W)

2) Peace

Paul prayed for believers to know peace (i.e., rest in adversity and harmony with one another)

3) Hope

Paul prayed for believers to know hope (i.e., confident expectation rooted in God’s faithfulness)

4) Love

Paul prayed for Christians to abound in love (i.e. ever-increasing affection for God and others)

5) Connection

Paul prayed that Christians would be deeply connected—one with another—in relationship

NOTE – This morning I would like to CONTINUE to examine the prayer life of Paul...

Q. What else did Paul pray for Christians to know and/or experience?

LET’S DELVE IN...

POINT 1 (GODLINESS)

KEY – Paul prayed for genuine RIGHTEOUSNESS and PURITY.

Philippians 1:9–11 (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

9 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, 10 so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be **pure** and **blameless** for the day of Christ, 11 filled with the fruit of **righteousness** that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

1 Thessalonians 5:23–24 (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

23 May God himself, the God of peace, **sanctify** you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept **blameless** at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

Colossians 1:9–10a (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

9 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, 10 so that you may **live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work . . .**

NOTE 1 – Righteousness is about BOTH what you REJECT/resist and what you GIVE yourself to.

NOTE 2 – The apostle Paul understood the importance of RIGHTEOUS living. Note the following:

1) Paul Recognized that Sinfulness Yields Disastrous Consequence

Galatians 5:16–17, 19–21 (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.

19 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I **warn you**, as I did before, that those who live like this **will not inherit the kingdom of God**.

KEY – “You are free to choose but you are NOT free to choose the consequence of your choice”

2) Paul Recognized that Godliness is the Appropriate Response to God’s Grace in Christ

Romans 6:1b–2(NIV)

Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2 By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?

Titus 2:11–14 (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

11 For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. 12 It teaches us to say **“No”** to **ungodliness** and **worldly passions**, and to live **self-controlled, upright** and **godly** lives in this present age, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, **eager to do what is good.**

3) He Recognized that Righteous Living is God’s Call/Desire for His People

Ephesians 2:8–10 (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus **to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.**

APP 1 – Do you STRUGGLE with sin and temptation? Pray for the Lord to make you HOLY—that you might live a life of godliness, blamelessness, righteousness, etc. before God and man. SUCH a life shall receive REWARD in this life and in the life to come!

APP 2 – Pray for a spirit of holiness to CAPTURE the Church of Jesus Christ. In an age of sinful DECADENCE and moral COMPROMISE, we need a move of the Spirit now more than ever before! We need less of the HOLLYWOOD Spirit and more of the HOLY Spirit!

APP 3 – Pray for God to motivate us unto righteous (i.e., GOOD) works—honoring our Savior!

POINT 2 (STRENGTHENING)

KEY – Paul prayed for God’s people to experience a spiritual STRENGTHENING.

Let no one DECEIVE you into thinking that Christian living is at all-times EASY! Rather, there are MANY difficulties that we must navigate along the journey. That is why the apostle Paul—who knew a thing or two about difficulty—prayed for spiritual STRENGTHENING time and again!

Ephesians 3:14–17a (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

14 For this reason I kneel before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. 16 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may **strengthen** you with power through his Spirit in your **inner being**, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

KEY – The underlying GREEK for strengthen herein is lit. “be strong to overcome resistance.” Thus, Paul was praying for an abiding STRENGTH that OVERCOMES ALL opposition, hindrance and resistance!

Q. What TYPES of resistance, opposition and hindrance will we EXPERIENCE?

1) Temptation & Sinful Desires

1 Thessalonians 3:13 (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

13 May he **strengthen** your hearts **so that you will be blameless and holy** in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

NOTE – There will be seasons when you will want to yield to sinful life and living. In those moments, APPEAL to God for divine strength that YOU might be kept blameless and holy before God and man! Pray for OTHERS to know this empowerment of God!

2) The Adversary

2 Thessalonians 3:2–5 (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

As for other matters, brothers and sisters, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you. 2 And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil people, for not everyone has faith. 3 But the Lord is faithful, and he will **strengthen you and protect you from the evil one**.

NOTE – Scripture NEVER diminishes the reality that we have an ADVERSARY. Our adversary is ancient, cunning, insightful, and knows us far better than we know ourselves (not to mention a weaponized knowledge of the Word). IF we are to overcome Him—as Christ did—we will NEED the strengthening power of the Lord! APPEAL to Him for strength (for you and others)!

3) The Desire to Quit

2 Thessalonians 2:16–17 (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

16 May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, 17 **encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.**

NOTE – You will face seasons of WEARINESS, where you want to abandon ship. You'll want to QUIT the work to which God has called you, etc. In those moments, you will need strengthening (i.e., an inner sense of encouragement that comes from God—and possibly through—others)! APPEAL to God for yourself and others! REMEMBER...

Galatians 6:9–10

9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

POINT 3 (POWER)

KEY – Paul prayed for God's people to recognize the reality of the POWER of God.

Ephesians 1:17–23 (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

17 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, 19 and his **incomparably great power** for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength 20 **he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms**, 21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. 22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

KEY – Paul prayed for the eyes of believers to be opened to the reality of the POWER of God (made manifest in His miraculous workings – i.e., the Resurrection). Scripture NEVER downplays the power of God and His capacity to act.

NOTE 1 – Consider the power that CHRIST displayed while on earth (see table below)...

#	Miracle	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
1	Jesus Turns Water into Wine				2:1-11
2	Jesus Heals an Official's Son				4:43-54
3	Jesus Drives Out an Evil Spirit		1:21-27	4:31-36	
4	Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-in-Law	8:14-15	1:29-31	4:38-39	
5	Jesus Heals Many Sick at Evening	8:16-17	1:32-34	4:40-41	
6	First Miraculous Catch of Fish			5:1-11	
7	Jesus Cleanses a Man With Leprosy	8:1-4	1:40-45	5:12-14	
8	Jesus Heals a Centurion's Servant	8:5-13		7:1-10	
9	Jesus Heals a Paralytic	9:1-8	2:1-12	5:17-26	
10	Jesus Heals a Man's Withered Hand	12:9-14	3:1-6	6:6-11	
11	Jesus Raises a Widow's Son in Nain			7:11-17	
12	Jesus Calms a Storm	8:23-27	4:35-41	8:22-25	
13	Jesus Casts Demons into a Herd of Pigs	8:28-33	5:1-20	8:26-39	
14	Jesus Heals a Woman in the Crowd	9:20-22	5:25-34	8:42-48	
15	Jesus Raises Jairus' Daughter to Life	9:18, 23-26	5:21-24, 35-43	8:40-42, 49-56	
16	Jesus Heals Two Blind Men	9:27-31			
17	Jesus Heals a Man Unable to Speak	9:32-34			
18	Jesus Heals an Invalid at Bethesda				5:1-15
19	Jesus Feeds 5,000	14:13-21	6:30-44	9:10-17	6:1-15
20	Jesus Walks on Water	14:22-33	6:45-52		6:16-21
21	Jesus Heals Many Sick in Gennesaret	14:34-36	6:53-56		
22	Jesus Heals a Gentile Woman's Demon-Possessed Daughter	5:21-28	7:24-30		
23	Jesus Heals a Deaf and Dumb Man		7:31-37		
24	Jesus Feeds 4,000	15:32-39	8:1-13		
25	Jesus Heals a Blind Man at Bethsaida		8:22-26		
26	Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind				9:1-12
27	Jesus Heals a Boy with a Demon	17:14-20	9:14-29	9:37-43	
28	Miraculous Temple Tax in a Fish's Mouth	17:24-27			
29	Jesus Heals a Blind, Mute Demoniac	12:22-23		11:14-23	
30	Jesus Heals a Crippled Woman			13:10-17	
31	Jesus Heals a Man With Dropsy on the Sabbath			14:1-6	
32	Jesus Cleanses Ten Lepers			17:11-19	
33	Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead				11:1-45
34	Jesus Restores Sight to Bartimaeus	20:29-34	10:46-52	18:35-43	
35	Jesus Withers the Fig Tree	21:18-22	11:12-14		
36	Jesus Heals a Servant's Severed Ear			22:50-51	
37	Second Miraculous Catch of Fish				21:4-11

NOTE 2 – And this listing doesn't even mention the RESURRECTION of Christ/His glorification...

NOTE 3 – And this listing doesn't even begin to touch upon the many OT miracles of the Lord...

KEY 1 – Paul prayed for the eyes of Christians to be opened to the power of God toward those who BELIEVE (cf. Eph. 1:19). Thus, the SAME power that we see operational so long ago STILL ABOUNDS toward us who believe! God can STILL work IN and THROUGH us to bring change to this broken world!

KEY 2 – We need our eyes OPENED to the reality of God's POWER. We must pray for God to open OUR eyes to this biblical reality. We must pray for God to open the eyes of OTHERS as well!

POINT 4 (GRACE)

KEY – Paul prayed for God's people to know and experience GRACE.

NOTE 1 – A few weeks back I noted that Paul commonly opened his letters using a customary GREETING: i.e., the evoking of both PEACE and GRACE. Feel free to reference the following list as you desire (personal devotions).

- Romans 1:7
- 1 Cor. 1:3
- 2 Cor. 1:2
- Gal. 1:3
- Eph. 1:2
- Phil. 1:2
- Col. 1:2
- 1 Thess. 1:1
- 2 Thess. 1:2
- 1 Tim. 1:2
- 2 Tim. 1:2
- Phile. 1:3

NOTE 2 – Thus said, it should be NO surprise that we see the themes of peace and grace operational in prayers contained within his writings! Last week we noted that Paul wanted his peers to know the PEACE of God (i.e., rest in the midst of adversity and harmony with one another). Let me also note that he prayed that they might know His GRACE. Consider...

1 Corinthians 16:23 (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

23 The **grace** of the Lord Jesus be with you.

Galatians 6:18 (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

18 The **grace** of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers and sisters. Amen.

Philippians 4:23 (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

23 The **grace** of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Titus 3:15b (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

15 . . . **Grace** be with you all.

Philemon 25 (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

25 The **grace** of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

PJV – “May you know, experience and revel in the UNMERITED FAVOR and BLESSING of God!

Q. What BLESSINGS are afforded to us in Christ Jesus by grace?**Ephesians 1:3 (NIV, Emphasis Mine)**

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has **blessed** us in the heavenly realms with **every spiritual blessing** in Christ.

Psalms 23 (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

1 The Lord is my shepherd, **I lack nothing**.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,

3 he refreshes my soul.

He guides me along the right paths
for his name's sake.

4 Even though I walk
through the darkest valley,

I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

6 Surely your goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord
forever.

Psalms 103:1–5, 8–12 (NIV, Emphasis Mine)

- 1 Praise the Lord, my soul;
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.
 - 2 Praise the Lord, my soul,
and **forget not all his benefits—**
 - 3 who **forgives** all your sins
and **heals** all your diseases,
 - 4 who **redeems** your life from the pit
and **crowns** you with love and compassion,
 - 5 who **satisfies** your desires with good things
so that your youth is **renewed** like the eagle's.
-
- 8 The Lord is **compassionate** and **gracious**,
slow to anger, abounding in love.
 - 9 He will **not** always accuse,
nor will he harbor his anger forever;
 - 10 he does **not** treat us as our sins deserve
or **repay** us according to our iniquities.
 - 11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his **love** for those who fear him;
 - 12 as far as the east is from the west,
so far has he **removed** our transgressions from us.

KEY – Paul prayed for his fellow believers to know, experience and revel in the GRACE of God. Let's pray for God to open OUR eyes and the eyes of OTHERS to His grace—through which we have been SO richly BLESSED!

CONCLUSIONS

NOTE – We have analyzed but a FRACTION of the prayer life of Paul. As has been noted, Paul was a man who PRAYED FOR God's PEOPLE to experience and know...

- 1) Wisdom and Knowledge
- 2) Peace (of God and w/ One Another)
- 3) Hope (Hopefulness/Confident Expectation)
- 4) Love (Abounding/Ever-Increasing Love)
- 5) Human Connection and Relationship
- 6) Righteousness (Godly/Pure Living)
- 7) Strengthening to Overcome
- 8) The "Might" of His Power
- 9) Grace (Blessing of God)

KEY – We'd do well to CONSIDER the prayer life of this eminent apostle and MIMIC him in kind!