

**Eph. 1:15-21 - A Prayer List From An Apostle**

Intro - Do you have problems with your prayer life? I would guess that this is a common problem. Your prayer life is a good gage of your spiritual life. Our life of faith is set in terms of a relationship...and communication is essential to any good relationship. God talks to us thru His Word, and we talk to Him through prayer. This reciprocal aspect of communication is essential to spiritual growth. Yet most of us struggle when we try to talk to God in prayer. We don't know what to say in the conversation, so we wind up not saying anything at all...~~prayer~~. In regular conversation you talk about what the one who started the conversation is talking about. You key off their conversation with you. God has initiated a conversation with us. When we listen to what God has to say to us in His Word...that helps us know what to say to Him in prayer. Our text of scripture today is a great prayer guide. It is a prayer list that we can use in our personal prayers for each other. So, if you don't know what to pray/say...that ends today.

**PRAY THE BIBLE**

- Great advice from the Ephesians study guide (Lifeway) - "Pray the Bible."
  - Pray about what you are reading about in the Bible.
    - Ask God to help you understand it and to know how to apply it.
  - Talk to Him about what He is talking to you about in His Word.
- My frequent prayer
  - Psalm 25:4-5
- We are "Praying through the Psalms" on Wednesday night
  - Come join the conversation.

**PRAY ABOUT THE BIG 3**

- The Big 3 are: Faith, Hope & Love - 1 Cor. 13:13
- There is a biblical precedent/pattern to pray about these three basic Christian qualities.
  - Eph. 1:15-16, 18
  - Col. 1:3-5                      1 Thess. 1:2-4
  - We are to be thankful when we see the Big 3...and pray for more of the Big 3
- Faith
  - Eph. 1:15 "...*faith in the Lord Jesus...*"
  - Jesus is the object of our faith.                      He is the ONE in whom we trust
  - Jesus is Lord...the One we submit to - Faith in Jesus = trusting & obeying Jesus
    - Luke 6:46      Rom. 1:5 "...*the obedience of faith...*"                      Heb. 11:8
  - Pray to obey (Trust and obey, for there is no other way...)                      Having faith to follow Him.
- Hope
  - Pray for an eternal perspective/hope - Col. 3:1-2      Rom. 8:23-24 - new body
  - Hope for a sure inheritance - 1:18                      1 Peter 1:3-4 - reserved in heaven
  - Christian hope is not focused on this life -                      1 Cor. 15:19

- Love
  - Love is the evidence of genuine conversion/faith.
    - John 13:35 1 John 3:10, 14
  - We are to pray that love may abound - Phil. 1:9
  - Love can diminish - Rev. 2:4 We need to spur it along - Heb. 10:24
- Pray the Big 3 (1 Cor. 13:13) - be thankful for it and pray for more of it

### **PRAY TO KNOW GOD BETTER**

- Ephesians 1:16-17
  - Jesus defined eternal life as the knowledge of God.
    - John 17:3
  - Knowledge of God is the chief knowledge and the highest plane of existence.
    - Jer. 9:23-24
  - Our greatest need and desire should be to know Him.
    - Phil. 3:8-10
  - What we know of Him is not enough. 2 Peter 3:18      1 Cor. 8:2
    - *"More, more about Jesus..."*
- Pray to know God better.
  - Pray that others would know Him better.

### **PRAY TO KNOW MORE ABOUT GOD'S SALVATION**

- Ephesians 1:18
  - We are often blind to all that God has done for us in His salvation of us.
    - This is a prayer for eyes to be enlightened.
  - JV McGee - "The Lord saved me and then I went to seminary to find out what happened to me."
- Paul prays that the church would have a deeper understanding of Eph. 1:3-14
  - That long sentence is some deep truth – Trinity, predestination, adoption, redemption, sealing...
    - Paul prays that they will understand these things better.
  - The ocean is beautiful on the surface but there are wonderful things to see if you go into the deep. This is a prayer to explore the deep end of salvation.
- Calling
  - God's calling gives us hope - Eph. 1:18 *"...the hope of His calling..."* a light in life's tunnel
  - Church = "called out ones" Rom. 8:30      2 Peter 1:10      Rev. 17:14
- Rich Inheritance
  - Rom. 8:16-17, 32
  - Unsearchable riches in Christ – Eph. 3:8 James 2:5
- Power Eph. 1:19
  - Christians don't lack power; we lack the knowledge of the power we have.
  - Acts 1:8 Eph. 6:10

There is a name on the tear out of your bulletin. Pray for that person this week. Pray the *Big 3*... Pray that they would know God better and know more of what has done for them in salvation. Now you know what to say as you "pray the Bible" for fellow believers.