

PRAYING WITH PAUL

Especially when he couldn't be with his people, Paul devoted himself to praying for them and with them.

⁶ But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of your faith and love and reported that you always remember us kindly and long to see us, as we long to see you— ⁷ for this reason, brothers, in all our distress and affliction we have been comforted about you through your faith. ⁸ For now we live, if you are standing fast in the Lord. ⁹ For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God, ¹⁰ as we pray most earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith?

¹¹ Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, ¹² and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, ¹³ so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints. (1 Thess 3:6-13)

1. Thank God for specific people in your life that you miss. Thank God for how he has acted for good in their lives (shown them grace).
2. Tell those people, like Paul told the Thessalonians, that you are thankful for God's grace in their life. Tell them what it is about them that you thank God for; that, when you're with God it gives you joy to consider.
3. Remember that prayer isn't a substitute for loving them face to face, but part of loving them, and eagerly anticipate when you'll get to see them again.
4. Ask for there to be an overflow of love in their lives; that Christlike-love will flow in and through them.
5. Ask for God to be at work strengthening them in such a way that all they are becoming "children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation." Phil 2:15.
6. Because these people are spiritual beings with an eternal destiny, pray with eternity's values in view.

Other prayers of Paul include:

¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. (Rom 15:13)

⁷ But we pray to God that you may not do wrong—not that we may appear to have met the test, but that you may do what is right, though we may seem to have failed. ⁸ For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth. ⁹ For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. Your restoration is what we pray for. (2 Cor 13:7-9)

³⁰ I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf, ³¹ that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, ³² so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company. ³³ May the God of peace be with you all. Amen. (Rom 15:30-33)

⁴ I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵ that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge—⁶ even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you—⁷ so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁸ who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. (1 Cor 1:4-9)

⁹ And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹ being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. ¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (Col. 1:9-14)

¹⁶ Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, ¹⁷ comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word. (2 Thess 2:16-17)

See also, Rom 1:8-10, 10:1, 12:12; 2 Cor 1:3-7, 2:14-16, 9:12-15, 12:7-9a; Gal 6:18; Eph 1:3-23, 3:14-21, 6:19-20; Phil 1:3-6, 1:9-11, 4:6-7, 4:23; Col 1:3-14, 4:2-4; 1 Thess 1:2-3, 2:13-16, 5:23-24, 5:28; 2 Thess 1:3ff, 1:11-12, 3:2-5, 3:16; 1 Tim 1:12, 2:1ff; 2 Tim 1:3-7, 1:16-28, 4:22; Tit 3:15b; Philem 4-7, 25