

Ephesians 6 (5-20-12)

PRAYING FOR WORKERS (NOT SLACKERS)

The Spiritual Warfare Series

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TEXT: Ephesians 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication **for all saints**;

19 **And for me**, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,

20 For **which I am an ambassador in bonds**: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

24 Grace be with **all them** that **love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity**. Amen.

Exodus 17:11 And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

12 But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and **Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands**, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

Galatians 6:6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

"This is one part of the duty which people owe to their ministers; they need the prayers of the people; and the more earnestly the people pray for their ministers, the more benefit they may expect to reap from their ministry..."

(Matthew Henry)

Romans 15:30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye **strive** together with me in your prayers to God for me;

Hebrews 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

18 **Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.**

"It is only when we aim to do right, and to maintain a good conscience, that we can with propriety ask the prayers of others..."

(Barnes)

"...ministers by whom people receive most good...ought to be prayed for..."

(William Gouge)

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Galatians 4:11 I am afraid of you, lest I have **bestowed upon you labour in vain.**

1 Thessalonians 3:5 For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, **and our labour be in vain.**

2 John 1:10 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

11 For **he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.**

2 Chronicles 18:3 And **Ahab** king of Israel said unto **Jehoshaphat** king of Judah, Wilt thou go with me to Ramothgilead? And he answered him, I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war.

4 And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Enquire, I pray thee, **at the word of the LORD** to day.

7 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, by whom we may enquire of the LORD: **but I hate him**; for he never prophesied good unto me, but always evil: the same is Micaiah the son of Imla. And Jehoshaphat said, **Let not the king say so.**

2 Chronicles 19:1 And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem.

2 And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, **Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD.**

Hosea 2:6 Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths.

7 And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find them: then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband; **for then was it better with me than now.**

Luke 15:17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

2 Thessalonians 3:14 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, **that he may be ashamed.**

15 Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

"Plain spoken men were the pioneer preachers of Missouri. Down in the Ozarks is preserved the tradition of the prayer which was offered at the bedside of a young man who had been bitten by a snake and was in desperate straits. The family to which the preacher was called was unregenerate, and no credit to the community. But when John lay sick from the snake bite, the preacher was sent for, and this, according to the tradition, was the way he prayed:

'We thank Thee, Almighty God, for Thy watchful care over us and for Thy goodness and tender mercy, and especially we thank Thee for rattlesnakes. Thou hast sent one to bite John Weaver. We pray Thee to send one to bite Jim, one to bite Henry, one to bite Sam, one to bite Bill; and we pray Thee to send the biggest kind of a rattlesnake to bite the old man, for nothing but rattlesnakes will ever bring the Weaver family to repentance. There are others in Missouri just as bad as the Weavers. We pray Thee to stir up Missouri, and, if nothing else will bring the people to repentance, we pray Thee to shower down more rattlesnakes. Amen.'

(Centennial History of Missouri, 1921)

Luke 19:26 For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath **shall be given**; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

Luke 10:1 After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.

2 Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the **labourers** are few: **pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers** into his harvest.

Romans 16:1 I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea:

2 That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and **that ye assist her** in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

Psalms 10:3 For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and **blesseth the covetous**, whom the LORD abhorreth.

Ephesians 6:24 Grace be with **all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.**

John 17:9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world...

"Many professing Christians are inclined to take a passive attitude on this subject, and feel as if they had nothing to do. They have...paid him to feed them with instruction and comfort, and now they have nothing to do but to sit and swallow the food he gives...THEY WILL GO TO HELL if this is their religion!...Be the minister ever so faithful, ever so devoted, ever so talented and eloquent, though he may wear himself out, and perhaps destroy his life, he will have little or no revival...Be careful not to complain of plain, pointed preaching, even when its reproofs fasten on yourselves...**Do not take part with the wicked in any way. If you do it at all, you will strengthen their hands...Do not unite with them at all, for they will feel that they have you on their side...you adopt their principles, use their language, and are understood as sympathizing with them...**If you wish to stand by your minister in promoting a revival, do not, by your lives contradict his preaching...It is [also] the command of God, that 'they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel'...[And] **pray for your minister. Even the apostles used to urge the churches to pray for them. This is more important than you imagine...**I have known a church bear up their minister in prayer from day to day, and watch with anxiety...and when

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they see their prayer answered, and when they hear a word...taking effect among the people, you can see their whole souls look out of their eyes! How different is the case where the Christians feel that the Minister is praying, and so there is no need for them to do so. They are mistaken...Prayer for a minister is often made in a set and formal way...they never have agonized in private for a blessing on his labors...The church ought always to say to the minister: 'We will support you; go to work; let the truth pour down on the people, and we will stand by you'....They should watch over the members of the church. They should visit each other, in order to stir each other up...it is impossible [the pastor] should study and prepare sermons, and at the same time visit all the members of the church as often as is necessary to keep them advancing. The members are bound to watch over each other's spiritual welfare...Be ready to aid your minister in carrying out his plans for doing good...when the members hang back from every enterprise until they are actually dragged into it...they are a dead weight upon a minister...Why do they employ a minister? Is it to amuse them by preaching? Or is it that he may teach them the will of God, that they may do it?.... I am not excusing negligent ministers...[But] sometimes the church is much more to blame than the minister...Perhaps they are dishonest to their minister, or covetous, or careless about the conveniences of public worship. Alas! what a state many country churches are in...It might be well for him to say to the church: 'Whenever you are determined to take one of these long naps, I wish you would let me know it, so that I can go and labor somewhere else in the meantime, till you are ready to wake again'...As I have gone from place to place laboring in revivals, I have always found that churches were blessed in proportion to their liberality...Gird on the Gospel armor, and come up to the work..."

(Finney, *Revival Lectures*)

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