

John Bunyan



“In prayer it is better to have a heart without words than words without a heart.”

Most common prayer requests

Physical health
Vocational success
Family relationships
Salvation of friends
Spiritual revival

Seldom mentioned issues

Thankfulness
Insight and wisdom
Knowing Christ
Faith and power to face life

Paul's prayers

1 Thess.3:9-13

2 Thess.1:1-12

Phil.1:9-11

Eph.1:15-23

Eph.3:14-21

Col.1:9-14

1 Thessalonians 3

“⁹ For what **thanks** can we render to God for you in return for all the joy with which we rejoice before our God on your account,

¹⁰ as we night and day keep praying most earnestly **that we may see your face, and may complete what is lacking in your faith?** ¹¹ Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord **direct our way to you;**

¹² and may the Lord cause you to **increase and abound in love** for one another, and for all men, just as we also do for you;

¹³ so that He may **establish your hearts** unblamable in **holiness** before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.”

2 Thessalonians 1

“³ We ought always to **give thanks** to God for you, brethren, as is only fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows ever greater; ⁴ therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure.

¹¹ To this end also we pray for you always that our **God may count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power;** ¹² in order that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Philippians 1

“⁹ **And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment,**

¹⁰ so that you may approve the things that are excellent,

in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;

¹¹ having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”

Ephesians 1

“¹⁵ For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you, and your love for all the saints,

¹⁶ do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers;

¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.

¹⁸ I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.”

Ephesians 3

“¹⁴ For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name,

¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man;

¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith;

and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,

¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fulness of God.”

Colossians 1

“⁹ For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask

that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

¹⁰ so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

¹¹ strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience;

joyously ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.”

Knowing of God's will.

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¹¹ strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience;

joyously ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.”

It is the thankful fruitful manner of our walk in response to life's circumstances that is the essence of God's will.

What we need to know is the love, power, and Spirit of Christ, more than specific decisions and directions.

Paul's agenda in prayer

Text	Thanks	Wisdom	Walk	Faith	Love
1 Thess.	Red	White	Brown	Purple	Blue
2 Thess.	Red	White	Brown	Purple	White
Phil.1	White	Green	Brown	White	Blue
Eph.1	Red	Green	White	White	White
Eph.3	White	Green	White	Purple	Blue
Col.1	Red	Green	Brown	White	White

What do Paul's prayers tell us?

1. **Thankfulness** is a starting place.
2. A **renewed mind** is a foundation.
3. **Godly living** is a goal.



Conspicuously absent

- bodily comfort
- detailed guidance
- evangelistic outreach
- filling of the Spirit
- cultural revival
- physical resources

What do Paul's prayers tell us?

1. Thankfulness is a starting place.

Respect the fruit of God's work not just the need for it. **See the glass 1/2 full.**



Let others know that you thank God for them. **Turn thankfulness into encouragement.**

Be specific about what you are thankful for. **Be conscious of your blessings.**

What do Paul's prayers tell us?

2. A renewed mind is a foundation.

Wisdom is our path to discerning God's will. **Seek wisdom more than special revelation.**

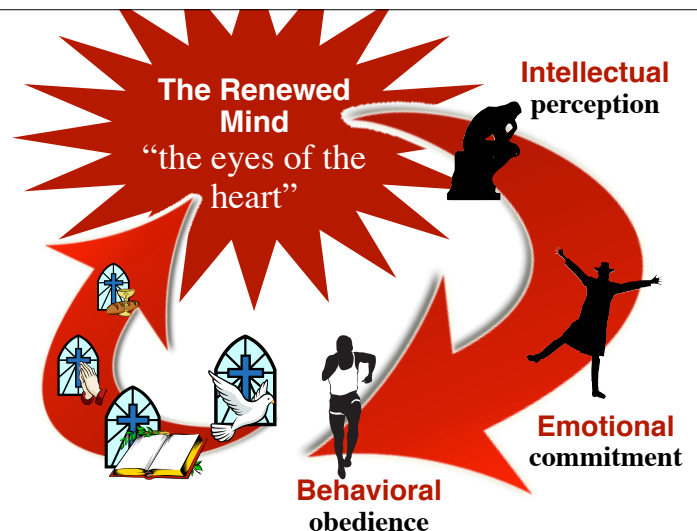


Knowing the love of God and the wonder of grace sets us free for powerful living. **Pray for an intimate encounter with God's love and grace.**

When at a loss to know a person's needs start here. **This is a universal prayer need.**

James 1

“5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.”



What do Paul's prayers tell us?

3. Godly living is a goal.

Loving relationships are at the heart of God's will. **Make relationships a priority.**



Spiritual growth is needed and expected. **Make spiritual growth a priority.**

Pray for the peace of God. **Make reconciliation a priority.**

Resolving dissonance in prayer

1 Peter 5:6-11

1. Cast your cares on God.
2. Trust God's Spirit to intercede for us.
3. Trust God's wisdom and heart.
4. Trust God for endurance in suffering.



Paul's priorities

1. Thankfulness.
2. Renewed mind.
3. Godly living.

The Lord's Prayer Matthew 6:9-13

1. See God as a caring Father.
2. Put God's earthly agenda first.
3. Ask for God's sustenance in this life.
 - provision for body and soul
 - peace with man and God
 - protection from self and Satan.