

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Morning

Date 3rd April 2022 Hymns Psalm 11 St Magnus, 631-t Kilmarnock, 371 Read: Philippians 1:1-5 Text Philippians 1:3-5

Series: Philippians () Title: A Praying Pastor

The Apostle Paul in giving thanks to God, for the saints at Philippi, and for their fellowship in the gospel, then assured those believers of his prayers.

Paul said in **verses 3-4** ***"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,"***

It is interesting to note that the word **prayer** and the word **request** are the same word in the original Greek, meaning **supplication**.

Therefore, you can read these words, ***"Always in every prayer of mine for you all making prayer with joy,"***

or ***Always in every request of mine for you all making request with joy,***

or ***Always in every supplication of mine for you all making supplication with joy.***

(From these words it is clear Paul was a praying Pastor, or could we say it like this the church at Philippi were blessed to have a praying Pastor.)

Paul took his pastoral praying serious, because he took his example of the greatest Praying Pastor, the Lord Jesus Himself, who said **John 10:14** ***"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.***

The word **shepherd** means **a pastor**. Christ said in **verse 27** *I know them...*” **Heb 7:25** ***He ever liveth to make intercession for them.***

Christ is taking the shepherd and his sheep, to illustrate Christ and His people. He is the Pastor of His Church, Christ knows His people by name because He lay down His life for them, He gave them eternal life, but also He prays for them by name.

Christ is our example not only when it comes to a praying pastor, but also a praying people.

Paul was a praying Pastor, and the Philippians a praying people, as he exhorted them in **Ch 4:6** ***but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.***

Having sat in Paul’s presence under his word and now reading his letters, they learned from Paul in thanksgiving and prayers.

Even from the early days of church at Philippi in **Acts 16** the Apostles spent time in the house of the early converts, they learned from times of prayer that were established, **verse 16** ***“as we went to prayer.***

listening to the prayer of Paul, and other Apostles, they learned to pray, They became prayer warriors for Philippi and for Paul.

That’s why it’s vital to attend prayer meetings, to learn to pray from prayer warriors so that you become one.

Dr carins he learned to pray by listening to the prayers of Dr Paisley.

May this be known among our congregation.

But for today we focus upon Paul as a Praying Pastor

You may not be a Pastor of a church, but God has given you a family, church family to pastorally pray for them.

CH Spurgeon said “*the greatest good any man could do for me is to pray for me*”

I FIRST, THE RELIABILITY OF A PRAYING PASTOR

Notice Paul’s words in **verse 4** “...*in every prayer of mine for you all making request...*”

What a blessing it was for the saints at Philippi to know there was a preaching man sent from God who was a praying man.

They could rely on the fact that Paul made request for them, that he offered up prayer for them at the throne of grace.

Like the high priest of Israel in Ex 25-30 who prayed for God’s people as they were also close to his heart.

Before the Philippians were saved by grace, there was no man who cared for their soul.

Think even of the damsel possessed, her masters never cared for her, just what profit she gave them from her lies.

Think of the Jailor who expected to lose his life under Roman law, trouble that the prisoner left the jail after the afterquake, but they remained.

Yet when Paul and others preached the way of salvation as revealed by the gospel of Christ, sinners were brought into the fellowship of the gospel.

God had given Paul a people to pray for, and the people were given a pastor to pray for them.

Therefore, believer i am certainly not perfect or a perfect pastor, but I assure you all of my prayers for you, seeking to learn from the Chief Pastor of the flock, Jesus Christ in order **to be a good pastor, a praying pastor, as possible as a saved sinner can be this side of eternity.**

Only Christ is the perfect Pastor. Be assured believer Christ is praying for you from heaven, as He did when He was upon earth.

Therefore, the words spoken to Peter on earth and still as true today though prayed from heaven. They have not lost their effectiveness.

Christ assured Peter and rest of the company in **Luke 22:31-32** ***“And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee.”***

The name **Satan** means **resister, opposer, adversary**, The word **desired** is an intensive word means **to ask, to beg**, so it could be read – ***“Satan resister, opposer, adversary hath demanded to have you that he may sift you as wheat*** ist, that he might ***“sift”*** them or **shake them**.

And because Peter is next to face his attack, notice Christ has a word ***32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”***

Even before the attack occurs Christ has prayed for His people.

Christ prayed in **John 17:15** ***“ I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.***

He prayed that God would keep and guard His people, and He does, for Peter stated in 1 Peter 1:5 that redeemed sinners are ***kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.***

Believer you can rely on the prayers of Christ, for His prayers are perfect, and powerful.

His prayers as the righteous man availeth much. He said in John 11:41-42 ***“Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. ⁴² And I knew that thou hearest me always:”***

The Saviour knows your needs, changing circumstances, every temptation, despair, hell’s attacks, but He is praying for you from heaven, ***“always in every prayer of mine for you all making request...”*** or as the words can be read, ***“always in every prayer of mine for you all making prayer...”***

Robert Murray McCheyne said ***“if I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room I would not fear a million enemies. Yet distance makes no difference. He is praying for me.”***

II SECOND, THE RESILIENCE OF A PRAYING PASTOR.

Please keep in mind, when Paul wrote these words, stating his prayerful support, he was bound in a Roman cell, yet Paul was resilient, strong, as a praying pastor.

Paul didn’t allow his situation or circumstances to effect his prayers for God’s people.

A prison cell never caused Paul to lose prayerful focus. **In one sense or a prayerful sense** when Paul entered the Roman cell the Philippians went with him.

There may have been a distance between Rome and Philippi, but there was no distance between Paul's prayers in Rome for the saints at Philippi.

Paul knew he was not getting out of prison, but his prayers would, and not only out but his prayer went up to the throne of grace.

You see, when troubles arise our situation changes, that situation becomes our focus, and prayers are often forgotten.

But not Paul, "***always in every prayer of mine for you all...***" what a lesson for this pastor, that whatever is going on in the ministry, the burdens of church life, the work load, ill health, situations arise, there must be resilience, going on "***always in every prayer of mine for you all...***"

the same applies to all believers, praying for others even when you are experiencing your own trouble and trials.

Encouraging yourself in the Lord by praying for others, praying for souls to be saved.

May I suggest when discouraged, you can't face people, burden down, get gospel tracts go around the doors put them through their letter box, pray as you go around, you will be lifted up.

Does this not lead us to Jesus Christ our true praying Pastor. In His humiliation and sufferings, He never lost focus.

when He faced the cross, or when upon the cross, sinners He had chosen to save were on His mind, when He prayed in **Luke 23:43** "***Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do...***" That is a prayer offered in time, that includes the past, present and future.

He never gave up or gave in. Upon the cross, Christ was our praying Pastor. He will see the travail or labour of His soul and be satisfied.

III THIRD, THE REPETITION OF A PRAYING PASTOR

the word **always** gives the idea that Paul **continually prayed for the saints at Philippi**, or when Paul prayed, the Saints at Philippi were always mentioned, for that is the sense of the words “**always in every prayer of mine for you all...**”

later in the chapter from **verses 9-11** one of Paul's prayers for the Philippians are recorded, and we get consider that prayer on another occasion in greater detail.

Can you imagine Paul's prayer list, because we read also that Paul said to the believers at Rome in **Romans 1:9** “...**without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers; 2 Timothy 1:3** “**that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;**”

Paul never gave up on praying for the saints at Philippi, but repeatedly, **always in every prayer of mine for you all making request...**”

Preachers can learn from Paul, office members, parents, husbands and wife's, learn from Paul, in our prayers, one for another **always in every prayer of mine for you all making request...**” at home, in the church.

In fact the word **making** means **an offering or to offer up**. Paul is offering up to God prayer for the saints at Philippi.

Furthermore, the word **making** or **offering** is in the present tense meaning **Paul continually offered prayer**, or Paul was always offering prayer for Philippians.

It is a word that speaks of a continual practise, consistency offering up prayer of the saints at Philippi concerning the things of God.

This is Christ likeness, the praying pastor, who always prays for all His people. **Romans 8:34** teaches Christ is “*at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*”

Hebrews 9:12 “*by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.*” He appears in heaven for you believer, always making prayers on your behalf.

We learn this from the prayer of Christ recorded for learning in **John 17:9** “*I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.*” **Verse 20** “*Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;*

He always prays for them from heaven that on earth in **John 17:16** *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth,* that is they will be set apart, grow in holiness and grace, because He also prays that they on earth will be with Him in heaven, **John 17:24** “*that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am.*”

IV FOURTH, THE REJOICING OF A PRAYING PASTOR

Verse 4 *Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy.*” The word **joy** comes from the word **rejoice**. **Paul’s letter is full of joy and rejoicing, due to their fellowship in the gospel.** Why because this Joy is from God, who Himself is absolute joy.

But as Paul prays continually for God's people, he does so with joy, it rejoices his heart to pray for them, to think about them, to thank God for their fellowship in the gospel.

Paul's prayer does not think about failures or hold any grudges, rather he offers prayer with joy.

May I just say it is a blessing to pray for you. I say that truly, when pray for this congregation I do so making request, offering prayer with joy. It rejoices my heart to pray for you.

Did you know believer Christ rejoices over for His people, He rejoices over His Church as He thinks about them, notice **Zephaniah 3:17** ***“He will rejoice over thee with joy, He will joy over thee with singing.”***

Now you may look at yourself and wonder how can the Saviour rejoice over me. The reasoning the cause of His joy and rejoicing is not depend upon me, but in the Saviour of sinners.

He rejoices and sings over His people not because of anything they have done, earned, or deserved to be praised, rather He rejoices, and sings joyfully, over them because of His everlasting covenant of grace and mercy **authorised by the Father, accomplished by Son and applied to them by the Spirit.**

That is why, Zephaniah writes, ***“He will rest in His love.”***, the Hebrews reading is ***“He will be silent in His love.”*** This means that He will be silent about His people's sins

He will not bring up past sins to accuse and hold against them, rather, in Christ every accusation and sin against them

has been dealt with, blotted out. God is silent, toward every accusation.

God rejoices in Himself and what He has done for and in His people. Therefore, our joy and rejoicing flows from Redemption in Christ, you where the joy set before Him.

Paul can pray with joy for the saints at Philippi for their fellowship in the gospel, He joy over who the Lord joys over, because Christ rejoices over His people.