

Last week we talked about the fact that we, as the church, should be people of prayer and our church assemblies should be known for our corporate atmosphere of prayer. Houses of prayer.

Bold Prayer

Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore draw near with boldness to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace for help in time of need.

Ephesians 4:12 (NLT) Because of Christ and our faith in him, we can now come boldly and confidently into God’s presence.

I believe that we can pray and talk to God about anything, anytime, anywhere.

- Pray about everything. **Philippians 4:6** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.
- Cast all your cares on Jesus. **1 Peter 5:7** Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.
- Never stop praying. **1 Thessalonians 5:17** ...pray continually...

Let’s be clear about the above verses and what we have always taught you about prayer here at Believers Church- we are encouraged to take everything to the Lord in prayer. Today I want to talk to you about Bold prayers that go beyond prayers that are centered around “help me, bless me, make my life easier” prayers. Again, those are great and needed, but I want to encourage you to begin to pray **Missional Prayers**.

Personal Prayers and Purpose Prayers

When we look into the scriptures we can learn how and what Jesus, the early church, and Paul focused on the most when they prayed. This will expand our thinking of what our prayers should focus on too. The main difference that I see from our “prayer list” and the prayer concerns in the Bible is that we pray mostly about our personal problems, while the biblical prayers focused more on Christ’s purpose and His mission.

ILL: There is nothing wrong with praying, “Lord give me a parking spot right up front at Walmart for my convenience.” But what if you prayed, “Lord let me park near someone that you want me to share your love with today.” Missional Prayers.

If 80% of my prayers are “bless me” prayers and only 20% are about Jesus’ purpose and mission, while in the scriptures 80% or so are missional prayers...maybe I need to change the percentages in *my* prayers.

Jesus’ Missional Prayers

- Sometimes when Jesus prayed, we are told no content of His prayers. (Mark 1:35; 6:46; Luke 3:21; 9:18, 28; 11:1.) We do know that Jesus made time to commune with His Father and be refreshed in Him.
- Jesus prayed for the healing, deliverance, and salvation of others. (Matthew 8:16; 9:35; 12:15; 14:14; 15:20; 19:2; 21:14; Mark 6:5; 7:37; Luke 4:40; 9:11 and many more.)
- Jesus prayed for God to receive glory and he totally submitted to the Father’s will for Him. (Matthew 11:25; 26:39, 42; 27:46; Mark 14:36; 15:34; Luke 22:31-32, 42; 23:34, 46; John 11:41-42; 12:27-28)

Jesus’ prayers focused on His mission and the fruitful mission of His followers.

Paul Prayed for the Churches and His Mission

Ephesians 1:17-19 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, 19 and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength.

Ephesians 3:16-19 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Philippians 1:9-11 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, 10 so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, 11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

Colossians 1:9-12 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, 10 so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, 11 being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, 12 and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light.

Paul Asked the Church to Pray for Him to Fulfill His Mission

Romans 15:30-33 I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. Pray that I may be kept safe from the unbelievers in Judea and that the contribution I take to Jerusalem may be favorably received by the Lord's people there, so that I may come to you with joy, by God's will, and in your company be refreshed. The God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Ephesians 6:19 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...

Colossians 4:2-4 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. 3 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. 4 Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.

1 Thessalonians 5:25 Brothers and sisters, pray for us.

2 Thessalonians 3:1 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."

Next week, I'm going to ask you to commit to pray for me and the pastors of Believers Church and join us as "Pastor's Prayer Partners".

Bold Next Step: This week I will compare Paul's Missional Prayers to my prayer list and consider if I need expand my prayer life to include Jesus' purpose and mission.

How to Pray for Believers Church

1) Pray that our church is healthy and grows.

(The Believers Church Membership Covenant #2- Share the responsibility of my church by praying for its growth, inviting the unchurched to attend, and by warmly welcoming our guests.)

Numerical Growth – **Acts 16:5 So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.** Every number has a name, and every name is important to Jesus.

Salvation Growth - **Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”**

Pray that people will encounter the presence of Jesus and surrender to His love, forgiveness, and leadership and accept the work Jesus did on the cross as the only way to salvation and life.

Spiritual Growth - **Ephesians 4:22-24 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.** Pray we all become more like Christ Jesus every day!

2) Pray people will experience the presence of Jesus at Believers. **Matthew 18:20 For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”** It’s nice when people come and meet us, but its ashamed if the only meet us and not Jesus.

3) Pray for unity and peace at Believers Church.

Ephesians 4:2-3 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. 3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

4) Pray for the Holy Spirit to move freely among us and have His will and way.

Acts 4:29-30 Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. 30 Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”

5) Pray that we will all be equipped and together do the work of ministry.

Ephesians 4:11-13 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12 to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

6) Pray we grow up and mature as a church.

Ephesians 4:15-16 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. 16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

7) Pray for the leadership of Believers Church.

Everything rises and falls on leadership; therefore, it stands to reason that the devil attacks the pastor and his family. In Matthew 26:21 Jesus agreed with Zechariah 13:7, “I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.”

Bold Next Step: I commit myself to pray for Believers Church.