



THE PRAYER CLOSET

ENCOURAGING & EQUIPPING BELIEVERS IN PRAYER

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ISSUE I

PRAYING FOR SPIRITUAL MATURITY

The Christian life begins with regeneration – with being born again. When we are born again, we are babes, infants in the Christian life. This is the beginning of a process of change and growth. We start on the road to spiritual maturity. The Word of God pictures this as growth from little children to young men to fathers (**1 John 2:12-14**). Christians are to strive for spiritual maturity.

This is the intent of Paul's prayer in **Ephesians 1:17-19**. Paul had heard of the Ephesians' faith in Jesus Christ and their love toward all the saints (**1:15-16**). Because of this, his heart is burdened to intercede for them. He then explains how he prays for them. He prays that they will understand what they have in Christ. This will enable me to grow in Christ and move on to spiritual maturity.

This prayer can be used to pray for yourself. It can also be used to intercede for your church. Paul's intention is that every Christian would come to know these things personally and in experience.

Pray For Understanding In The Perfections Of God (Ephesians 1:17-18a)

Paul's first prayer concern is that believers will grow in their knowledge of God. He prays, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him" (**1:17**). Paul calls on God to reveal to them the knowledge of Himself – the Father of glory. The "glory" of God is that which makes Him visible. Paul asks that they believers would "see" and "know" whom God is as He is. He prays that the Holy Spirit would "enlighten the eyes of their understanding" in the knowledge of God (**1:18**).

Paul prays that these believers would have a greater understanding of the attributes and activities of God. When you first come to Jesus, God becomes your Father (**Galatians 3:26**). You enter into a relationship

with God as your personal Father. For this relationship to grow and mature, you have to grow in your knowledge of God. You need to understand who God is and how this applies to your life. This is the heart of Paul's prayer – to pray for greater understanding in who God is and how He works.

A growing knowledge of God's attributes and ways is essential to a child of God. Knowing who God is affects every part of our walk with God. It strengthens our assurance of salvation. It fuels our prayer lives. It makes us bolder for Him and His causes. It brings us comfort in the adversities of life. It empowers us to endure when challenged. The more we know Him, the deeper and more fruitful our walk with Him and our service before Him.

We must continue to grow in our knowledge of God. No one ever gets to the place where they no longer need to grow in the knowledge of God. Charles Spurgeon once said that the knowledge of God is like a body of water – shallow enough for a child to wade in and deep enough for an elephant to drown in. From the moment we come to Christ until we breathe our last breath, we are to pursue Him.

This should shape our understanding of the church. The church has to be a place passionate about the knowledge of God. The church is to be a people who are hungry for God – desiring and striving to know Him as He is revealed in the Scripture.

We are to pray that God would help us to grow in the knowledge of Him. We are to plead with God by His Holy Spirit to give us revelation – insight into who God is. We are to call on God by His Holy Spirit to give us wisdom – the ability to apply the truths about God in our lives. We must pray for this because it's not in our ability to come to this understanding on our own. We must plead that God by His Holy Spirit would empower us to understand what the Word teaches about Himself and how this applies to our daily lives.

Father, grant me wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of You. Teach me who You are and how this makes a difference in my life.

**Pray For Understanding In Our Position In
Christ
(Ephesians 1:18b)**

After praying that these believers would understand who God is, He now asks that they would understand their position in Christ. He prays, “that ye may know what is the hope of his calling” (1:18b). What is the hope of his calling? It is the final glorification of the believer. It is the day when the believer is delivered from sin and is conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. God has saved us for a glorious future! Paul prays that these believers will grasp this amazing truth. He pleads that they will have hope because of this calling.

God has determined to save sinful people, change them, and bring them into eternal joy and glory in heaven (Ephesians 1:4-5, 10). This is our calling! This should give us hope. When we sin and feel that we are hopeless, we must remember the hope of our calling. When we don’t see change like we desire, we must remember the hope of our calling. God has saved us and He will complete the work in us that He began (Philippians 1:6). He has determined to save us and to bring us to eternal glory and blessing in heaven, being conformed to Jesus Christ our Lord.

By praying this prayer, we are asking God to give us fresh hope – hope that we will be changed, that we will be kept, that we will enter into heaven with eternal glory and joy. This is crucial for us to grasp and hold on to in his life. The Christian life has many ups and downs. We have times when we feel closer to God than others. We have times when we feel are drowning in sinful thoughts and feelings. We have times when we are not as diligent for the Lord as we ought.

But, there is hope! God is at work. He is working out his purpose for you. Even when you are striving and don’t see any progress, God is working. He will complete what He started in you. He will keep you. He will sustain you. He will protect you. He will bring you to heaven for an eternity of blessing, joy, and glory. In this sinful, fallen world, this hope is an anchor that will sustain us and help us to keep persevering in faith.

This text challenges us to pray for greater understanding in this hope of our calling. It is asking God to instill in our hearts and minds that we are secure in Him, headed to heaven, and that we will be completely changed and glorified one day. It is to pray for the assurance of God’s salvation and purpose that we might have hope, no matter what happens in this life.

Father, help me to grasp the hope of Your calling. Grant me hope in the midst of my struggles and sins.

**Pray For Understanding In Our Portion In
Christ
(Ephesians 1:18c)**

Paul has asked that these believers might grow in the knowledge of God and in the hope of his calling. He now continues with this petition by asking that they grasp, “what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints” (1:18c). He wants them to realize that the saints, the believers, are God’s inheritance. One day, God will inherit His own people. His purpose for them will be complete. His transformation of them will be finalized. He will be glorified in them.

Believers are God’s inheritance. Why does Paul pray that they will grasp this? God is going to secure us and provide for us so that He can bring us to heaven and receive His inheritance. He has a plan for His people, loves them, and will bring them to heaven for His glory. When a believer grasps this, it can help him live in confidence.

We are God’s portion. We are His inheritance. Don’t you believe He will take care of you and sustain you until you reach heaven? Don’t you believe that He will provide all that you need to live for Him until He brings you to heaven? Don’t you believe that He will secure you until He gets you to heaven where He can rejoice in you?

When we grasp this truth – that we are God’s inheritance – it should fill us with confidence. We are to have the confidence that He will provide for us. Everything that God is and God has is available to us. We are blessed with all of God’s spiritual blessings through Jesus Christ. We are God’s inheritance – everything He has is at our disposal. Everything needed to glorify Him and live for Him is ours for the asking.

When you grasp this, it also helps you fight worldliness. All spiritual blessings are ours through Christ. As God’s inheritance, all we need is available to us. Our pursuit in life should move from the getting of

earthly treasures to the receiving of spiritual blessings to glorify God and live for Him.

When we pray this petition, we are asking God to show us that we are His inheritance. We are pleading for the conviction that we belong to God and that He will sustain us and preserve us until we reach heaven. We will shine with His glory in heaven one day.

Father, help me to know that I am Your inheritance. Empower me to trust You for all my needs and to rest in Your provision and protection.

Pray For Understanding About Our Power In Christ (Ephesians 1:19)

Paul's final petition is that believers would grasp, "what is the exceeding greatness of his power to-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power" (1:19). He prays that believers will know the greatness of the power that is available to them. The power available to them is the resurrection power of Jesus Christ (1:20-21). Paul prays that they will grasp that this power is available for **them**. He longs for them to understand that the resurrection power of Jesus is available for their daily life.

When we pray this petition, we are asking God to help us know that resurrection power is available to us. The power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead is available to every believer. By virtue of our faith in Jesus Christ, this power is a reality for every believer.

It is crucial to grasp this truth. Why is it crucial? First, it shows us our weakness. If Paul prays that believers would see the greatness of Christ's power available to them, doesn't that necessarily mean that we are powerless? We do not have the power to live the Christian life. We have no power inherent in us. We must receive the power of Jesus Christ. Second, it should stir us to receive the power of Jesus Christ. Since we have no power, it should drive us to call on Him and trust Him for His power. Our powerlessness ought to cause us to confess our weakness and to seek for His power.

What is this power for? This power is available to us that we might lead godly lives in a sinful world. This power is for godly living. It is power to be holy in a wicked world. It is power to proclaim the gospel in a hostile world. It is the power to stand firm in the faith in an antagonistic society. It is the power to carry out the ethical teachings in **Ephesians 4-6**.

Father, enable me to understand the power that is available to me. I confess my powerlessness; help me to walk daily in dependence on Your power. Grant me power to live a holy life and to be a bold witness for you.

Praying Ephesians 1:17-19 For Your Church

We can and ought to pray these verses for ourselves. However, I would encourage you to pray them for your church. Paul gives us a powerful example in **Ephesians 1**. He prayed for other believers, "Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers" (**Ephesians 1:16**). He confesses that he prayed regularly for these believers (1:15). Our regularly practice should be to pray for other believers – especially those who belong to your local church.

One of the best ways to pray for your church is to pray this text of Scripture. The following are Scripture prayers that you can use to pray **Ephesians 1:15-19** for your church.

Father, I thank you for the believers of _____ Church. I praise You for their salvation and Your work of grace in their lives. I rejoice in their faith in Jesus Christ and the love that they have to other believers. Continue to sustain and deepen their faith and love.

Father, I plead that the believers of _____ Church would receive wisdom and revelation from the Holy Spirit concerning You. Enlighten our eyes by Your Spirit to see You and know You as You are. Cause us to hunger for You; stir us in our pursuit of knowing You – Your attributes and Your ways.

Father, I pray that the believers of _____ Church will grasp the hope of Your calling. Cause us to know that You are at work. Instill in our hearts the conviction that You will bring us to heaven and will transform us completely. Help us to pursue holiness now, knowing it will be completed one day. Deliver us from discouragement and lead us in the paths of righteousness.

Father, I ask that the believers of _____ Church will know certainly that we are Your inheritance. You will provide for us and sustain us. Help us then to walk in dependence on You, seeking and asking You for Your blessings to live godly lives.

The Prayer Closet Ministries, Inc.
Dr. Kevin Meador
P.O. Box 278
Hickory, MS 39332

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Father, I plead that the believers of _____ Church will know that the resurrection power of Jesus Christ is available to us. I pray that we will see our powerlessness and will see the almighty power of Christ available to us. Enable us to turn away from ourselves and to depend on Your power to live godly, faithful lives in this sinful world.

Prayer Closet News

We continue to make progress on our ministry facility. We now have insulation in the facility. The next step is to have the floors sealed and gravel placed around the facility. We rejoice at what God has done and look forward to His future provision. It is our desire to finish this facility as possible as we can. This will enable us to expand our ministry and will give us the opportunity to start offering prayer seminars in the facility.

Please continue to pray for this ministry and this facility. I would also ask you prayerfully to consider giving to this ministry. Your financial help would be greatly appreciated and will be used to touch the lives of people across the world. May God richly bless and help you!

Dr. Kevin Meador, President

The Prayer Closet Ministries, Inc.
P. O. Box 278
Hickory, MS 39332

(601) 635-2180

(601) 646-2295

EMAIL:

prayer@prayerclosetministries.org

WEB PAGES:

www.prayerclosetministries.org

www.kingdompraying.com