

C & C: It is a sin not to pray for God's people!

Connections and Comparisons is an ongoing weekly series that deals with many scriptures in the Bible, some of which are not commonly addressed. The purpose of this series is to examine the scriptures at hand comparing what is said and looking at the connections within.

1 Samuel 12:23

23 Moreover as for me, **God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you:** but I will teach you the good and the right way:

How can you love your brothers and sisters in Christ if you don't even pray for them? How can you love your brothers and sisters in Christ if you don't forgive them of their trespasses against you?

Colossians 4:12-13

12 Epaphras, **who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.**

13 For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.

I've heard it preached that if you claim to be a "prayer warrior" or a person who just prays for people and not actually witnessing to people then you are not a soul winner. That you are not laboring in the harvest field. However your life is a witness of Jesus Christ if you are truly following after him. You can see that Epaphras was "always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." Clearly praying was labouring in the Harvest. Your works and your fruit will bear you out! You may not have a chance to verbally witness to people you are often around, however they seeing your good works and righteous lifestyle will know that you are different, set apart, and that is a witness of Jesus Christ to them. They may then inquire of you why you are doing what you are doing and the door is open for verbal communication.

It is also of importance to recognize that the phrase "prayer warrior" is something that people have made up to describe those who are **actually obeying** what the scriptures teach us to do. "Pray without ceasing." (1 Thess 5:17) This commandment and what you are about to read throughout this lesson will teach you that we are all to be praying! Not just some Christians! But ALL Christians! **The phrase "prayer warrior" has it's place when the call goes forth to the "prayer warriors" to pray over a need. However, it also testifies against every one who does not faithfully pray over the needs of others.**

Luke 2:36-37

36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;

37 And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, **which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.**

Again, we see the example of the Godly lifestyle not departing from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. **This lesson is to encourage you and to lift you up! Not to condemn you. This lesson is to encourage you to grow closer to the Lord Jesus Christ and to develop a closer relationship with him! Not to condemn you.**

2 Thessalonians 3:1-6

1 Finally, brethren, **pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you:**

2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.

3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

4 And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things **which we command you.**

It is a sin not to pray for God's people! Learn from the prayers that the Apostles are praying for the Church and the prayers they were asking for themselves. **Do you think the word of the Lord has free course in our world? It doesn't.** Just one example of the many nations where our brothers and sisters are located where the word of the Lord does not have free course is North Korea. There are too many others to list. **You can see here that we need to be praying for our missionaries, pastors, teachers, and all saints that they "may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith".**

5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

Acts 12:5, 12-17

5 Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

Your prayers are needed! Your prayers are essential for countless souls and also for your own soul! There is persecution taking place all over our world for the gospel of Jesus Christ. Persecutions like that of imprisonments, fines, beatings, rapings, murders, kidnappers, and many other ungodly practices. The Apostle Peter was freed because of the prayers of the saints and because of that of the will of God as you will see!! "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (James 5:16b) **Your prayers can change God's mind.** "In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, **Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying, I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.** And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying, Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD. And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I

will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. **And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered.**” (2 Kings 20:1-7)

12 And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; **where many were gathered together praying.**

13 And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda.

14 And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate.

15 And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel.

Even with those gathered together in faith praying, yet even when there prayers were answered they doubted that God answered their prayers, **but God is faithful!!**

16 But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened the door, and saw him, **they were astonished.**

17 But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go shew these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-25

16 Rejoice evermore.

17 Pray without ceasing.

18 In every thing give thanks: **for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.**

19 Quench not the Spirit.

20 Despise not prophesyings.

21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; **and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

24 Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

25 Brethren, pray for us.

When you pray if you find yourself struggling with sleep or other weaknesses of the flesh ask God to strengthen and help you. If you stop praying at that point do not condemn yourself. If the Spirit of God convicts you then repent and continue praying!!

Matthew 6:6

6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

This verse of scripture isn't to be taken alone to avoid or condemn corporate prayer as this is also Biblical as you have just seen an example of concerning those praying for the Apostle Peter. However, when you pray it is not to be seen of others for you to self glory in. You have your reward! And what a horrible reward that would be!

Matthew 14:22-23

22 And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

We absolutely need private prayer time where we are alone. While we pray daily in our private prayer time we need to be open to the Spirit of God and the direction God is leading our prayers. Do your best to make a regular daily private prayer time. Pray according to the time you have set aside for prayer but not quenching the Spirit because the time you set is at hand. The main goal of even setting a prayer time is about disciplining yourself to pray faithfully, daily. The ultimate goal is to pray faithfully, daily without time constraint.

Acts 9:36-41

36 Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.

37 And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber.

38 And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them.

39 Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: **and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them.** But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

41 And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive.

As the Body of Christ we need to pray for the sick and if it be the will of God even to pray that God would raise up someone from the dead.

Matthew 18:19-20

19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Acts 1:13-17, 23-26

13 And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.

14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)

16 Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.

17 For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry.

23 And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.

24 And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen,

25 That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.

26 And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

It is important that along with a faithful, daily prayer life that you not neglect coming together with your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to pray together! If your Church doesn't have a time to come together to pray then you should suggest it to your Pastor. **The Church should come together to pray before each service** that God would have his way in the service, that souls would be added to the kingdom, and that the Church is subjecting itself to the moving and leading of the Spirit of God and not after traditions of men. **Yet still being in subjection to your Pastor as he is the shepherd of God chosen over the flock that God has given to him.**

Luke 22:31-32

31 And the Lord said, **Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:**

32 **But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.**

Pray that your brothers and sisters do not fail. Pray that they will grow in Christ. Pray that if they stumble and fall that they remain faithful and repent allowing God to raise them up again. Consider also yourself unless you too fall.

Romans 1:8-12

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, **that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;**

10 Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.

11 For I long to see you, **that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift,** to the end ye may be established;

12 That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

Pray that your Church would be used in the gifts of the Spirit for the edification of the Body of Christ. Notice the Apostle Paul stresses "that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;". It is a sin not to pray for God's people! How can the love of Christ be in you if you don't have time to pray for his people which is part of your spiritual Body in Christ? If you yet be in the Body of Christ?

1 Corinthians 1:1-7

1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

3 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ;

5 That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge;

6 Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you:

7 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Use the examples given to us of the Apostle's words in things they desire for the Church to receive for your prayers for the Church.

2 Corinthians 9:7-15

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: **for God loveth a cheerful giver.**

8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, **may abound to every good work:**

9 (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.

10 Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)

11 Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, **which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.**

12 For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;

13 Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men;

14 And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you.

15 Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

As you go about doing good for the glory of God while seeking the best interest of others over yourself, there abounds many thanksgivings and prayers toward you as they glorify God on your behalf! That the Body of Christ is edified together in it's love and nourishing of one another and from the nourishment from our God.

Ephesians 1:15-19

15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,

16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

Let us go on to perfection and pray for the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. For all saints! So we know the hope of his calling “And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power”.

Ephesians 3:13-21

13 Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

What a beautiful prayer! What beautiful words of exhortation! This is where God wants us to be! That we “May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.”

Philippians 1:3-11

3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,

5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;

6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.

8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;

10 That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;

11 Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

If you are struggling on how to pray for your brothers and sisters in Christ you need look no further than at the words and prayers of the Apostles for the Churches and their desire for you which is under the inspiration of the Spirit of God!

Colossians 1:3-14

3 We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

4 Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints,

5 For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;

6 Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth:

7 As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;

8 Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.

Read carefully now the prayer that he has for us all as we are the Church the Body of Christ.

9 For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

11 Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

1 Thessalonians 1:2-10

2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

5 For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

6 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:

7 So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

8 For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;

10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

1 Thessalonians 3:7-13

7 Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith:

8 For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

9 For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God;

10 Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

11 Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.

12 And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:

13 To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

11 Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power:

12 That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

16 Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,

17 Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

2 Timothy 1:1-3

1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,

2 To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

3 I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;