



Bible Study – February 14, 2024

Series: A Study About Sharing Your Faith

Lesson 7: Asking for Intercession Before Journeying

Ephesians 6:19-20, Colossians 4:2-4 | 2 Thessalonians 3:1-3 (NIV)

Introduction

This evening, our study will be topical and search through multiple Scripture passages. Intercessory prayer is generally a must for believers. It is primarily a must when going out to witness the world. In your home, neighborhood, community, city, or worldwide, seek prayer before sharing the gospel. Paul the Apostle practiced this necessity during his ministry of the gospel. When conquering the fear of witnessing, prayer is essential before going on your journey. Let us see what we can learn from the Scriptures.

Boldness to Proclaim

Ephesians 6:19-20

Pray also for me that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

The Apostle Paul, upon concluding his written communication about the Armor of GOD and the need to dress up in it, expressed a need for prayer, too. Before ending this communication, he encouraged the saints at Ephesus to pray for him. Paul was burdened, and he needed intercession from those saints. Please remember that he is writing this church from prison. He asked them not only to pray for the Body of Christ in general ([V 18](#)) but to include him in their prayers. Why? So when he proclaims the mystery of the gospel (different from witnessing), it will be spoken boldly.

What is the mystery of the gospel? Paul explained it this way in the following verse: [This mystery is that through the gospel, the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus. \[Ephesians 3:6 NIV\]](#) The mystery is that Jewish and Gentile believers are heirs of the same blessings from GOD; they are of the same body of believers and sharers in the same promise (eternal life) in Jesus Christ. In other words, the Christian faith was not a sect of Judaism as assumed by the Romans nor a heretic group as assumed by the traditional Jews. The word “fearlessly” is used twice, indicating that Paul sought boldness to speak as he said clearly or plainly.

While Paul was not asking for prayer to witness the gospel, his example should encourage witnesses today to seek prayer before going on a witnessing journey. The late Minister Andreae Crouch sang a song entitled “We Need To Hear From You.”



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Your plea to GOD is to seek him sincerely about your journey. Your appeal to the intercessors in the church is for them to pray sincerely about your journey. You want clear guidance, direction, and protection for your witnessing journey.

Q. Why do you believe asking others to pray for you is essential?

An Open Door to Speak

Colossians 4:2-4

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.

What else can we learn about prayer being necessary for witnessing? Paul encouraged the believers at the church in Colossae to engage in prayer. He practiced a mature prayer life and suggested it for all believers. When he said for them to devote themselves to prayer, it was a command for them to grow in this spiritual discipline. Look at prayer this way: It is as vital to your spiritual health as breathing is to your physical health. You cannot live without it. As the Lord Jesus Christ commanded, Paul told the believers to be watchful (alert) against spiritual drowsiness caused by the appeal of the world ([See Matthew 24:42](#)) and attacks caused by the influence of the devil ([See Ephesians 6:13](#)). Also, they were to be thankful (grateful) for it goes along with prayer ([See Philippians 4:6](#)) and puts the believer in a proper attitude before GOD ([1 Thessalonians 5:18](#)).

Once again, Paul appeals to this church to pray for him and his companions. He was not being self-centered about his request. But he was seeking an open door or receptive audience (*my emphasis*) to proclaim the mystery of Christ. This is the same request that he asked of the church at Ephesus. Again, he tells these believers he is in prison because of this work. However, he emphasizes that they pray so that he can speak his message clearly and plainly. This is a consistent prayer request. Be persistent about seeking prayer before going on your witnessing journey.

Q. Thus far, does Paul's repetitious prayer requests indicate that he has little faith?



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The Word to Spread Quickly

2 Thessalonians 3:1-3

As for other matters, brothers and sisters, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you. And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil people, for not everyone has faith. But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one.

This is the third of about five appeals made by Paul to the churches for prayer (See [Romans 15:30](#) and [1 Thessalonians 5:25](#) along with these three appeals). Here, he asked the church at Thessalonica to pray for him and his companions. Paul wanted them to pray specifically and not just a general prayer. He asked them to pray that the gospel message would spread rapidly wherever they preached it. Paul knew their missionary success was from the Lord giving them grace and blessing His Word as they preached. Also, the Lord went before them, preparing the people's hearts to hear the gospel so it could spread rapidly.

Paul requested that these believers pray for deliverance from evil and wicked people who would confront them. Everywhere that they would go could result in confrontations from those who opposed the Name of Jesus Christ. The enemies of the gospel probably thought they were serving GOD by opposing the gospel messengers. But they were harming themselves by resisting the free gift of GOD ([Ephesians 2:8](#)). Another thing that Paul mentioned to these believers is that these hostile enemies lacked faith, which was expected of them.

Lastly, this letter offers a word of encouragement to the church. The Lord is faithful, a message to build confidence in relying upon Him. GOD promised to meet His people's needs, and Paul could depend upon Him for strength ([Philippians 4:19](#)). GOD vowed to protect His people from evil ([Matthew 6:13](#)). Once more, Paul could depend upon Him for protection according to His will. Today, we can rely upon these promises of strength and security to witness the gospel. But remember to commit all you do to the Lord in prayer for guidance, direction, and protection.

Q. What is one of the “phobias” Minister Johnson mentioned in the witnessing training? Tell us what it means. _____

Endnotes

1. *Drs. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, The Bible Knowledge Commentary New Testament (Colorado Springs: Chariot Victor Publishing, 1983) 644, 684, and 722.*
2. *Unless otherwise stated, all Scripture is taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®, Copyright©2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved.*