

## The Ministry of Prayer # 52

Romans 15: 30-33

As we close out this chapter we discover a personal, impassioned plea from the great Apostle to the church in Rome. After much encouragement and admonition, Paul had revealed his desire to visit the church there while on his way to Spain. Prior to making this journey, Paul knew he was needed in Jerusalem in order to deliver the provisions to the church there from the churches in Macedonia and Achaia. He was not seeking to avoid this trip to Jerusalem; he was quite determined to go there, but Paul was also aware of the volatility and potential for trouble. Some would be glad to see him and others would seek to persecute him, or even take his life. It is under these extreme circumstances that Paul desires the prayers of the church in Rome.

It is likely none of us face such opposition at this time, and since we have no way of knowing what our future holds, likely none of us feel our lives are being threatened. However, this passage reveals the great need for prayer and the many benefits associated with it. Prayer is the one way we all can engage in ministry throughout the world. We can partner with believers locally and around the world through prayer. Just as Paul sought to encourage the church in Rome to pray, we too need challenged and reminded to pray.

Let's spend a few moments examining the [characteristics](#) of prayer within the text as we consider: [The Ministry of Prayer](#).

**I. A Fervent Prayer** (30) – [Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me.](#) As Paul pleads with the church in Rome regarding prayer, it is evident that he is seeking fervent prayer for his needs. We too need to sense the urgency regarding needs in our day and pray with fervency. Consider:

**A. The Request** – [Now I beseech you, brethren...](#) Paul repeats a common phrase he is known to use, but it reveals the urgency in this request. The word beseech carries the idea of "*calling to one's side, literally drafting for service.*" Paul wanted the church to understand the great burden he carried and the urgent need for prayer. Of all they could do for him, prayer was of utmost importance!

- Really it should go without saying, but we need reminded of the great need for prayer in our day as well. We may not be able to join others in their journey or physically help bear their burdens, but we can all pray. It is that important! We must not neglect prayer.

**B. The Reminder** (30) – [for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit](#). Paul sought to remind them he was not seeking selfishly. This wasn't just about his personal desires or wishes. He wanted them to pray for the sake of the Lord and His kingdom work. He wanted them to pray in regard to the bigger picture. There was much yet to be accomplished and Paul earnestly desired partners in prayer who were committed to praying toward that end. He also reminded them of the love which the Holy Spirit had placed within their hearts. Paul was being led of the Spirit and the Spirit would lead them in prayers for him.

- These two aspects ought to encourage any believer to be diligent in prayer. Surely we can pray for the Lord and for love. Someone prayed for us, seeking to advance the Gospel and the Kingdom work. Surely we can pray for others who are striving to share the good news while pointing them to Christ. Our love for the Lord and others should compel us to pray as well.

**C. The Responsibility** (30) – [that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me](#). Paul is not seeking casual, unconcerned prayers. He urges them to strive together with him in prayer. The word strive is a strong word. It speaks of “*entering a battle or struggle*.” It is derived from the same word through which we get our word “*agony*.” It is the same word used to describe the nature of Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane. [Luke 22:44 – And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground](#).

- Earnest, sincere praying is hard work. In fact, those who genuinely pray engage in some of the most difficult aspects of serving the Lord. The enemy doesn't like it when we pray. He is aware of the power and effectiveness of genuine prayer. You can expect opposition when you pray, but we all share a responsibility to pray for one another. We must be willing to strive together in prayer for the needed outcome. The Lord hears and answers the prayers of the righteous when they are offered in sincerity. [James 5:16b – The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much](#).

**II. A Focused Prayer** (31-32) – Here Paul offers guidance in the areas he desired the church to pray. He hoped they would pray for:

**A. His Protection** (31a) – [That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea](#). Paul was well aware of the dangers in Jerusalem. He knew there were many who denied the Gospel and would love to have an opportunity to apprehend him and silence the message he shared. They had rejected the Lord and those who sought to promote the Gospel. He hoped the church would pray for God's protection as he traveled to Jerusalem and while he was there also.

- I have heard some joke about praying for a hedge of protection, but we know through the life of Job that God is able and willing to put a hedge about those who are His. While some may snicker, I am convinced we need to pray for God's mighty hand to be upon our lives, shielding us from the attack of the enemy. Like Paul, we face a determined foe. He is described as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. He would love nothing more than to defeat us and hinder our work for the Lord. We must be willing to pray for godly protection in the lives of those who faithfully serve the Lord. There is little we can do against the enemy, but he is no match for the Lord. Let us lift one another up to the Lord in prayer, praying specifically for His protection in our lives.

**B. His Prosperity (31b)** – [and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints.](#)

Bear in mind that Paul was planning to take an offering to the church in Jerusalem. While many there opposed him, Paul continued to love the church in Jerusalem and sought the wellbeing of the believers there. He knew rumors had been spread and many had sought to influence the church to oppose Paul and his ministry. He desired to be able to deliver their offering and find acceptance of the church. He desired to join them in the work they were engaged in, but would need to be received favorably for that to become reality. He wanted the Roman church to pray that his work and ministry would continue to prosper for the Lord.

- I know there are times when financial burdens warrant our prayers, but I am not focused on financial prosperity and neither was Paul. We need to pray for spiritual prosperity in the lives of fellow believers. We need to pray for continued opportunities, supported by wisdom and guidance within those opportunities. We need to pray that God would continue to work among His church and make our way prosperous as we continue to serve Him. I need your prayers. The Sunday school teachers need your prayers. The choir and leadership needs your prayers. Other congregations and missionaries around the world need your prayers. We need to pray for all who are engaged in any aspect of ministry for the Lord. [Eph.6:18 – Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.](#)

**C. His Progression (32)** – [That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.](#)

Paul wanted the church to pray for the will of God to be accomplished in his life, and if the Lord saw fit, allow him to make it to Rome. He longed to fulfill the desires God had placed within his heart. He was not seeking a way to abandon the ministry or avoid the call of God. He knew his time in Rome would be personally beneficial for him as well. Paul realized as long as he was left upon the earth there was a work yet to perform.

- We certainly need to pray that God's will be accomplished in our lives. When we seek and follow the will of God for our lives we enjoy a season of peace and fulfillment. When we try to accomplish the Lord's work through our own wisdom and ability we lack strength, wisdom, and

joy. There is nothing more fulfilling for the believer than being in the center of God's will and nothing more damaging than striving to make our own way, independent of the Lord. I continually pray for your spiritual maturity and progression. I humbly ask you do the same for me.

**III. A Favorable Prayer (33)** – [Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.](#) Having sought their prayers for his life, Paul shares a simple and profound prayer for them. He refers to:

**A. The Abundance of Peace** – He desired for them to experience the God of peace. Often he speaks of the peace of God, but here he speaks of the God of peace. He wanted them to experience the peace of God's presence in their midst. Paul had encountered that many times in his ministry and he wanted no less for them. His life had faced much adversity, but the Lord had never forsaken him. He enjoyed the presence of the Lord every day, wherever he went.

- I rejoice for the God of peace. Prior to salvation I didn't have peace in my life. At the moment I believed on Christ by faith and received salvation, I was joined by a constant Friend and Companion. Every believer has the Spirit of God abiding within. We enjoy the peace of God, but we also have the privilege of enjoying the God of peace. What could we possibly face that we cannot overcome with the God of peace with us? That is peace in great abundance!

**B. The Availability of Peace** – Paul also desired the God of peace be with each and every one of them. He wanted all believers to experience the abundance of peace he enjoyed. Paul knew there was no reason they couldn't, as long as they sought to live their lives for the Lord in close fellowship with Him.

- You may be facing an uncertain future with difficult circumstances, but you do not have to face that alone. If you are a child of God, you can enjoy the presence and power of the Lord. If we will only draw nigh to Him, He has promised to draw nigh to us. There is no reason to face your struggles and fears alone. If you have never believed in Christ by faith and received salvation, you don't know the God of peace. However, hope remains for you. The Lord died for the sin of humanity and that includes you. He wants you to come to Him in salvation, being forgiven of sin and reconciled to God. At the moment of salvation, you too can experience this abundance of peace. There is no reason for anyone to live in this life apart from Christ.

**Conclusion:** These have been simple verses, and yet they are very needful in our day. I am sure we are aware of the power and need for prayer, but we fail to pray as we should. We need to be fervent and focused when we pray. Prayer is the strongest tool we have. We must be familiar with

it and willing to engage in prayer consistently. If your prayer life is weak and lacking, there is no greater remedy than practice. Spend time with the Lord in prayer, being sensitive to the Spirit, and He will lead you as you pray. If you are unsaved, I urge you to come before the Lord in prayer, responding to His call for salvation.