

The Bulletin

Meeks Street Church of Christ

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“Praying Effectively For Others”

By Brian Meade



Prayer is the avenue we have to communicate our needs, desires, and petitions, to the God of the universe. And it can be that the majority of the time we go to God when we are facing difficulties and problems in our own lives, and rightfully so. We all have those needs that only God can fill.

But what about praying for others as we should? I want to challenge our thinking concerning this great need—the need to pray effectively for other people who are also facing difficulties and problems as well. The Bible addresses this in many places about the need to pray, not only for ourselves, but also for those we may know who need our prayers.

Paul tells us in 1 Timothy 2:1-4, *“Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”*

Notice the different words Paul uses to describe how we should pray for others: 1. *Supplications*- An Earnest or Urgent Request to God. 2. *Prayers*- Any Reverent Petition (to God). 3. *Intercessions*- Seeking the presence and hearing of God on behalf of others. 4. *Giving of Thanks*- The Act of expressing gratitude or showing appreciation to someone.

When we talk of praying for others, with their needs, we are primarily talking of interceding on behalf of them. We pray for them with certain things in mind that we ask God to help them with these needs.

Examples of intercession for others:

1. Abraham interceded for the people of Sodom for the sake of his nephew Lot in Genesis 18:23-33.
2. Moses pleaded for God’s mercy for the sinning people of Israel in Exodus 32:9-14; Numbers 14:11-20).
3. 1 Samuel 12:23 *“Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you; but I will instruct you in the good and right way.”* Samuel looks it at as extremely important work for him to continually praying for them and teaching them to remain faithful.
4. Simon asks Peter to pray for him in Acts 8:24, *“But Simon answered and said, Pray to the Lord for me yourselves, so that nothing of what you have said may come upon me.”*
5. In Acts 12:3-5, the church prayed that Peter’s life would be spared, *“When he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. Now it was during the days of Unleavened Bread. When he had seized him, he put him in prison, delivering him to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out before the people. So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God.”*
6. In Romans 15:30, Paul asks them to pray for him, *“Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me,”* (See also Romans 1:9-10).

7. In 2 Corinthians 1:10-11, Paul says it was the prayers of many that saved him, *“who delivered us from so great a peril of death, and will deliver us, He on whom we have set our hope. And He will yet deliver us, you also joining in helping us through your prayers, so that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the favor bestowed on us through the prayers of many.”*
8. Paul prays for the Ephesian brethren to have wisdom and knowledge of God, *“For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and your love for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.”* (Ephesians 1:15-17).
9. Paul asks the Ephesians to pray for him to speak the truth boldly, *“praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”* (Ephesians 6:18-20).
10. Paul prays for the salvation of his Jewish brethren in Romans 10:1-3, *“Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.”*

From all these examples from the Scriptures, we learn that is extremely important part of our work to pray for one another! There are times our friends, family members, church members, or even co-workers will ask us to pray for them. How we respond to that request will mean everything in that moment of need.

So having said all of that, what makes our prayers effective?

— **When We Pray In Faith For Someone.**

This holds true in all our prayers— we must ask in faith believing God will help with the needs of the one we are praying for. James tells us that we must ask God for our needs in this way, *“But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord,”* (James 1:6-7).

As one preacher used to say it, “If you’re going to ask God for rain, you better bring an umbrella with you.” Effective prayers are confident prayers.

— **When We Pray in All Sincerity For Them.**

It should be something that we should not have to say anything to address the sincerity of our prayers for others, but we must. When someone says to someone else that they are praying for them, it must be a genuine statement of fact, and not mere sentiment of the moment. Otherwise, we make ourselves to be at best— not genuine, and at worst — a liar. That’s why we must be conscientious and heartfelt in our praying for others.

I know there have been times I have forgotten who I have said I would pray for, and I have had to really think about that and reflect on ways I can do better in effectively praying for others. One thing I have made a decision to do, is immediately pray for the need that someone has right then.

— **When Fervent Prayer Is Offered For Them.**

We read in James 5:16-18, *“Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.”* It is not accidental that James uses the example of Elijah’s fervent and earnest praying to show us how we ought to ask God for the needs of others. We must emulate Elijah in effective praying!

— **When We Pray Regularly For Someone.**

One of the great teachings of Jesus concerning prayer, is that prayer should be persistent and thus, regularly given for others. In Luke 18:1-8, Jesus challenges us to be like the widow of that parable, and seek persistently in faith for the things we desire from God.

— **When We Pray With Purity Of Heart.**

John tells us, *“And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.”* (1 John 3:22). It the person who is seeking to please God with purity of heart that is on “praying terms” with God. David said concerning this, *“If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear.”* (Psalm 66:18). I would not ask the town drunk or the pastor of a denomination to pray for me effectively, but I would ask God’s people, who are faithful to God’s ways, to help me with my needs.

News and Notes:

Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, Robbie, Sheila, Sherry Doles, Sandi Poole, Nathan Cox, Sandra Oliver, Chad Harris, Eli Johnson, Burt Ward, Jamie Jones, Janet Boren, Fred Johnson, Mary Ann Holley, Anita Harris, and Larsen Plyler.

Robbie Doles had eye surgery last Wednesday morning and is recovering.
Sherry Fuqua (Doles) had a pain blocker procedure done, but has not helped as intended.
Willis Fields (Brandi Meade's Dad) needs our prayers for his health.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Tim Harris Sr.
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #1. "Get Help... Pt. 1"

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Workbook: Fred Johnson
1 & 2 Thessalonians
Author: Mark Mayberry
Starting Page & Question: Page #33, Question #12

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Doug George
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Adam Harris
Scripture Reading: Hebrews 4:14-16.
Song Leader: Jerry Kennemur
Lord's Supper: Paul Johnson
Assisting: — —
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #2: "Get Help... Pt. 2"
Closing Prayer: Russell Briggs

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

August 30, 2023

Auditorium Bible Class: Paul Johnson
Workbook: Preparing To Teach Our Neighbors
Author: Max Tice
Starting Page & Question: Page #6, Question #3
Invitation: Russell Briggs
Song Leader: Paul Busby
Closing Prayer: Blake Briggs

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“Get Help.... Pt. 1”

Lesson Text: **Psalm 94:12-19.**

I. Two Types Of Help.

- Human. **Leviticus 25:35; Deuteronomy 22:4; Ecclesiastes 4:10.**
- Divine. **Genesis 49:25; Deuteronomy 33:26-29.**

II. The Kind Of Help That Was Needed In The Old Testament.

- Help From Slavery In Egypt. **Exodus 3:6-10.**
- Help In Fighting Battles. **Deuteronomy 20:1-4; 2 Chronicles 32:5-8.**
- Help With Man’s Sin Problem— The Law. **Galatians 3:19.**
- Help For The Poor And Helpless. **Isaiah 41:14.**
- Help In Understanding And Wisdom. **Psalm 19:7; 119:130.**
- Help When The Wicked Oppress The Faithful. **Psalm 12:1-8.**

III. People In The Old Testament Who Did Get Help.

- Samuel And Israel. **1 Samuel 7:7-13.**
- Moses. **Exodus 18:4.**
- David. **1 Samuel 17:37; 2 Samuel 22:1-51 (44:51).**
- Elijah Helped The Widow Of Zarephath. **1 Kings 17:7-16.**
- Ruth’s Loyalty Helped Naomi. **Ruth 1:16-17.**
- Hannah. **1 Samuel 1:10-11; 1 Samuel 2:1-10.**

IV. Warnings Not To Get Help From Those Who Can’t Help Us.

- **Psalm 146:3.**
- **Isaiah 31:1-3.**
- **2 Chronicles 28:19-23.**
- **2 Chronicles 19:1-3.**

“Get Help.... Pt. 2”

Lesson Text: **Hebrews 4:14-16.**

I. Two Types Of Help:

- Human. **Luke 5:7.**
- Divine. **Acts 26:22.**

II. Why Do We Need To Get Help?

- Because We Can't Do It By Ourselves (Ability).
- Because We Don't Know What Or How To Do It (Knowledge).
- Because Of Emergencies In Our Lives (Situations).
- Because We Need What Others Can Supply (Lack).

III. The Kind Of Help That Is Needed In The New Testament.

- With Our Sin Problem. **Matthew 11:28-30; 1 Timothy 1:15.**
- Trials And Temptations. **Hebrews 4:16; 2:18 (ESV).**
- With Spiritual Needs: Forgiveness, Knowledge Of God's Word, Wisdom & Instruction - **Acts 16:9; Ephesians 1:15-20.**
- Emotional Support And Well Being. **1 Thessalonians 5:14.**
- Financial Support. **1 Timothy 5:3-4; 9-10.**

IV. People In The New Testament Who Did Get Help.

- **Matthew 15:21-28 (Mark 7:24-30).**
- **Mark 9:17-27.**
- **Luke 10:30-37.**
- Jesus' Disciples. **John 14:16 and 26.**
- Phoebe. **Romans 16:1-2.**
- **Philippians 4:2-3.**
- The Bereans. **Acts 17:11-12; James 1:21 (ESV).**
- The Gentile Converts. **Acts 13:42-49.**

V. People In The New Testament Who Did Not Get Help.

- The Proud, The Disobedient, And Faithless.
- **John 5:39-40;**
- **Mark 6:1-6.**
- **John 12:37-40.**
- **1 Peter 2:7-8.**