

PAUL'S PRISON PRAYER

Philippians 1: 9-11

INTRODUCTION

- a) Paul's Prayer Life
He prays regularly and consistently.
He usually combines Prayer and Praise.
His prayers are mainly on behalf of churches or individuals, not himself or for his needs in the prison.
He is totally sincere in his claims for his prayer life.
There are four "Prison Prayers".
The prayers of Nehemiah, Daniel, Paul, and the LORD give us patterns of prayer.
He used the time when he could not go anywhere to pray.
- b) Background - This epistle, to the Church at Philippi, was written 10 years after Paul first went there, and he writes from prison in Rome. It is a letter of thanksgiving, not only for a gift received, **(4: 15-16)** and services rendered, but for the warm concern that the church continued to show for him. It appears he was closer to them than with any of the other churches, he founded.
- c) The chapter is full of Christ- He is mentioned 18 times in Chapter 1.
- d) He begins with **Praise and Thanksgiving - verses 3- 8 - I have you in my mind – Acts 16.**
- As with his prayers he is totally sincere.
 - They are his children in the faith, and they seem to be a model Church.
 - **All of you** occurs 7 times in the epistle - they are ALL dear to him.
 - His memories were of the good things, not the bad, he looked at things from God's perspective.
- e) **He prays with joy – verse 4.** Joy is the theme of the epistle.
- ❖ Do we bring joy to those who pray for us?
 - ❖ Is prayer a joyful practice?

HIS THANKSGIVING is inspired by what follows: -

- i) **Partnership (Fellowship)** in the Gospel from the first day until now,
- ii) **Prayers (1: 19)**
- iii) **Finance (4: 15)**
- iv) **Confidence** that God is working in them. **(verse 6)** The work will be completed- Day of Jesus Christ – **2 Corinthians 1: 14, 5: 10, Ephesians 5: 27.**
The Work God **for** us – Redemption.
The Work God does **in** us- Sanctification.
The work does **through** us- Service.
- v) **Friendship - All of you share in God's Grace with me.** They were all sharing in the great influence of the Gospel. The Gospel that saved Paul, also saved Lydia and the jailer.
I have you in my heart- verse 7 God can testify - verse 8 –
He also declares His affection for them- **verse 8 - affection of Christ Jesus-** affection means heart of compassion - **1 John 3: 14 -18 - Christ's love channelled through Paul.**
He longs for them which probably means that he wants to come to them if only that were possible.

Quote: A look at the evangelical church today can be disheartening and discouraging, but a look at what the church will become in the future, in the day of Christ, is fantastically exciting.

HIS PRAYER Verses 9-11 – I have you in my prayers - Prayer is for maturity-Three main areas-

This is my prayer - This is the general word for prayer. **1: 4**, and **1: 19** carried the idea of entreaty for real or urgent need. **4: 6** indicates that which I have asked for – a definite plea. All three words in **4: 6**

a) **LOVE** - **Your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight - 1**

Thessalonians 3: 12 — Quality love, divine love, not superficial or shallow but a growing love. Overflowing unrestricted love - (perhaps reaching out to more people)

Paul's life and prayers are a great example to them.

God is working in our lives, but we have a part to play.

Knowledge is that which has a practical effect on our lives,

Insight - the only time this word is used carries idea of perception and sensitivity.

So, love affects the mind as well as the heart- intelligent love-

*Breathe on me, Breath of God,
fill me with life anew,
that I may love the way You love,
and do what You would do.*

❖ Do I love with my hear, my mind or both?

b) **LIFE** - **So that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ.**

Love that is enlightened will enable them to discern the things which are excellent.

Pure is singleness of motive before God – sincere, transparency and openness.

❖ Think about the danger of living a lie, and the outer life being different than the inner life.

Blameless has the idea of not stumbling- without causing offence **to others – integrity - See 2: 15,**

❖ Do I make others stumble?

❖ Will I be ashamed at His coming?

c) **FRUIT** - **Filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ — to the glory and praise of God.**

This is the fruit which makes up a righteous life - **Galatians 5: 22-23**

The Lord is the source of these virtues, and the object is the glory and praise of God.

Fruit is closely linked to our relationship in Christ- See also **See 3: 9, Isaiah 61: 3.**

Fruit is for His Glory- **Ephesians 1: 6,12,14.**

If we abide in Christ, we will bear fruit, more fruit, much fruit and much more fruit and our lives will be productive. **(John 15)**

Fruit could be winning people for Christ, **Romans 1: 13** (harvest), **15: 28,**

Fruit is good works - **Colossians 1: 10,**

Fruit is offering the sacrifice of Praise **Hebrews 13: 15**

The end result- **to the glory and praise of God.**

In summary he is praying for them:

To be **Increasing** in Love

Intelligent in discernment

Irreproachable in character and conduct

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