

APOSTOLIC PRAYERS

(No. 1199 – 2/22/21 – DR Zoom Meeting)

❖ INTRODUCTION

- Effective prayer is essential for our lives and ministry
 - **Jas 5:16** (NKJV): *The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.* [James teaches us to ask in faith (1:6) and to **ask correctly** (4:3)]
 - Jesus spent 3 years preaching and teaching, but He has spent 2,000 years praying! [see Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25]

- Prayer is something we need to be taught (Luke 11:1-13):

Luke 11:1-3: *¹One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When He finished, one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.” ²He said to them, “When you pray, say: “‘Father, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come. ³Give us each day our daily bread.”’*

- The Holy Spirit helps us to pray:

Rom. 8:26-27: *²⁶In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. ²⁷And He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.*

- There are 2 basics types of prayer—both are important:

1 Cor. 14:14-15 (NKJV): *¹⁴For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. ¹⁵What is the conclusion then? I will **pray with the spirit**, and I will **ALSO pray with the understanding**. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding.*

- Pray in the Spirit daily to edify and build yourself up (1 Cor. 14:4 – “he who speaks in a tongue edifies himself”; Jude 20 – “build yourselves up in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit”)
- We must **ALSO** pray with our understanding
- It is very helpful to study prayers of the apostles recorded in the New Testament (O.T. prayers also) and use them as patterns to guide our own prayers. Let us examine a few...

❖ APOSTOLIC PRAYERS FOUND IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- **Acts 4:23-31:** ²³*On their release, **Peter and John** went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. ²⁴When they heard this, **they raised their voices together in prayer to God.** “Sovereign Lord,” they said, You made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. ²⁵You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of Your servant, our father David: “**Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? ²⁶The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against His Anointed One.**’ ²⁷Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed. ²⁸They did what Your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. ²⁹Now, Lord, **consider their threats and enable Your servants to speak Your word with great boldness. ³⁰Stretch out Your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of Your holy servant Jesus.**” ³¹**After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken.** And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.*

Notice
how they
prayed
the
Scriptures

- Prayer in the face of **persecution**
- v.29 – “consider [look upon, take note of, hear] their threats”
 - When Sennacherib, king of Assyria threatened King Hezekiah [see 2 Kings 19], Hezekiah prayed in v.16: *Give ear, O LORD, and hear; open your eyes, O LORD, and see; **listen to the words Sennacherib has sent to insult the living God.***
 - God responded in v.28: *Because you [Sennacherib] rage against Me and **your insolence has reached My ears**, I will put My hook in your nose and My bit in your mouth, and I will make you return by the way you came.*
 - The angel of the Lord then put to death 185,000 Assyrians in one night!
- They didn’t pray to *escape* persecution—they **prayed for boldness** to *face it* and speak God’s word without fear!
- They **prayed for God to confirm His word with signs and wonders!**

- **Eph. 1:15-21:** ¹⁵*For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶I have not stopped giving thanks for you, **remembering you in my prayers.** ¹⁷I 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.** ¹⁸I pray also 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 the saints, ¹⁹and His incomparably great power for us who believe.** That power is like the working of His mighty strength, ²⁰which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.*

▪ Prayer for **revelation and enlightenment:**

- To know Christ better
- To know the hope of their calling
- To know the riches of His inheritance in the saints
- To know the mighty power of God

- **Eph. 3:14-21:** ¹⁴*For this reason I kneel before the Father, ¹⁵from whom His whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. ¹⁶I pray that **out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power** through His Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷so that **Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.** And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸may have power, together with all the saints, **to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.** ²⁰Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to **His power that is at work within us, ²¹to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.***

- Prayer for **inner strengthening** with God's power
- Prayer for **revelation of God's surpassing love**
- Prayer to be filled with **ALL OF THE FULLNESS OF GOD!**

- **Phil. 1:9-11:** 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 until the day of Christ,* ¹¹*filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.*
- Prayer for **increase in love**—a love based on real knowledge accompanied with judgment and discernment (not “sloppy agape!”)
 - Prayer for **discernment** to approve/chose what is excellent or best (not just good!)
 - Prayer to be **pure and blameless** for the coming of Christ [Question: Why would Paul pray like this unless these are REQUIREMENTS to be ready for Christ’s return?]
- **Col. 1:9-14:** ⁹*For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of His will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.* ¹⁰*And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,* ¹¹*being strengthened with all power according to His glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully* ¹²*giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.* ¹³*For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves,* ¹⁴*in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*
- Prayer to **know God’s will** with all *spiritual wisdom and understanding*
 - Prayer to **live a fruitful Christian life** that pleases God
 - Prayer to **grow in the knowledge of God**
 - Prayer to be **strengthened with God’s power** *in order to have patience and endurance*
 - **Thanksgiving** for translation from the dominion of darkness into the Kingdom of His Son

- **Col. 4:12:** *Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always **wrestling in prayer** for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured.*
 - Epaphras understood the need to **stand “perfect and complete” (NKJV) in ALL the will of God**
 - This requires “wrestling in prayer”
- **2 Thess. 1:8-12:** *⁸He [God] will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of His power ¹⁰on the day He comes to be glorified in His holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you. ¹¹With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of His calling, and that by His power He may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith. ¹²We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.*
 - A view of Christ’s coming and final judgement stirs our hearts to pray
 - Prayer for **God’s power to fulfill every good purpose** and work of faith
- **Heb. 13:20-21:** *²⁰May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, ²¹equip you with everything good for doing His will, and may He work in us what is pleasing to Him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*
 - Prayer for God to **equip us with everything we need to do His will**
 - Prayer for God to **work in us what is pleasing to Him**
- **3 John 2 (NKJV):** *Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.*
 - Prayer for **prosperity and health of body and soul**

❖ CONCLUSION

- Pray in the Spirit and with understanding
- Use the prayers recorded in the New Testament as patterns to deepen our prayer lives
- These are prayers for deeper revelation, inner strengthening, and increase in love, discernment, and endurance
- These are prayers for growth in fruitfulness, doing God's perfect will, and preparing for the coming of the Lord

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James 5:16 (NKJV)