



Four Prayers You Need

A BIBLE STUDY BY
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Four Prayers You Need

FOUR PRAYERS YOU NEED

Bible Study #1

Dr. David Cooper

WHEN WE PRAY, WE LEARN

“For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God’s people, ¹⁶ I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. ¹⁷ 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 ²⁰ he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.” Ephesians 1:15-23

Education is the key to maturity and success in life. We never live higher than our level of knowledge. “Wisdom is supreme, therefore get wisdom; though it cost all you have, gain understanding” (Prov 4:7). The greatest education is the learning of Jesus Christ. He said, “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me” (Matt 11:29).

Evangelism without education makes ineffective Christians and church. Jesus said, “Make disciples of all nations...teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matt 28:19).

When we pray, God gives us spiritual wisdom and knowledge of both heavenly and earthly things so that we can live effectively and minister powerfully.

Four Prayers You Need

1. **PRAY FOR OTHERS TO LEARN OF CHRIST:** “For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God’s people, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.”

- Pray for the salvation of others (1 Tim 2:1-3).
- Pray for the spiritual growth of others (John 17).

2. **PRAY FOR A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP TO JESUS:** “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.”

The goal is to “know him (Jesus) better.” Paul had this desire in his own life: “[For my determined purpose is] that I may know Him [that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of His Person more strongly and more clearly] (Phil 3:10, Amplified Bible).

3. **PRAY FOR SPIRITUAL EYESIGHT:** “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, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.”

The eyes of your heart: We have spiritual eyes as well as natural eyes. Jesus healed the blind and also those who are spiritually blind (Luke 4:18-19; John 8:12). Paul writes: “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Cor 4:4).

- The hope to which he has called you (Col 1:27; Titus 2:13).
- The riches of his glorious inheritance in us (Eph 3:8; Phil 4:19).
- The incomparably great power of Christ for us who believe.

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(1) The range of power: “Incomparably great” means to be superior; above and beyond in excellence and degree; more than sufficient; all-surpassing” (2 Cor 4:7).

(2) The reality of power: “The working of His mighty strength when He raised Christ from the dead.” The greatest demonstration of God’s power is the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Christ’s resurrection is confirmed every time a person is saved and raised from the death of sin to eternal life (Rom 6:4; Rom 8:11).

(3) The requirement of power: “For us who believe.” Faith is essential to experience the working of God’s power in your life (Mark 9:23; Heb 11:6).

(4) The realm of power: “And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.” The power of Jesus is displayed in the church, which is his body, as it fulfills His mission to go into all the world!

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Bible Study #2

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WHEN WE PRAY, WE OVERCOME

“For this reason, I kneel before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. ¹⁶ 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. ²⁰ Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, ²¹ to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.” Ephesians 3:14-21

Ephesus was a free city without a detachment of Roman troops. It was a transient city with a changing population. It featured the Temple of Artemis (Greek name) or Diana (Roman name) one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. The temple also served as a wealthy bank for kings and merchants and was an asylum for fleeing criminals.

Ephesus was an immoral city. Heraclitus of Ephesus (c. 535–475 BC) was a famous Greek philosopher before Socrates. He taught that the universe is in a constant state of change and is guided by a divine cosmic order he called the Logos. He was called the weeping philosopher because it was said he could never smile or laugh because he lived in such moral decay.

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Ephesus as a center of revival of the Christian faith. Paul and his team preached Christ for two years in the city surrounding areas. “This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord...In this way the word of the Lord grew and spread in power” (Acts 19:10, 20). The seven churches in the Book of Revelation, starting with Ephesus, grew out of the revival in Ephesus as the gospel of Christ spread.

We live in a time like Ephesus! Paul prayed for believers to overcome the world and to live as more than conquerors. John the apostle asks, “Who is the one who overcomes the world? Only those who believe that Jesus is the Son of God” (1 John 5:5). We overcome the gloom of the day because we have the joy of the Lord in our hearts and the gift of hope in Christ for the world!

1. **OVERCOMERS ARE STRENGTHENED WITH POWER:** “I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being.”
 - The source of power: His glorious riches (2 Cor 4:7).
 - The ministry of power: Through the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:31).
 - The place of power: In your inner being.
2. **OVERCOMERS ARE CHRIST-FILLED PEOPLE.** “So that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.” The word dwell means to take up permanent residence! Jesus is at home in our hearts.
 - Christ dwells in us at salvation (Rev 3:20).
 - Christ dwells as we surrender the title-deed our hearts.
2. **OVERCOMERS ARE ROOTED AND ESTABLISHED IN LOVE.** “And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 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, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.”

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Bible Study #3

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“WHEN WE PRAY, WE LOVE

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

- 1. THE LIMITLESSNESS OF LOVE:** “And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more.”

The word abound means to fill something up to the point that it overflows! God pours his love into our hearts so that it overflows (Rom 5:5).

- 2. THE LOGIC OF LOVE:** “Your love may abound...in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best.”

- Knowledge – the knowledge of God in Christ (John 17:3).
- Insight – understanding the deep things of God (1 Cor 2:9-10).
- Discernment – insight by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:14, 16).
- What is best – what is both holy and healthy.

- 3. THE LIFESTYLE OF LOVE:** “Your love may abound...and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ.”

- Purity – unmixed, genuine, true.
- Blameless – giving God our best like the OT sacrifices were blameless.
- The day of Christ (2 Cor 5:10; Titus 2:13).

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4. THE LABOR OF LOVE. “Your love may abound...filled with fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ.”

- The fruit is love in active ministry. When we are filled, we overflow! The good Samaritan saw the man and took pity on him and helped him (Luke 10).
- Through Jesus Christ means Jesus is living in us and working through us. Our relationship to Jesus is our highest priority (Phil 1:21).

5. THE LEADERSHIP OF LOVE: “Your love may abound...to the glory and praise of God.”

When we are motivated by love, we do everything for God’s glory and not self-promotion (1 Cor 13:1-3; 1 Cor 10:31).

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- Rooted: Roots keep us strong in the storms and fruitful in life (Col 2:6-7). When we are rooted in God's love we will avoid self-righteousness and judgmental attitudes.
- Established means deeply founded or grounded like strong foundation of a building.
- Grasping the love of Christ means to comprehend his love in the sense of taking hold of it as your personal possession and not let go of it or allow it to be stolen.
- Knowledge of love means both to understand God's love more and more and to experience His love on a personal, emotional and spiritual level. Love is both intellectual and intimate.
- The fullness of God means the complete work of grace that God desires to do in our lives. Let God fulfill his perfect will in your life.

How wide is Christ's love? Wide enough to embrace all peoples of the world.

How long is Christ's love? Long enough to reach all generations in time and long enough to cover the entire duration of our lives. The reach of his love is long enough to draw us back no matter how far we may run away from him.

How high is Christ's love? It reaches the person who has achieved the highest status and wealth. It raises us up to sit in heavenly place and to exalt us to places of promotion and success in this life for his glory. His love is high enough to take us to heaven when this life ends.

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How deep is Christ's love? It reaches to the depths of human sin and failure and suffering to lift us out. His love is deep enough to remain through all the storms of life.

4. **OVERCOMERS EXPECT GREAT THINGS FROM GOD.** “Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

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Bible Study #4

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WHEN WE PRAY, WE GROW

“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.¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves,¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

Colossians 1:9-14

One of the greatest challenges of life is getting and staying focused on our goals. We battle distractions that cause us to lose focus. When we don't focus on the important, we flounder dealing with distractions.

The prayer of Paul in Colossians, inspired by the Holy Spirit, gives us six focal points to help us mature in our spiritual life and in our relationship with Jesus. Turn this prayer into a personal prayer for yourself and you will keep you focus. Take the next six days and pray one of these areas for your life.

- 4. FILLED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S WILL.** Filled means complete and full to the point of overflowing. Our all-consuming desire is to do God's will.

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- The will of God is his personal plan for your life (Phil 2:13).
- The will of God is the image of Christ in us (Rom 8:29).
- The will of God is his calling for service in the kingdom (Rom 11:29).

2. WALK WORTHY OF THE LORD AND PLEASE HIM IN EVERY WAY. What a tall order! However, this simply means that our heart's desire is to honor the Lord in all we do and say.

- The approval of God: As kids, we strive to make our parents proud of us and gain their recognition and approval. We do the same with our heavenly Father. We seek to please God over people (2 Tim 2:15).
- The substance of success: The word "worthy" in Greek means worth, weight or value. When we add the character of Christ then our lives take on greater weight and importance. We live with substance and purpose rather than a superficial and shallow life.

3. BEAR FRUIT IN EVERY GOOD WORK. The purpose of planting a tree is to bear fruit! Jesus calls us to get involved in the work of God and to bear fruit by leading people to Christ (John 9:4; John 15:8). We need to develop a results-oriented approach in life. Are we engaged in the work of the Lord? Are we accomplishing what we plan? Activity must lead to accomplishment so that we hear Him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

4. 4. GROW IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD. Life requires ongoing education. We call it continuing education in our respective field of work and career. We need to remain with Christ in the school of discipleship (2 Peter 3:18). The knowledge of God is found in creation (Ps 19:1), in Christ (Col 1:15), in Scripture (2 Tim 3:14-17) and life's experiences with the Lord.

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5. **STRENGTHENED WITH ALL POWER.** While we possess natural strength, we also need spiritual strength as we depend on the Holy Spirit. He gives us power beyond our power. The word strengthened is present tense meaning that we need spiritual renewal. Life consists of gaining strength and losing strength. “Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint” (Isa 40:31).

The result of new strength is “so that you may have great endurance and patience.” We endure through challenges and struggles to reach our goals and to win our battles. We are patient with people and also with the process of the time it takes to reach our goals.

6. **JOYFULLY GIVE THANKS.** If we really believe the gospel of Christ and the promises of God to us then we will be the happiest, healthiest and most positive people in the world! Grace results in gratitude! “In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thess 5:18).

The apostle Paul gives us the reasons we joyfully give thanks since Christ is in our hearts. We are...

- Qualified to share in Christ's eternal inheritance (Eph 1:13-14).
- Rescued from the dominion of darkness.
- Translated into the kingdom of Christ.
- Redeemed and forgiven of our sins.

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