



Heads Up

By Johnny Caruso on July 20, 2022

TODAY'S READING: Philippians 1

What lessons can we learn from Paul when he prays for the Philippian church? How should we learn to pray like him? What does he spend most of his time praying for from a Roman prison cell? He does not focus on his own needs, or even ask for prayers for himself. His prayers revolve around the needs of others.

In this passage Paul begins his letter to the church of Philippi with a prayer. Now, this is not your typical Sunday morning group prayer. Rather than praying for safe travels, the health of a fellow believer's cat, or the infamous "unspoken," Paul prays in a way that is both selfless and keenly biblical. He prays for the Philippian believers' spiritual growth, and in doing this he models for us what our prayers should look like. To me, his prayer is especially different because Paul is writing this letter from a Roman prison cell. Instead of asking for prayer for his deliverance, he prays for the growth and sanctification of the Church. The example of Paul's prayer should change the way we pray for one another, especially for those in our churches.

Paul prays specifically for four results in the lives of the Philippian believers:

- that the Philippians would grow in love through knowledge.
- that they would live a life of maturity and discernment.
- that they would be found pure and blameless at the return of Christ.
- that their lives would be marked by the fruit of righteousness that comes from being in a relationship with Jesus.

In a nutshell, Paul prays for their spiritual growth with the end in mind. His desire is to see believers grow and live up to their full potential so that when they stand before God, they would be found to have lived a life pleasing to Him.

Our prayers should be the same. We must pray selflessly, even in difficult circumstances, for the spiritual well-being of those in our churches. This week, pray that our church would grow in love and maturity, that we might be found pure and blameless at the return of Christ, having lived a life marked by the fruit of righteousness.

PRAYER: I want to lift up my brothers and sisters in Christ to You. I pray that their love for You and for others would abound in their knowledge of You. May they grow to be mature believers, so that at Your return they would be found blameless in Your sight.

TOMORROW'S READING: Philippians 2

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