

IV. Prayer Instruction

A. LESSONS ON PRAYER

The following lessons were developed by Pastor Maxwell and used during monthly or quarterly meetings with the Prayer Partners. The outline is complete with answers in a "teacher's guide" format. It is suggested that a separate outline without answers be developed for note taking.

1. Puzzled About Prayer?
2. The Process of Prayer
3. The Secret of Prayer
4. Principles of Prayer
5. Listening to God
6. The Value of a Prayer Journal
7. Paul's Prayer For Us
8. How to Pray For Others



Puzzled About Prayer?

Luke 11:1, "And it came about that while He was praying in a certain place, after He had finished; one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught His disciples.'"

NOTE: This is the only thing the disciples ever asked Jesus to teach them.

Matthew 6:5-15

I. The Person of Prayer (vs. 5-8)

Count the personal pronouns (15)

II. The Procedure of Prayer (v. 6)

The Period "when you pray"

The Place "inner room" (sacred, special, sanctified, serene)

The Privacy "shut your door"

God's greatest men spend time alone with Him (Mark 1:35; Mark 6:46-47; Luke 15:16)

The Person "your Father" (vs. 6-9 Father appears 6 times)

The Promise "will repay you"

III. The Problem of Prayer (vs. 5, 7)

What is the problem in v. 5? (motive)

Why is this a problem?

What is the problem in v. 7? (vain repetitions)

Why is this a problem? (Pagans felt that by endless repetitions and many words they would inform their gods as to their needs and weary them into granting the requests.)

Example: worshippers of Baal, I Kings 8:26; Diana's amphitheater at Ephesus - yelled for two hours, Acts 19:34

IV. The Pattern of Prayer (vs. 9-13)

v. 9 *Our Father* - makes God not intimidating

Hallowed be thy name - Let God's name be treated differently than all other names

v. 9 Paraphrase: Those who know the nature of God will put their trust in Him and give Him a special place in their life.

v. 10 *Thy, not "my," Kingdom come*

Definition of "*Kingdom of God*" - a society on earth where God's will is as perfectly done as it is in heaven.



- v. 11 *Give us this day our daily bread* - God is interested in more than just our salvation.
- vs. 11, 12 Transition - Our prayers cannot involve just ourselves alone. We do not really pray until we involve others.
- v. 13 *And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.*

Defense against Temptation -

1. Self respect (Example: Nehemiah - life endangered - encouraged to quit; *Should such a man as I flee? I will not go in.*)
2. Those we love and who love us
3. The presence of Jesus

V. The Priority of Prayer (vs. 14 & 15)

The right relationship with our fellow man is the key to answered prayer.

Matthew 5:23-24

Mark 11:25

I Peter 3:7

Proverbs 21:13

VI. The Puzzlement of Prayer

A. What is Prayer?

1. Personal appeal to a personal God
2. Recognition of our needs (This is our motivation to pray.)
3. Realization that God is the Source to meet our needs (God has already purposed to do everything for His children that is good. II Chronicles 16:9)

B. Why Should I Pray?

1. To live a holy life (Psalm 139:23-24)
Prayer is the greatest sin killer in the world.
2. To prevent spiritual decline
Behind a defeated Christian life is a prayerless one.
3. To keep ourselves spiritually energized (II Corinthians 4:16)
They that wait...
4. To remain spiritually sensitive (I John 1:7, 9)

C. What Kind of Prayer Pleases God?

1. Prayer in Jesus' name (John 16:23)
Jesus' name means much to the Father. (John 11:41)
2. Prayer that is wholehearted (Jeremiah 29:13; Luke 22:44)
We used to "agonize." Now we "organize."
3. Prayer according to His will (I John 5:14, 15)
4. Prayer in faith (James 1:6, 7)

Why Prayers Are Not Answered:

1. Sin in your life (Proverbs 66:18; Isaiah 59:1-2)
2. Unforgiving spirit (Matthew 5:23-24; Mark 11:15; I Peter 3:7)
3. Stinginess (Proverbs 21:13)

APPLICATION:

Write down two requests, either personal or for the family:

1. _____
2. _____

In your personal prayer time bring these requests before God:

- (1) In Jesus' name;
- (2) Wholeheartedly;
- (3) Submissive to His will; and
- (4) With faith!

The Process Of Prayer

Making Prayer a Habit

Problems -

1. Becoming mechanical

Anytime the mechanics of prayer get in the way of loving God, they are useless. Results? Dry, joyless prayer.

Prayer is more than structural - it is supernatural.

2. Mindless Prayer
Prepackaged form without thought

Questions to ask before a regular habit of prayer can be formed.

1. Are you committed to breaking the old habit and forming a new one?
How? Role model cited by most prayer warriors - DAD
2. Are you in control of your life to make the changes necessary?
Example: Guilt over what form or time for prayer
Discuss - Different times and ways to pray.
3. Are you willing to make the changes necessary?
Resolve and opportunity will not mean much if action doesn't follow.

Psychology principle - We have a basic need for what we **think** about a subject to match up with what we **do** about a subject.

The Habit of Prayer

Steps Toward a Habit of Prayer:

1. Recognize that the life I am now living is not the life I want to live.
Before any habit can be broken or formed we must become convinced that change is necessary.

Helps in recognizing our prayer need.

- (1) Learning Through Personal Trial (Personal Experiences)
 - (2) Learning Through People's Needs (Needs of our World)
 - (3) Learning Through Books
A.W. Tozer - "Listen to the one who listens to God."
 - (4) Learning Through Ministry
2. A moment of truth when a decision is made
Examples: Paul on the road to Damascus; an alcoholic never takes another drink
 3. Developing a tool to accompany that decision
Examples: Prayer Partners; time with God
 4. Changing our own self-perception
Example: "I am a praying person."



The Secret Of Prayer

Matthew 7:7-11

Introduction:

Reasons why people don't pray (discussion)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Main Reason: Our comfort keeps us from prayer.

Steps to the Secret of Prayer:

I. Ask

1. To ask is to admit a need and helplessness.
2. To ask means we go to a person.
3. To ask is to be definite.

Paul said, *"Let your request be made known unto God."*
"We have not because we ask not."

II. Seek

Asking and Effort

Example: When Jesus told us to pray, *"Give us this day our daily bread,"* He did not mean that we were to expect God simply to rain down manna from heaven. Jesus meant, *"Give us the opportunity to earn our bread."*

Example: The prayer, *"Thy kingdom come..."* means that we commit ourselves to the task of building it.

God does not give added resources to those who are lazy.

Example: Parable of Talents

III. Knock

Knocking is asking + effort (determination, attitude) + persistence (action - a demonstration of an attitude)

Moffatt's: *"I tell you he will not get up and give you anything because you are a friend of his. But he will rise and give you whatever you want because you persist."*

Jesus also said, *"Men ought always to pray and not faint."* Faint means to quit.

Sermon on the Mount: *"Your Father knows what things you need before you ask Him."*

Problem - Many times we do not know what we need and therefore must keep praying until it becomes clear in our life.



Nine Prayer Steps:

Three Steps Before You Pray

1. Decide what you really want.
2. Seek to determine whether or not what you want is right.
 - Is it Scriptural?
 - Will it help others?
 - Will it glorify God?
 - Does it blend with my gifts?
 - Will it draw me closer to God?
3. Write it down.
 - Develop a prayer notebook (clarifies our thinking; deepens our request in our mind; strengthens our faith when answered)

Three Steps During Prayer

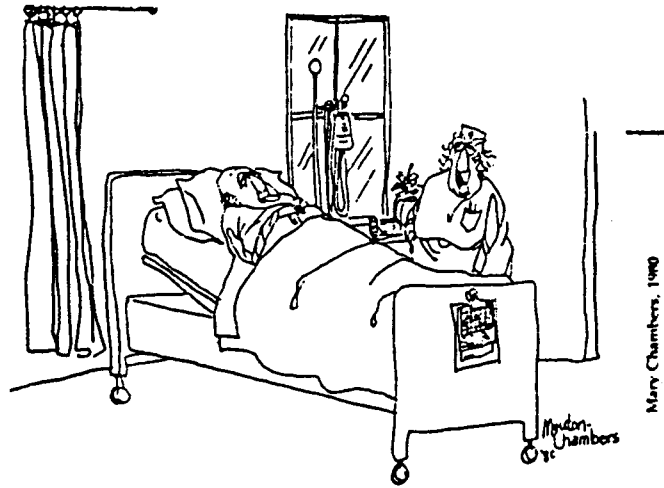
4. Keep your mind still. *"Be still and know that I am God."* Psalm 46
That is what Jesus meant *"when you have shut the door."* How is this done -
Keys to Worship:
 - (1) Expectation
 - (2) Preparation
 - (3) Participation
5. Talk with God not to God. Bible study and prayer go together.
6. Commit yourself to do your part in answering your prayer.
God answers prayer not for you but with you.

Three Steps After Prayer

7. Always remember to thank God for answering your prayer.
8. Be willing to accept whatever God's answer may be.
9. Be obedient to His will in every matter of prayer.

Secret of Prayer: Asking + Faith + Persistence = Results!

Principles of Prayer



"Good news Pastor. Your prayer partners have voted 51 to 49 to pray for your recovery."

I Timothy 2:1-8

1. Make Prayer Your #1 Priority

(v.1) *"First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men..."*

Before you do anything else - PRAY.

In Acts 6:4, the Apostles said they wanted to give themselves first to prayer, then ministry of the Word. Notice that prayer came first, then ministry of the Word. Today, in general, our priorities are people first, preaching second, and then prayer as an addendum if we have time.

Prayer will become a greater priority in our lives when we...

- (1) Understand that a prayerless life is sin against God.

Samuel told the people, *"Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you."* I Samuel 12:23

- (2) Realize that we do not possess because we do not pray.

"You lust and do not have...you are anxious and cannot obtain...you do not have because you do not ask." James 4:2

- (3) Accept it as the channel for God to develop us.

God challenges us, *"Call unto me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things which you do not know."* Jeremiah 33:3



I asked (God) for strength, that I might achieve;
 I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey.
 I asked for health, that I might do greater things;
 I was given infirmity, that I might do better things.
 I asked for riches, that I might be happy;
 I was given poverty, that I might be wise.
 I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men;
 I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.
 I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life;
 I was given life, that I might enjoy all things.
 I got nothing that I asked for -
 But everything I had hoped for.
 Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.
 I am among all men, most richly blessed.

(Written by an unknown Confederate soldier)

2. Successful Prayer has Various Aspects

There are at least seven Greek nouns for prayer. Four of them are used here.

- (1) *Entreaties* - offering a request for a felt need.
- (2) *Prayers* (communion) - act of worship, practicing the presence...
- (3) *Petitions* - intercession on behalf of others.
- (4) *Thanksgivings* - Expressions of gratitude to God.

3. No Person Is Beyond The Influence Of Prayer

(v. 1) *"First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men,*

(v. 2a) *for kings and all who are in authority."*

Paul urged the church to especially pray for those in authority. Godless Emperor Nero was on the throne at that time, and yet the believers were supposed to pray for him! Even when we cannot respect men or women in authority, we must respect their offices and pray for them.

As Prayer Partners we should especially pray for...

- (1) Our leaders (Examples: Moses, Aaron and Hur)
- (2) Spiritual condition of the church (I Timothy 1:18-20)

(v. 18) *This command I entrust to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may fight the good fight,*

(v. 19) *keeping faith and good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.*

(v. 20) *Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have delivered over to Satan, so that they may be taught not to blaspheme.*

(3) Salvation of others (vs. 3 & 4)

"God our Saviour desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

We should talk to God about others and then talk to others about God.

4. Our Prayers Are Beautiful To God

(v. 2) *in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.*

(v. 3) *This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,*

Two benefits of our prayers

(1) Help us

(2) Pleases God

The purpose of prayer is not to get men's will done in heaven,
but God's will done on earth.

5. Prayer Is Successful Because Jesus Is Our Mediator

(v. 5) *For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,*

(v. 6) *who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony borne at the proper time.*

Many believers do not realize that prayer is based on the work of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Mediator. As the God-Man, Jesus Christ is the perfect Mediator between a holy God and His failing children. One of Job's complaints had to do with the absence of a mediator who could take his message to the throne of God. *"There is no umpire between us, who may lay his hand upon us both"* (Job 9:33).

Since there is only one God, there is need for only one Mediator; and that Mediator is Jesus Christ. **No other person can qualify.** Jesus Christ is both God and man, and therefore can be the "umpire" between God and man. In His perfect life and substitutionary death, He met the just demands of God's holy law. He was the "ransom for all." The word "ransom" means "a price paid to free a slave." His death was "on behalf of all." Though the death of Christ is efficient only for those who trust Him, it is sufficient for the sins of the whole world. Jesus said that He came *"to give His life a ransom for many"* (Matthew 20:28).

6. Effective Prayer Means Right Relationships

(v. 8) *Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension."*

C.P. Wagner - *"More men pray at Skyline than any other church."*

Effective prayer means that I have a right relationship

(1) With God "holy hands" (clean hands = blameless life)

Psalm 66:18, *"If I regard (cherish) wickedness in my heart the Lord will not hear."*

(2) With others "wrath and dissension"

One hundred and ninety years ago a shoe repairman in England began to be concerned about the world's heathen peoples. As he would pound away on his shoes, looking at a map he had placed above his work bench and on which he had written the few facts he could garner from *Captain Cook's Travels* and other books, he would pray for the salvation of people in distant lands.

William Carey - who described himself as a self-educated, ungifted plodder - went on to become the father of modern missions. Through his influence, Britain's first missionary society was formed - but only after Carey overcame great reluctance among his Baptist brethren. Soon afterward he went as a missionary himself to India - but only after being put off his British ship and having to take a Danish boat instead. His wife at first refused to go with him and refused to allow their children to go. She was persuaded differently only after Carey had already boarded ship.

Once in India, where he spent forty-two years, Carey and his co-workers translated the entire Bible into twenty-five Indian languages, and the New Testament or parts of it into fifteen more.

Many books have been written about William Carey, but to my knowledge not one has been written about his little-known sister, a bedridden cripple. She and Carey were very close, and from India he wrote to her about all the details and problems of his work. Hour after hour, week after week, she would lift these concerns to the Lord in prayer. So I wonder: Who was responsible for the success of William Carey's ministry?

How does God apportion the credit? A good verse on this is I Samuel 30:24 - *"The share of the man who stayed with the supplies is to be the same as that of him who went down to the battle. All will share alike."* I wonder if God isn't saying to us that we can have a worldwide impact without ever leaving our hometown or our home country.

Listening To God

I Samuel 3:1-21

Observations:

1. Ministering to the Lord makes us receptive to hear from Him (v.1).
2. God speaks to unlikely people at unlikely times (v.1).
3. We sometimes have difficulty knowing the voice of God (vs. 4-8). Why?

(1)

(4)

(2)

(5)

(3)

(6)

4. Other mature Christians can teach us how to know the voice of God (v. 9).
Discussion: "How do we know His voice?"

(1)

(3)

(2)

(4)

5. Sometimes the message is difficult to receive or give (vs.15-17).
6. The message is always for a purpose (v. 10).
7. God's blessings rest on those who listen to Him (vs. 19-21). Why?

Ways God Speaks To Us

WHEN THE CONDITIONS ARE NOT RIGHT God Says..."No"

When God says "no" it is because He has a better way for developing you into a greater person.

WHEN YOU ARE NOT RIGHT God Says..."Grow!"

Prayer is not God doing something for you, but it is allowing God to do what is needed with you. God only answers the prayers of people when they are ready for it.

WHEN THE TIME IS NOT RIGHT God Says..."Slow!"

God maintains control in the area of why things happen and when things are to be done. God's delays are not God's denials. His timing is perfect. We need patience in prayer.

WHEN EVERYTHING IS RIGHT God Says..."Go!"

The door to opportunity suddenly swings open. Miracles happen. Hope rises out of the mist of circumstances to let you know God is still vitally interested in you.



The Value Of A Personal Journal

One of the first instructions God gave to Moses after the Exodus was to "write these things in a book." Recalling the mighty acts of God was an essential element for sustaining the people's vision of God. What about our own "holy histories?" An invaluable tool for the preservation of God's work and the application of his truth in our lives is a personal journal.

My own use of a personal journal evolved from keeping a notebook of insights gleaned from my personal Bible study. I prize those moments of illumination. The thrill of discovery is a gift from God.

How is it that when a person prays for illumination and receives it, he or she can let that precious truth slip away like the tide erasing writing in the sand? Trust it to paper - not to memory.

Over a period of time, I began to include prayer requests and answers, problems and hurts, and hopes and plans for the future. Initially, writing came in surges, but over the last twelve years it has become more regular. Each person discovers a pace that fits.

Personal Benefits

1. A journal gives us insight into our own growth.

Our confidence as Christian leaders comes from knowing where we've been and where God is directing us.

In his *Confessions*, St. Augustine wrote, "I want to call back to mind my past impurities and the carnal corruptions of my soul, not because I love them, but so that I may love you, my God...that the bitterness may be replaced by the sweetness of you."

As we reflect on our spiritual pilgrimage, we gain understanding of the dynamics of spiritual life: the obstacles, the predictable crises, the doubts, and the means of grace to overcome these. The preservation of these insights and the memory of God's faithfulness promotes an attitude of praise and thanksgiving.

2. A journal helps us clarify our priorities.

Life always seems at least a step or two ahead of us. It's easy to lose control. I often turn to my journal as the key to unlock the shackles of the time trap. Reflection enables me to sort out what's important. The commitments that clamor and crowd in on me lose some of their urgency in the light of my basic goals and values. On the other hand, a clear perception of the important matters awakens a new resolve to get on with it.

3. A journal also helps in problem-solving.

Conflicts and disappointments are part of leadership. The leader often is put in the lonely position of having nowhere to turn for guidance. Writing crystallizes issues. As the dust settles and specific details become clear, prayer and careful thought often open a way to reconciliation and progress.

Ministry Benefits

4. A journal stimulates accountability.

One of the unrelenting thorns of Christian leadership is the discrepancy between what we talk and how we walk. As we discipline ourselves to what the Puritans referred to as "the self-watch journal," we constantly reset our course to walk in the way of Christ.

5. A journal leads us toward authenticity, the ability and willingness to let others enter the home of our hearts.

It means we set aside the privilege of the pedestal for the prize of being really known. Honesty in a journal generates the courage to be open and vulnerable in relationships. People can listen and respond best to the person who is a fellow traveler. Respect and a ready ear are given to the one who understands from his own experience and the thickets and loose stones on the trail.



6. **A journal sensitizes us to the hurts of others; it develops empathy.**

Somewhere I read a story of a ten-year-old boy who was asked by his mother, "What's empathy?" The little boy responded, "Empathy is your pain in my heart." Human struggle is democratic. The pain, doubt, frustration, and anxiety that we feel is common to all. This realization enables us to provide genuine support as we counsel and guide others to wholeness in Christ.

7. **A fresh and vital ministry springs from creativity, another benefit of journal-keeping.**

Jesus was creative in his preaching, teaching, and healing. Trust passed through the prism of his life and burst into a spectrum of applications. As we learn to trust our insights, a creative power builds momentum; ideas begin to propel themselves into our consciousness. Frequently, the seeds of sermons or particular actions are planted when we break ground with a journal.

Write It Down

A favorite motto of my ministry is "Write it down." When someone tells me of answered prayer, an exciting evangelistic encounter, or an insight into Scripture, I urge them to write it down. As a result, many in our congregation, especially among the leaders, have begun keeping journals. A new appreciation has grown for the fact of God's activity in the details of our lives.

The journal is also a tool I've used in counseling. When people are unclear concerning God's will, or caught in a particular problem, I often encourage them to prayerfully talk it over with the Lord in a journal. This proved so helpful to one woman that she frequently counsels her friends to do the same. One day this woman learned that her nephew was distraught over the death of a teen-aged friend in a boating accident. As she consoled him, she suggested he talk it out with God on paper. He did, and it helped him immensely to recognize his grief and renew his faith in the Lord.

I suggested to a college student considering a call to the ministry that he begin to keep a journal. After more than a year of study, he commented to me recently, "You know, one of the best things I ever did was start my journal. As I read over it, I see God's hand pruning and shaping."

Principles For Keeping A Journal

There's no right or wrong way to keep a journal. The basic principle is: Does it help me better understand the Lord, myself, and others? Here are seven principles that can set you on the road to developing your own style:

1. **Trust the Holy Spirit to guide you.** I always begin with prayer. Often the journal entry is entirely prayer. The Lord searches our hearts and directs us to the most important matters.
2. **Work with feelings and perceptions.** The journal should not be a chronicle of dates and events. The important things is how you felt, what you perceived about a particular event.
3. **Trust your own insights.** If they are wrong, that will become apparent in the process of writing. A proper sense of independence and personal authority is healthy. After all, who, besides the Holy Spirit, is a better authority on yourself than you?
4. **Anything goes.** Be completely free in your journal. Write it for your eyes only, not to impress someone who may some day read it. It is private; no one is looking over your shoulder. You're free to go with God over the landscape of your soul: to trudge along, to skip, to run, to roll.
5. **Be honest.** Don't fool yourself with pious talk; if you feel lousy, say it. We are free to be honest because as has been said, "The One who knows me best, loves me most." In honesty, we will see both the light and dark sides of our soul. The point is to accept them and take God with us as we explore them.
6. **There is a natural tendency to what I call "spiraling."** This is my own term for going over the same ground again and again. The center of the spiral, the issue, may be the same, but our understanding of it is continually deepening and progressing like the widening loops of a spiral.
7. **Discipline yourself to write positively.** The aim of the journal is to generate the energy to be an overcomer. State the facts, record your negative feelings honestly, but then seek out the promise.

Douglas J. Rumford, pastor
The Presbyterian Church of Old Greenwich
Connecticut

Paul's Prayer For Us

Ephesians 3:14-21

Introduction: v. 14 "For this reason..."

What reason? Because of Paul's deep interest in the people of God and His desire that we should enter fully into all the privileges in Christ.

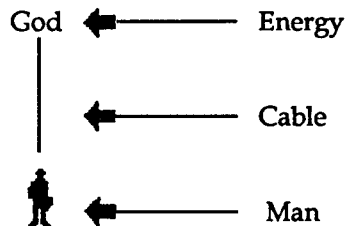
1. Our Endowment (v. 16a)

What has Christ endowed us with?

2. Our Enduement (v.16b)

We are not the battery that stores the energy.

We are in connection with the great eternal dynamo!



What clogs our cable connection?

- (1) unforgiving spirit
- (2) selfishness
- (3) lack of commitment
- (4) lack of high priority
- (5) sin
- (6) disobedience
- (7) lack of knowledge
- (8) lack of faith
- (9) pride
- (10) wrong motives

3. Our Enthronement (v.17a)

Dwell - Greek meaning "may be at home"

Paraphrase, "That Christ might finally settle down and feel comfortable, at home in your hearts."

"If Christ is not Lord of all, He is not Lord at all."



This does not refer to salvation. They are already saved.
This is an issue of Rights!

Consecration means - giving up my rights (crucifixion)

Example: Lord's Prayer, "*Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done...*"

Example: John 17, "*I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do.*"

Example: Gethsemane, "*If it is possible...nevertheless not my will but Thine be done.*"

Christ wants full access to every room and closet.

4. Our Establishment (v. 17b)

"Rooted" (What do we hold onto?)

"Grounded"

"Love" (What holds onto us?)

5. Our Enlightenment (v. 18a)

This spiritual capacity is not limited to a few "spiritual" ones.

This verse teaches us that we need each other to comprehend what God has for us.

We need to fellowship together.

We need to worship together.

We need to pray together.

What does Paul want us to comprehend?

(1) The breadth of the love of Jesus.

(breaks all barriers, traditions, prejudices, misunderstandings)

(2) The length of the love of Jesus.

From eternity to eternity (vs. 1:4 - 2:7)

(sacrifice - God came down - "enough unlike-Savior; enough like-Friend")

(3) The height of the love of Jesus.

(hope)

(4) The depth of the love of Jesus.

(love for the lost)

6. Our Enlargement (v. 19a)

Paul prays that we may know the unknowable!

Know - "knowledge gained by experience"

Surpasses - "To throw over and beyond"

Filled up - "no matter how much love we experience, God has oceans of love that we have not yet witnessed"

7. Our Encouragement (v. 20)

List two things in which you are "poor" that you desire to be "rich" in:

(1)

(2)

Break up into groups of four and share your "poverty" with the other men.
Pray for each other.

How To Pray For Others

Colossians 1:3-12

Introduction:

A soul-winner talks to others about God. A prayer warrior talks to God about others.

- (v. 3) *We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,*
- (v. 4) *since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints;*
- (v. 5) *because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel,*
- (v. 6) *which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as it has been doing in you also since the day you heard of it and understood the grace of God in truth;*
- (v. 7) *just as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf,*
- (v. 8) *and he also informed us of your love in the Spirit.*
- (v. 9) *For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you.*

Paul, the Prayer Partner for the Colossae Christians did the following...

1. Prayed continually for them (vs. 3 & 9)
Discussion: How do we pray continually for others?
2. Expressed appreciation for their spiritual growth (vs. 4-8)
3. Communicated with those he prayed for (v. 7)
4. Immediately prayed on updated communication.

The Pattern Of Prayer

1. They might know the will of God for their lives (vs. 9 & 10)
(v. 10) *and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,*
What specific area do you seek to know God's will for your life?
2. They may do the will of God in their lives (v. 10)
(v. 10) *so that you walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please him in all respects,*
We are to be hearers and doers of the will of God. What specific area do you need to do what you already know?



3. The productivity of their lives (v. 10)
 - (v. 10) *bearing fruit in every good work*
 Prayer Partners on Sunday mornings pray for results. What specific area do you feel needs to be more productive?

4. Their growing walk with God (v. 10)
 - (v. 10) *increasing in the knowledge of God*
 We grow spiritually by spending time with God. Is your time with God consistent or inconsistent? If inconsistent, why?

5. They will have power to overcome difficult situations (v. 11)
 - (v. 11) *strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience;*
 Steadfastness - stamina to "hang in there" when things get tough
 Patience - long fuse that doesn't explode in reaction to difficult people
 What specific area do you sense a need for strength?

6. A right attitude (vs. 11 & 12)
 - (v. 11) *joyously*
 - (v. 12) *giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.*
 Daniel was appointed an overseer in the Babylonian kingdom.
 Daniel 6:3, *"Then Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners because he possessed an extraordinary spirit."*

What Is Your Attitude?

It is the "advance man" of our true selves.
 Its roots are inward but its fruit is outward.
 It is our best friend or our worst enemy.
 It is more honest and more consistent than our words.
 It is an outward look based on past experiences.
 It is a thing which draws people to us or repels them.
 It is never content until it is expressed.
 It is the librarian of our past;
 It is the speaker of our present;
 It is the prophet of our future.

What specific area of your attitude needs adjustment?