

PRAYING WITH THE APOSTLE PAUL

Things that matter, we usually learn by imitating someone we love or really respect. Most Christians are very familiar with the prayer our Lord Jesus taught his disciples when they wanted to follow His example and pray. The Apostle Paul in his letters told his friends what he was praying for them and his own requests he hoped they would pray on his behalf.

Since Leading Edge works with pioneers facing challenges that parallel the one's Paul faced in the first century, we recommend his prayers as great examples to follow in our own prayers today. He was a missionary with a heart for prayer – praying for believers and non-believers. He had faith that conversing with God would bring results.

Perhaps the next time you pull out your prayer list or a recent newsletter from a Christian leader who is working in another country, look for a few moments at one of the prayers listed below that Paul wrote. Ask these questions and then turn Paul's requests into prayers for your friends. Or try substituting the name of your friend and place where they work and read it out loud before the Lord.

- What did he pray for others? What did he ask others to pray for him?
- What kept his faith steady in the face of difficulties?
- Did the circumstances he found himself in affect his prayers?

By following the Apostle Paul's example and praying, you can be a partner in the great work God is doing today in places you may never see.

The following prayers and prayer requests of Paul are quoted from the New International Version of the Bible and are listed in the order they appear. For further study you might look in the Book of Acts the descriptions of how Paul met these people or consider the context of the letter where his prayer is written down and how that made a difference in what he prayed for.

Paul Prays for Others

Letter to the Romans 1.8-10

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world. God, whom I serve with my whole heart in preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you in my prayers at all times; and I pray that now at last by God's will the way may be opened for me to come to you.

Letter to the Ephesians 1: 15-19

For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparable great power for us who believe.

Letter to the Ephesians 3:14-19

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge — that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Letter to the Philippians 1:9-11

In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ – to the glory and praise of God.

Letter to the Colossians 1:9-12

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.

First Letter to the Thessalonians 1:2-3

We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Second Letter to the Thessalonians 1:11-12

With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith. We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Letter to Philemon 1:4-7

I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints. I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints.

Paul Asks Others to Pray

Letter to the Romans 15.30-32

I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. Pray that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea and that my service in Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints there, so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and together with you be refreshed.

Second Letter to the Corinthians 1.8-11

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many.

Letter to the Ephesians 6.18-20

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

First Letter to the Thessalonians 5.25

Brothers, pray for us.

Second Letter to the Thessalonians 3.1-2

Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you. And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith.

First Letter to Timothy 2:1-4

I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone — for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

Letter to the Hebrews¹ 13.18-19

Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honorably in every way. I particularly urge you to pray so that I may be restored to you soon.

¹Scholars disagree about who wrote the Letter to the Hebrews. I do not know if Paul wrote this letter anonymously or if it was written by one of his contemporaries. But the same earnest request stands out as in Paul's other letters – "Please, pray for me!"