

One Another – Pray For

Text : **James 5: 13-16 , Col. 1: 9-12 , I Sam. 12: 23**

INTRODUCTION :

- A. Ben Franklin attempted to develop 13 virtues in his life, one each week; but the scriptures make it clear that one doesn't grow in Christ in that way.**
1. It's the combination of Ben's virtues which make for good character, not any one.
 2. Likewise, that one fruit of the Spirit is like an orange, composed of many segments. (*love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control*)
- B. As we have been studying the relationship God requires between Christians, we see that it's like the fruit of the Spirit or a fine diamond, it's many faceted.**
1. We've looked at a number of the facets of Christian fellowship, and it's clear no one single facet produces a Christian relationship.
 2. Like that diamond, the more well-arranged facets, the more our relationship glitters.
- C. Each of the facets of the “one another” relationship that's added between brethren, the more precious the relationship becomes.**
1. Each of the facets we develop makes it easier to develop others.
 2. As the facets of a diamond all radiate from one point, all facets of Christian fellowship radiate from one ... **love**.
- D. These last four facets we'll study can be developed only in the presence of others.**
1. He who successfully develops these can do so because he's already developed others
 2. These last facets are the ones that give strength to all the others that love produces.

With this lesson we will look at our Lord's command which was communicated to us via His brother, James. ... “Pray for one another.” (5:16)

- A. James was a good one to give us this command because he personified it.**
1. James spent hours every day praying in the temple.
 2. He developed such calluses on his knees that he was called “*Camel Knees*.”
- B. James was martyred because he was so pious he was leading others to Christ.**
1. Because of his extreme piety, he was often referred to as “*James the Just*.”
 2. They threw him off the pinnacle of the temple
 - a. The fall did not kill him so they clubbed him with a fuller's brush.
 - b. Then they stoned him just to vent their anger.

I. Why should we pray for the brethren ?

A. Christians are a nation of royal priests; intercession is work for priests.

1. **I Pet. 2: 9** – But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness ...;
2. Because Christians are given the privilege of approaching God, we must make intercessions before God for those who cannot. (**Isa. 59: 1-2**)
I Tim. 2: 1-2 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, ² for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.

B. It is commanded.

1. **James 5:16** – "... pray for one another ..."
2. **I John 5: 16** – If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and God will for him give life to those who commit sin ...
3. Our ability to call Jesus "Lord" is dependent on our willingness to obey. **Luke 6:46**

C. We have the example of the Apostles praying for many different brethren.

1. **Rom. 1: 8** – First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.
2. **I Cor. 1: 4** – I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus,
3. **Eph. 1: 15-16** For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶ do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers;
4. **Phil. 1: 3-4** I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, ⁴ always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all,
5. **Col. 1: 3** – We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,
6. **I Thes. 1: 2** – We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers;
7. **II Tim. 1: 3** – I thank God, whom I serve with a clear conscience the way my forefathers did, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and ...
8. **Philemon 4** – I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers, ...

D. We have the example of Jesus praying for the brethren. **John 17**

E. Prayer affirms that we accept the Lordship of Christ and the sovereignty of God.

1. The act of prayer is the lesser addressing the greater so prayer acknowledges that.
2. Prayer requires faith that the greater can and will grant the request.

F. Prayer in behalf of another demonstrates love and concern for that person.

1. The act of praying demonstrates you are thinking about them.
2. It's an expression of positive desire for their welfare, i.e., love.

II. What should we pray for the brethren ?**A. We most commonly pray for health and for healing.**

1. **James 5: 14** – **Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, ...**
 - a. This may refer to spiritual illness, but the principle is the same.
 - b. **I Cor. 11: 29-30** .. Wrongly partaking of the Lord's Supper causes spiritual illness.
2. **Matt. 9: 35** ... While on earth Jesus went about healing all manner of sicknesses.
3. **Acts 5: 14-16** ... The Apostles healed people. *Crowds sought even Peter's shadow.*
4. Not all prayers for healing are granted; sometimes God has a purpose for suffering.
 - a. Paul prayed for physical healing but was denied.

II Cor. 12: 7-9 **Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself! 8 Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. 9 And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.**

*** NOTE : The origin of Paul's sickness was from Satan. (Remember Job)**
God used his sickness to accomplish a spiritual purpose.

Thus, we know some illness serves a purpose for God. .. Cf. James 1: 2-3

- b. Paul either didn't or couldn't heal his companions. (**II Tim. 4: 20, Phil. 2: 26-27**)
5. Therefore, it's good that we maintain a prayer list and pray for the sick.
 - a. Keep the prayer list in the place where you pray and pray for each one.
 - b. **However**, our prayer for others should never be limited to just their health.

B. Safety (deliverance)

1. Jesus prayed that His followers would be delivered from the evil one.
John 17: 15 – I do not ask You to take them out of the world,
but to keep them from the evil one. (*compare : II Thes. 3: 3*)
2. Jesus prayed that Satan would not be able to divide His followers.
John 17: 20-21 I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who
believe in Me through their word; ²¹ that they may all be one;
even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, ...
3. Jesus prayed for His own deliverance. (*He was denied .. it was required for redemption.*)
 - a. **Mark 14: 36** – And He was saying, “Abba! Father! All things are possible for You;
remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what You will.”
 - b. Sometimes God has a purpose for not delivering us from our distress.

C. Pray for the brethren to prosper.

1. We may pray for the prosperity of another.
III John 2 Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and
be in good health, just as your soul prospers.
2. As for ourselves, Jesus limits us to praying for our daily needs. **Matt. 6: 11, 25-34**

D. Our prayers must not just be all about the physical things.**III. What did Apostle Paul pray for His followers ? (Remember ... I Cor. 11: 1)****A. In our text he prayed for the Colossians :**

1. **1: 3-5** ... He gives thanks for their spiritual qualities :
3 We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
praying always for you, ⁴ since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus
and the love which you have for all the saints; ⁵ because of the
hope laid up for you in Heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, ...
 - a. Faith in Christ Jesus
 - b. Love for all saints
 - c. Confidence in the reward that awaits them (hope)
2. **1: 9** ... He asks spiritual blessings for them :
9 For this reason also, since the day we heard of it,
we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be
filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,
 - a. Filled with the knowledge of God’s will (*not asking for miraculous revelation*)
 - b. Spiritual wisdom and understand (*so they will be able to use the knowledge*)

3. **1: 10-12** ... He prays they will use the spiritual blessings
10 so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;
11 strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously 12 giving thanks to the Father, ...
 - a. Walk worthy of the Lord
 - b. Please God in every respect
 - c. Bear fruit in every respect
 - d. Increase in knowledge and strengthened with all power (*steadfast, gratitude*)

B. Notice what Paul prayed for the **Philippian brethren :**

1. The Apostle prays for their spiritual development .. not their physical circumstances.
1: 9 – And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, (Love = *Strength even get stronger*)
 - a. He prays they will develop more “**knowledge**” of the word.
 - b. He prays that they will be able to “**discern**” what their knowledge means.
2. He prays that their spiritual development will have an effect on their lives.
1: 10 so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;
 - a. They will have the ability to make good spiritual decisions (**approve**)
 - b. Their faith will be real ... unmixed, without defect. (**sincere**) *transformed heart*
 - c. They will live a sanctified life. (**blameless**)
3. He prays that their lives will be productive for God.
1: 11 having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

C. Paul prayed for individual Christians as well. (*Examples .. Timothy & Philemon*)

1. Paul gives thanksgiving and praise because of Philemon’s faith and love.
 - a. **Philm. 4-5 I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers, 5 because I hear of your love and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints;**
 - b. Love between faithful brethren is a blessing for which we should be grateful.
2. Paul then prays that Philemon’s faith and love will enable him to influence others.
 - a. **Philm. 6 and I pray that the fellowship of your faith may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ’s sake.**
 - b. Like a moth to a flame, good people are drawn to those who shine a godly light.

IV. Christians have always been a praying people ?

A. Even God's prophet of old realized the importance of intercessory prayer.

I Sam. 12: 23-24 Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you; but I will instruct you in the good and right way. **24** Only fear the Lord and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you.

B. Before the time when the church was established in Jerusalem, the Apostles and disciples devoted themselves to prayer.

Acts 1:14 – These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers

C. When the 3000 were added they also devoted themselves to prayer.

Acts. 2: 42 – They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

D. Ten chapters later the brethren are still given to prayer.

Acts 12: 12 – And when he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.

CONCLUSION :

A. When God James commands us to “Pray for one another.” it was a good choice.

1. By inspiration he speaks from the mind of God. (*Consistent with Prophet Samuel*)
2. As a leader in Jerusalem he speaks from the heart of the N.T. Church.
3. When James speaks of prayer he also speaks from the practice of his own life.

B. God knows what's required to create the relationship that He desires between His children. (*The decision is not up to us, God gives specific instructions.*)

1. Every facet of our relationship is an application of love.
2. Each Christian desires every other Christian to be with him in Heaven.
3. Therefore, we labor together in prayer to accomplish that mutual goal. **Col. 4: 12**

C. All along the way we continually request our Father God's help. **Rom. 15: 30**

1. In Eph. 6 the Apostle exhorted us to put on the whole armor of God to fight Satan.
2. He sums up that section about spiritual warfare with these words.
Eph. 8:18 – With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,
3. So, let us all persevere in praying for the spiritual victories of all our brethren.

Lesson Texts :**James 5: 13-16**

13 Is anyone among you suffering? *Then* he must pray. Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises. **14** Is anyone among you sick? *Then* he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; **15** and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him. **16** Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

Col. 1: 9-12

9 For this reason also, since the day we heard *of it*, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, **10** so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; **11** strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously **12** giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.

I Samuel 12: 23-24

Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you; but I will instruct you in the good and right way. **24** Only fear the Lord and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you.

PAINTING, THE PRAYING HANDS

About 1490, two young friends, Albrecht Durer and Franz Knigstein, were struggling young artists. Since both were poor, they worked to support themselves while they studied art.

Work took so much of their time and advancement was slow. Finally, they reached an agreement: they would draw lots, and one of them would work to support both of them while the other would study art. Albrecht won and began to study, while Franz worked at hard labor to support them. They agreed that when Albrecht was successful he would support Franz who would then study art.

Albrecht went off to the cities of Europe to study. As the world now knows, he had not only talent but genius. When he had attained success, he went back to keep his bargain with Franz. But

Albrecht soon discovered the enormous price his friend had paid. For as Franz worked at hard manual labor to support his friend, his fingers had become stiff and twisted. His slender, sensitive hands had been ruined for life. He could no longer execute the delicate brush strokes necessary to fine painting. Though his artistic dreams could never be realized, he was not embittered but rather rejoiced in his friend's success.

One day Durer came upon his friend unexpectedly and found him kneeling with his gnarled hands intertwined in prayer, quietly praying for the success of his friend although he himself could no longer be an artist. Albrecht Durer, the great genius, hurriedly sketched the folded hands of his faithful friend and later completed a truly great masterpiece known as "The Praying Hands."

Today art galleries everywhere feature Albrecht Durer's works, and this particular masterpiece tells an eloquent story of love, sacrifice, labor and gratitude. *Stories For The Heart* Alice Gray, Multnomah, p. 265.

Application

Many times I have come to God in prayer and did not understand what was happening in my life or the life of someone else. I bow and reflected upon who God is and what he has done in the past. s

