



## ***World Christian Fellowship***

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### **Prayer – Lesson 03**

In our first lesson, we saw how Jesus went out alone to pray and how we ought to live our life communicating with God every moment of it. In the second, we saw how the apostles prayed for the churches that they would be filled with the knowledge of God and live for Him alone. They never prayed for any physical need at all. Every prayer request that was made on behalf of the church was related to their spiritual life.

In this lesson, let us look at what the early church and the apostles commanded us to pray for.

#### **1 Thessalonians 5:17, *pray without ceasing***

Let us examine the following:

**Romans 15:30–32 (NCV), *Brothers and sisters, I beg you to help me in my work by praying to God for me. Do this because of our Lord Jesus and the love that the Holy Spirit gives us. Pray that I will be saved from the nonbelievers in Judea and that this help I bring to Jerusalem will please God's people there. Then, if God wants me to, I will come to you with joy, and together you and I will have a time of rest. The God who gives peace be with you all. Amen.***

Firstly, here Paul is asking them to pray that he will be able to fulfil the work that the Lord had laid in his heart.

Secondly, to pray for him to be saved from the non-believers, those who are opposing the work of God so that Apostle Paul will be able to continue his ministry.

Thirdly, that the gift he has been carrying, given by the Macedonian churches, be accepted by the Christians in Jerusalem.

Now just for a moment think about what is being preached by those so-called pastors/tele evangelists. They say God wants to open His storehouse for you, and all that you have to do is sow your 'seed'. Now where did it all go wrong?

Look at the letter written to the Corinthians.

**2 Corinthians 1:8-11 (NKJV)**, *For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us, you also helping together in prayer for us, that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the gift granted to us through many.*

Paul here describes the hardship in their midst and how God helped them overcome it through prayer partnership!

**2 Corinthians 9:12-15 (NLT)**, *So two good things will result from this ministry of giving—the needs of the believers in Jerusalem will be met, and they will joyfully express their thanks*

*to God. As a result of your ministry, they will give glory to God. For your generosity to them and to all believers will prove that you are obedient to the Good News of Christ. And they will pray for you with deep affection because of the overflowing grace God has given to you. Thank God for this gift too wonderful for words!*

Apostle Paul mentions here that God will be glorified through the giving of the church in Corinth towards the church in Jerusalem. The giving was due to the big famine in Jerusalem, for which Apostle Paul collected money from the churches in Macedonia so that the believers who are struggling could be looked after. Apostle Paul never raised any money for himself or for his ministry.

**Ephesians 6:18-20 (NLT)**, *Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere. And pray for me, too. Ask God to give me the right words so I can boldly explain God's mysterious plan that the Good News is for Jews and Gentiles alike. I am in chains now, still preaching this message as God's ambassador. So pray that I will keep on speaking boldly for him, as I should.*

Here again we find Apostle Paul asking for prayers, that he would be bold in his preaching. At that point, although he was under house arrest, yet he was not asking them to pray for his release, rather he preaches the message of God boldly while still in his chains.

He commands them to pray for all the believers in the Spirit!!

To the church in Philippi:

**Philippians 4: 6-7 (NKJV)**, *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

To the church in Colossi:

**Colossians 4:2-4 (NKJV)**, *Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.*

**1 Thessalonians 5:23-25 (NKJV)**, *Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us.*

**2 Thessalonians 3:1-5 (NLV)**, *My last words to you, Christian brothers, are that you pray for us. Pray that the Word of the Lord will go out over all the land and prove its power just as it did with you. Pray that we will be kept from sinful men, because not all men are Christians. But the Lord is faithful. He will give you strength and keep you safe from the devil. We have faith in the Lord for you. We believe you are doing and will keep on doing the things we told you. May the Lord lead your hearts into the love of God. May He help you as you wait for Christ.*

**1 Timothy 2:1-5 (NLV)**, *First of all, I ask you to pray much for all men and to give thanks for them. Pray for kings and all others who are in power over us so we might live quiet God-like lives in peace. It is good when you pray like this. It pleases God Who is the One Who saves. He wants all people to be saved from the punishment of sin. He wants them to come to know the truth. There is one God. There is one Man standing between God and men. That Man is Christ Jesus. He gave His life for all men so they could go free and not be held by the power of sin. God made this known to the world at the right time. This is why I was chosen to be a teacher and a missionary. I am to teach faith and truth to the people who do not know God. I am not lying but telling the truth.*

**Hebrews 13:18-19 (NKJV)**, *Pray for us; for we are confident that we have a good conscience, in all things desiring to live honourably. But I especially urge you to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.*

Before Apostle Paul asks the believers to pray for him, he makes a prayer for them. He also urges them to make prayer a lifestyle. And then, he asks them to pray for him, mainly for boldness in preaching the message of God and secondly for the best for the people.

**Romans 15:30-32** – When he asks them to pray for him, he mentions requests for things that would benefit others. Paul first prayed for them (Romans 1:9–12) and then mentioned his prayer for the unsaved (Romans 10:1).

**Ephesians 6:18-20** – Paul asks them to pray for him, with a specific emphasis on his proclamation of the Gospel, something that would be of benefit to others. Paul first prayed for them (1:15–19 and 3:14–19); then, he asked them to pray for Christians everywhere.

**Colossians 4:2-4** – Here again, Paul asks them to pray for him, with a specific emphasis on his proclamation of the Gospel, something that would be of benefit to others. Paul first prayed for them (1:9–12).

**2 Thessalonians 3:1-2** – Paul asks them to pray for him and for those with him, to focus on his proclamation of the Gospel and people’s acceptance of it. He also asks for prayer that they might be delivered from those who did not accept the Gospel. Paul prayed for them first (1:11–12).

Apostle Peter has also asked Christians to pray.

**1 Peter 4:7-11 (NKJV)**, *But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.” Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

## **Conclusion:**

We draw the following conclusion from all of the above:

- 1. The apostles never asked the Christians to come to them for any prayer needs**

From all of the scriptures we have studied now, not once did the apostles ask anyone to come to them for prayer. Then why is that these so-called ministries batter the believers into writing to or calling them for their prayers?

Do you think it is right for them to mislead people?

They have made a marketing tool out of all this, trying to sell prayer oil, prayer cloth, prayer book etc. None of the apostles in the Bible asked for money for themselves or for their ministry needs. Then, why are these so-called men of God selling partnership programs on TV deceiving people?

- 2. The apostles asked the Christians to pray for them**

From the scriptures, we see that it is the other way round – the apostles asking the believers for prayer. Then, why are these ministries NOT asking you to pray for them? When was the last time you heard a leader, a pastor or an evangelist asking you to pray that he/she will live an honourable life with a clear conscience before people?

### 3. **Apostle Paul's prayer request to the Christians**

- That God would provide an opportunity for him and those with him to speak the Gospel and be heard! Colossians 4:3.
- That he would know what to say! Ephesians 6:19–.
- That he would proclaim the message very clearly! Colossians 4:4.
- That he would be bold, not afraid, as he proclaimed the message! Ephesians 6:19–20.
- That the message would not only be accepted by many but that it would also spread and be honoured! 2 Thessalonians 3:1.

But what do we hear from these ministers now?!

- Travel mercies (though we travel a thousand times comfortable than during Biblical times)
- Financial needs to be met!
- Good health!
- God's protection!
- Finally, Spirit anointing for them to be known as great men of God.
- Which Bible do they read or do we have a misinterpretation of the Word of God here?

Could you please make a resolution to walk according to the Word of God rather than following the traditions of men?