

A Prayer for One Another

One of the greatest blessings we can offer each other is our prayers. As Paul instructed in **Ephesians 6:18**, we need to persevere in making supplications for each other. We must certainly offer help and give aid in very practical ways, day to day, but we must be sure to make all that help worthwhile by inviting God to be part of the relationship and by inviting God to bring His blessing on our friend that we are helping. As **Psalms 127:1-2** explains, it is vain for us to rise up early and stay up late, spinning our wheels, even in help to our brethren if God is not brought in to help and strengthen.

Certainly, in our individual relationships, we may know of specific requests to offer on behalf of particular individuals. We may know of particular struggles with temptation, particular battles, particular tragedies. However, we can't possibly know most of our brethren that well. In that case, we need a good guide for prayer to bring our brothers and sisters before the throne of God and ask for His all-seeing care and guardianship over their lives.

Paul provides a great guide of praying for one another in **Colossians 1:9-12**, praying:

“And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light” (ESV).

Notice three key aspects of this prayer.

Key #1: Knowledge, wisdom, and understanding: We are to pray that we may all be filled with knowledge. But this is more than a grasp of some facts about God and His will. This is a wisdom and understanding. Knowledge puffs up (cf. **I Corinthians 8:1**). That is, if all we are focused on is a head knowledge that proves intellectual superiority, we will be arrogant. But wisdom, applied knowledge, and understanding, grasping the purpose of the knowledge, keep us humble and focused on God's glory.

Key #2: Walking in a manner worthy of the Lord: We are to pray that our brothers and sisters will use the knowledge, wisdom, and understanding they have to walk like the Lord. While we are saved by the grace of God, we are saved in order to walk by the lead of God. We pray for this because we want our brothers and sisters to please our Father in heaven, bearing fruit for His glory and increasing in His knowledge.

Key #3: Strengthened with God's power: This gets right to the heart of what we all need. We can't go it alone. Neither can our brothers and sisters. We need the power of God to hold us up, protect us, empower us so we may patiently endure the trials Satan will hurl at us. When our brothers and sisters are strengthened by God, they will be able to give thanks even in the face of trials because they are aware that God is the one qualifying them.

Our brothers and sisters need us to pray for them. Let Paul's prayer be a guide for you as you lift them up to His throne of mercy and grace this week.

—Edwin L. Crozier