

I. Introduction and review: Plan then pray.

II. Your fervent prayers are essential. v. 30

- A. Why pray for one another? v. 30a
1. Pray for the Lord's sake.
 2. Pray because of the Spirit-produced love we have for one another. Ga. 5:22 6:2
- B. Paul is convinced he needs the prayers of other believers.
1. He earnestly solicits their prayers (but not their money).
 2. This is not the only place Paul makes such a request. II Co. 1:11 Phil. 1:19 Col. 4:3 I Th. 5:24 II Th. 3:1 Eph. 6:18-20
 3. We need each other's prayers.
 4. Our missionaries and leaders especially need our prayers.
- C. The prayer Paul seeks is agonizing prayer.
1. Cold perfunctory prayer is not enough.
 2. What does it mean to strive in prayer? I Co. 9:25 Heb. 12:1 Col. 4:12 II Ti. 4:7 Lu. 22:44 Gen. 32:24f
 3. What hinders us from praying fervently? Mark 14:38
 - a. Sin. Ps. 66:28 Isa. 59:1-3
 - b. Broken relationships. I Pe. 3:7 Mt. 5:23-24 Heb. 12:14-15
 - c. Wrong motives. Js. 4:3
 - d. Doubt. Js. 1:6-7
 - e. Distraction.
 - f. Laziness. Luke 18:1-8
 4. What can we do to promote fervent prayer? I Pet. 4:7
 - a. Concentrate.
 - b. Devote more time to prayer. Acts 6:4 2:42
 - c. Set aside a day for prayer and fasting. Mt. 6:13 17:21 Acts 13:3
 - d. Persist. Luke 18:1-8
 - e. Strive with God. Deut. 9:24-29 I Sam. 1:10,12 Rom. 9:1-3 10:1 Dan.
 - f. Pray with Expectancy. Js. 5:16-18

III. Pray specifically. v. 31-32

- A. Paul makes specific prayer requests.
1. That he would be delivered from the unbelieving Jews. v. 31a Mt. 6:13 II Th. 3:2 Acts 9:29-30 14:2 17:5 19:9 20:3,23 21:27f 23:12 II Co. 1:10 II Ti. 3:11 4:17-18
 2. That the gift from the Gentile churches will be accepted by the Jewish believers. v. 31b II Co. 8:12
 3. That after his successful mission to Jerusalem he may return for a time of mutual refreshment in Rome. v. 32 15:23-24,28-29 I Co. 16:18 II Co. 7:13 Phm. 1:7,20
- B. We ought to pray specifically for one-another.
1. We should make and seek specific prayer requests.
 2. We should pray for that which is most important. *What would most glorify God?*
 3. Pray for family members.
 4. Pray for the church.
 5. Pray for our missionaries.
- C. Prayers are not always answered in the way we hope or expect.

1. Paul acknowledges God's will is ultimate. v. 32a 1:10 Mt. 6:10 Acts 18:21 I Co. 4:19 Js. 4:15 Luke 22:42 John 5:30
2. How were Paul's requests answered?
 - a. The brethren received them gladly. Acts 21:17f *YES*
 - b. The unbelieving Jews sought to kill him, but Paul was saved by the Romans (who imprisoned him). Acts 21:27f 23:16 *YES and NO*
 - c. Paul finally made it to Rome, but not as he had planned. Acts 23:11 28:14f *WAIT*
 - d. Paul probably never made it to Spain. *NO*
3. Even the "No" answers were for the best. 8:28 Phil. 1:12f

D. Why pray if God has already determined what He will do? Eph. 1:11

1. Theological errors in prayer.
 - a. Prayer changes God. (Arminianism)
 - b. Prayer is unimportant, except to change us. (Superficial Calvinism)
2. Prayer is powerful and effective. Mt. 7:7f Js. 4:16-18
3. Prayer is God's appointed means to accomplish His purposes and to bless us. Acts 21:31 23:16 Js. 4:17-18 Daniel 9 I Kings 18
4. There is no contradiction between God's sovereignty and agonizing in prayer.
5. Prayer only makes sense if God is sovereign.
6. Prayer glorifies God.

IV. May the God of Peace be with you. v. 33

- A. Agonizing in prayer leads to peace.
- B. God is a God of peace, Who makes peace. 5:1 Eph. 2:14-18
- C. Only those who know the God of peace enjoy the peace of God. Is. 57:20-21 Js. 4:1-2 Phil. 4:6-9

V. Concluding applications. Lord teach us to pray!

- A. Pray privately.
- B. Pray publicly. *Will you strive in pray with us? Acts 2:42*

Discussion questions for family worship

1. Why should we pray for one another?
2. What does it mean to strive (or agonize) in prayer?
3. What hinders us from praying as we should?
4. What can you do to pray more fervently?
5. What specific prayer requests does Paul make?
6. How can you pray more specifically for others?
7. For whom should you especially pray?
8. Why doesn't God always answer "yes" to our prayers?
9. Why pray if God has predetermined what will happen?
10. How does our prayer glorify God?