

Praying with Paul:
Using the Apostle's
Prayers to Guide
Our Own

DR. JAMES SIMONEAU





© 2022 Dr. James Simoneau

Published by:
Committee on Discipleship Ministries
1700 North Brown Road, Suite 102
Lawrenceville, Georgia 30043
Bookstore: 1-800-283-1357
www.pcabookstore.com

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronically, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise—except as expressly allowed herein or for brief quotations for the purpose of review or comment, without the prior permission of the publisher, Committee on Discipleship Ministries, at the above address.

Unless noted, Scripture used is from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version™*
Copyright © 2000; 2001; 2016 by Crossway Bibles, A Division of Good News Publishers, 1300 Crescent Street, Wheaton, Illinois 60187, USA. All Rights Reserved.

This edition published by arrangement with Crossway Bibles, a Division of Good News Publishers. *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version™* is adapted from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA. All Rights Reserved.

Although many publishers do not capitalize terms, and particularly pronouns which refer to the Trinity, CDM publications has capitalized those elements for reverence and clarity of reference. In the text, when Church is capitalized, the author means the universal Church-at-large, visible and invisible. When church is not capitalized, it refers to a local body of believers.

ISBN: 978-1-944964-78-8

Cover art concept: Sam Henkelman
Cover design: Chip Evans
Interior design: Beth VanDyke

Table of Contents

Introduction	11
How to Use This Book	15
Prayers:	
From Romans: Prayers to Build Our Faith	17
From 1 Corinthians: Prayers for Confidence	45
From 2 Corinthians: Prayers for Comfort and Help in Trials	55
From Galatians: Prayers for Much Needed Grace	71
From Ephesians: Prayers for the Wonder, Wisdom, Work, and the Word of God	77
From Philippians: Prayers to Keep Joyfully Growing in Christ	95
From Colossians: Prayers for Gospel Growth and Proclamation	111
From 1 Thessalonians: Prayers for Standing Firm in the Gospel	121
From 2 Thessalonians: Prayers for Strength through Trials	141
From 1 Timothy: Prayers for Ourselves and for the World	163
From 2 Timothy: Prayers of Thanks for Friends, Family, and the Holy Spirit	173
From Titus: Prayers of Warmth, Love, and Grace	187
From Philemon: Prayers of Joy and Grace	191

Praying with Paul— How to Use This Book

When God touches us, we seek to talk to Him through prayer. The Bible is full of the prayers of God's people. Some prayers cry out for deliverance. Some prayers are confessions of sin and cries for God's forgiveness. Some prayers are very simple. Others are *more* complex. But all prayers are an effort to be closer to God and to find *more* of His help and presence in one way or another.

Once we put our faith in Christ as Lord and Savior, we are "born again" (John 3:3-8). We have a new spiritual nature, and the Holy Spirit working within our hearts causes us to want what God wants. God puts within us a new longing for His grace and holiness and, indeed, for His very life to work in us and through us. We grow to know and to show *more* and *more* of Him to each other and to a watching world. We learn to want what God wants for our own hearts and lives, for the lives of those we know and love, and for those who do not know God's love and grace. We long for the earth to be "filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14).

The forty-two prayers in this book were gleaned from Paul's letters to the churches. Since Paul was an apostle of Jesus Christ and a spirit-led, mature believer in Christ, his prayers can guide our prayers. Paul prayed for himself and others to know *more* of the Triune God, His will and way! When we are praying with Paul, we are learning from this great man of God, through the inspired Word of God, how to pray and what to pray.

In the pages that follow, you will find Paul's prayers in order his epistles appear in Scripture. For each epistle, there is a brief

introduction with historical background and cultural context. Meditations on the individual prayers begin with the prayer goal and a brief comment about the prayer to follow. Then Paul's prayer is given first. Next, you are encouraged to re-read Paul's prayer, using the questions provided to guide your thoughts. Then, I have recorded my own prayer based on that passage as an example of how to write a prayer using Paul's as guidance. Once you have read Paul's prayer and examined my prayer, you may want to stop and pray through Paul's words for yourself, your family, and your church. But don't stop there! You'll find prayer prompts and space to record your own thoughts and prayers. Keep the book nearby because later you may want to read over your prayers to see just how many God has answered!

May God use this guide to deepen and strengthen our lives in Christ, our spiritual desires, and our prayer lives. May God help us know *more* of Him, *more* of His glory, and *more* of His grace working in us and through us and with all those who love His appearing! Give us *more*, O Lord!

From Romans: Prayers to Build Our Faith

In some senses, Paul's letter to the Romans is one of the most definitive letters of the New Testament. Paul's writing presents the message of Jesus Christ not as a narrative, but as a systematic review of the message for the Roman believers and, by God's continuing grace, for believers down through the ages. Paul was longing to see the Roman Christians and to help them expand their understanding of the gospel, both for themselves and for the watching world. Paul's prayers in this book reflect God's burden on his heart to truly know Christ and make Him known personally and through the community of God's people. He knew these believers would struggle with difficult trials but prayed for God's help for these people through the Holy Spirit. He prayed for the gospel to go to all people, but especially to the people of Israel. Paul prayed that the Christians in Rome would endure and glorify God together, that they might be filled by God with hope. He prayed they would love each other and that he would soon see them and be refreshed together with them.

DAY ONE: Pray to Help Others' Faith

Prayer Goal: We want others to know Christ and pray that we might help them.

About This Prayer

As you come to this prayer, you may want to reflect on who Paul was and how he came to be in ministry. (Read Acts 7:59–8:3; 9:1–19 for further background information.) Paul had been self-righteous, legalistic, and deceived about his faith. When Paul was converted, God led him to use his spiritual gifts to help others come to know Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior of all who would repent of their sin and believe in the person and work of Christ. This became the prayer and deep desire of Paul's heart throughout his ministry. While Paul did not establish the church in Rome, he wanted to help its members grow in their love, knowledge, and service of Christ as the following prayer suggests. He was thankful they had come out of their sin and come to faith in Christ!

Paul's Prayer: Romans 1:8-15

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I mention you always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God's will I may now at last succeed in coming to you. For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you—that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine. I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles. I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. So, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

Meditation Questions (to reflect upon as you read Paul's prayer again and look at the sample prayer):

1. To whom do you give thanks, and why?
2. Through whom and for what do you give thanks, and how?
3. How do you give thanks?
4. How will this spirit of thanksgiving draw you closer to God and to others?
5. How will this spirit of thanksgiving deepen your desires and designs to serve God and others?

A Sample Prayer (Paul's words are in bold italics):

O most holy God, You created us to be a community of those who love and believe in You because You first loved us (1 John 4:19). Even though we ran from You, You sought us and paid for the guilt of our sin. You gave us newness of life so that we could turn from our sin and trust in You (2 Cor. 5:17).

I thank You, my God through Jesus Christ, for the Christians who are serving Christ around *the world. I mention [them] in my prayers* and pray that I might be a blessing to as many of them as possible. I pray with the apostle Paul that You would help me share *some spiritual gift to strengthen* my brothers and sisters in Christ. Help me love You and these Your servants even *more* with Your love, through the strength of Jesus and the power of Your Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:16-22).

As Paul desired to go to Rome to share his spiritual gifts with these Romans, may You, God, allow all of us, Your children, to use our gifts to strengthen believers near and far. May we *be mutually encouraged by each other's faith*. Help us to mutually encourage one another and be a part of the growth and increase of Your kingdom.

God, You sent Your Son among us (John 3:16) as the ultimate missionary. He saw our needs, and He came to give us the greatest gift we can ever possess: eternal life with You!

I owe You everything. I can never pay for my salvation, but

DAY TWO: Pray to Experience the Work of the Holy Spirit

Prayer Goal: We desire to know God ever *more* intimately through the work of the Holy Spirit.

About This Prayer

Before coming to Christ, people are enslaved to sin's power, sin's penalty, and sin's pervasive presence without hope of overcoming the spirit of slavery to sin and evil in their own strength (Eph. 2:1-3). But Jesus died and rose again; He ascended into heaven and sent His Holy Spirit to enable people to repent and believe in Jesus. By the Holy Spirit, we are adopted into the family of God to be sons and daughters of God (Rom. 8:12-17). And now as children, we can call God our Father. Our Father is the great and mighty and sovereign God of the universe, but He is also our Abba, our Father who is close to us. We were made to desire this God, our Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer, and Friend. The ultimate power of God is paired with the tender love of the ultimate Father who can help us against the spirit of the world, the sinful desires, and the evil one.

Paul's Prayer: Romans 8:15

For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"

Meditation Questions (to reflect upon as you read Paul's prayer again and look at the sample prayer):

1. How are all Christians subject to a spirit of slavery before they believe?
2. How does the Holy Spirit help Christians repent and believe in Jesus Christ?
3. What does it mean to be adopted into God's family?
4. What are the benefits of being adopted into God's family?

5. How can your prayer reflect God's power and His personal love for you?

A Sample Prayer (Paul's words are in bold italics):

Father, You sent Your only, eternal Son to save me from the guilt, fear, and shame of my sin. You rescued me from the darkness (Col. 1:13), the blindness, and the idols of my heart. (See Ezekiel 14:1-5.) Jesus came so I would no longer fear the wrath of God against my sin (Rom. 5:9). He proved that those who trust in Him do not have to fear death (1 Cor. 15:55) or the many terrors of evil, because Jesus has overcome all of these. He removed from me ***the spirit of slavery***. Your love and this ***Spirit of adoption*** demonstrate how You overcame my sin.

I come to You, O Lord, who is not just the Father of Creation, the Designer, the Protector, the Provider, and the Director of my life (Ps. 139), but also my ***Abba***. I come to You as my Redeemer, through the person of Your only eternal Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ who died to pay the penalty of sin and to break its absolute power over me! Through Jesus, I have received the Holy Spirit, who has brought me from death to life through the work of Christ, including His resurrection power. He has sealed my redemption. It is the perfect combination of Your infinite greatness and Your intimate, personal love!

Help me through this work of Your Holy Spirit to draw ever closer to You. Help me overcome my fear and slavery to sin. Help me put on Christ and put away my old sinful self, with all its evil desires and ways (Eph. 4:20-24). I am slowly seeing the change that You are working in me. I am beginning to believe in Your great love and grace for me, as the Holy Spirit continues to open my heart. O Lord, help us all. O Lord, seal us to Yourself.

In Jesus's name alone, I pray. Amen.

Prayer Prompts (to help you write your own prayer):

- As you are praying to God the Father, think on His greatness as God and His tenderness as the perfect loving Father.

