

The Soldier's Prayer – Part 11
What to Pray for Pastors

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AM Service

By: Pastor Greg Hocson

Text:

Ephesians 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; 19: And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, 20: For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Introduction

By way of introduction allow me to read a devotional written by C. H. Spurgeon on July 7th, 1865.

“Brethren, our work is solemnly momentous, involving weal or woe to thousands; we treat with souls for God on eternal business, and our word is either a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death. A very heavy responsibility rests upon us, and it will be no small mercy if at the last we be found clear of the blood of all men.

As officers in Christ's army, we are the especial mark of the enmity of men and devils; they watch for our halting, and labour to take us by the heels. Our sacred calling involves us in temptations from which you are exempt, above all it too often draws us away from our personal enjoyment of truth into a ministerial and official consideration of it. We meet with many knotty cases, and our wits are at a non plus; we observe very sad backslidings, and our hearts are wounded; we see millions perishing, and our spirits sink. We wish to profit you by our preaching; we desire to be blest (a blessing) to your children; we long to be useful both to saints and sinners; therefore, dear friends, intercede for us with our God.

Miserable men are we if we miss the aid (help) of your prayers, but happy are we if we live in your supplications. You do not look to us but to our Master for spiritual blessings, and yet how many times has He given those blessings through His ministers; ask then, again and again, that we may be the earthen vessels into which the Lord may put the treasure of the gospel. We, the whole company of missionaries, ministers, city missionaries, and students, do in the name of Jesus beseech you, ‘BRETHREN, PRAY FOR US!’” – C. H. Spurgeon

Ephesians 6: 18: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; 19: And for me ...

Last Sunday, was an appeal to Grace & Truth family to pray for those of us who labor among you. I gave you three reasons why we need your prayers, namely, because of our natural frailty, then because of the heavy responsibility and the difficult task we carry, and on top of these we have our strong enemy who constantly opposes us as we in our weaknesses and limitations seek to carry out our heavy responsibility and difficult task. I tell you when you and I realize this it will drive us to our knees and intercede on behalf of those who labor among us.

Let's consider the two basic areas you need to focus on as you intercede on our behalf. These are our life and our ministry. Today, let's focus on the first area, which is our life. So what do you pray for us as far as our life is concerned?

I - Personal Holiness

Pray that we would grow in grace and holiness. Pray that we would grow in likeness to our Lord Jesus Christ. **Pray that our walk would match our talk.** Pray that we would not only be preacher of the Word but also doer of the Word. **This ought to be our primary concern.**

Robert Murray McChyene (1813 - 1843) who was a pastor himself put it this way ...

"My people's greatest need is my holiness." And then he went on to say, *"A holy minister are awesome weapon in the hand of God."*

Pray that we would walk in holiness. **The effectiveness of our ministry depends on it.** God will not use a dirty vessel. God will not bless the work if those who lead are worldly and ungodly.

[1 Timothy 4:16](#) Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

Pray that we would watch our life and doctrine closely. In doing so, both the minister and the congregation would be delivered and protected from the pollutions of the world, and from errors and false teachings.

If you are going to pray for me, pray for my holiness and growth in grace; **not just that I would have a successful and fruitful ministry.**

Pray Ephesians 3:14-21 for us. Pray that would be strengthened in the inner man; that I would be rooted and grounded in Christ and His love; that I would comprehend the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of Christ's love which surpasses knowledge; that I would be filled with the fullness of God.

All these are not just for the sake of the ministers but for your sakes. Brethren, pray for us!

II - Protection

Again, let me remind you that pastors are not super spiritual Christians. We, pastors, like all Christians, are subject to the enemy's **three-fold temptations**: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. **We also live in the same world that you live in.**

1. Pray for our protection from the devil

It is true that on one hand, pastors are just one of the people, but on the other hand there is a difference. **The difference is not in quality, but in responsibility.** We are no “better” than the people we minister to, but **we are attacked more than anyone else** in the church. We have a real enemy, and we are at war. We are the main targets of the enemy. The danger are greater, the opposition of the enemy is greater. So, please, pray for our protection.

The devil is a cruel enemy, who hates men, women, and children. He is always seeking someone to devour and destroy, and when he sees a pastor, he intensifies his attacks all the more.

Richard Baxter speaking to pastors says this:

“Take heed to yourselves because the tempter will attack you with his temptations more than other men. If you will be the leaders against the prince of darkness he will spare you no further than God restrains him. As wise and learned as you are take heed to yourselves lest he outwit you. The devil is a greater scholar than you are and a nimbler disputant. Take heed to yourselves because there are many eyes upon you and there will be many to observe your faults.”

Brethren, pray that we would be protected from the evil one.

2. Pray for protection from discouragement

One of the most constant things that ministers battle with is discouragement. The responsibility is heavy, the task is difficult, and the opposition is great and unending. **It is hard work and it can be discouraging.**

Last Sunday we saw how the John the Baptist got discouraged while he was in prison. Paul is another minister of the gospel who also experienced discouragement.

Acts 18:10

In this account, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. There in Corinth, every Sabbath he was at the meeting place, doing his best to convince both Jews and Greeks about Jesus. Paul doing everything he could to persuade the Jews that Jesus was in fact God’s Messiah. But they rejected his message. The Jews opposed and reviled him. Irritated and discouraged, Paul gave up on the and said,

Acts 18:6 And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, **Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.**

But the Lord came to him in a vision and encouraged him,

Acts 18:9 Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: 10: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.

Pray for us that God would protect us from discouragement. But brethren when you pray that God would protect us from discouragement **strive also not to be a source of discouragement yourself**. One of the ways you can encourage your preacher is to be faithfully in your place.

3. Pray for the protection of our family

Pray that God would protect our family. Pray that we would have a strong marriage and family. Pray for our wives. Pray for our children. **Pray that we would be the spiritual leaders at home that we exhort you to be on the Lord's Day.**

1 Timothy 3:2 A bishop then must be blameless (above reproach), the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach (able to teach); 3: Not given to wine (not a drunkard), no striker (not violent), not greedy of filthy lucre (not a lover of money); but patient, not a brawler (peaceful), not covetous; 4: One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; 5: (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

A spiritual leader must manage his own family well, and with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he care for the church of God?

Satan loves to destroy a pastor's family, and your pastor needs prayer that God will give him a strong marriage and a healthy family. So, brethren pray for us. Pray for our protection.

III - Prayer Life

For the past two months God has been dealing with me about prayer. Pray that I would be a man of prayer. That is our calling – prayer and the ministry of the word.

[Acts 6:4](#) But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

Prayer is a very spiritual work that means the flesh does not like it which means it is hard to see the value of it and the effectiveness of it.

Pray that I would be pastor who know what it means to commune with God, know how to seek the face of God, who know what it is to be on my knees, to know what it is to have my heart and mind meditating in the scripture.

This is again for your sakes.

E. M. Bounds puts it this way ...

"It was claimed for Augustus Caesar that he found Rome a city of wood, and left it a city of marble. The pastor who succeeds in changing his people from a prayerless to a prayerful people, has done a greater work than did Augustus in changing a city from wood to marble. And after all, this is the prime work of the preacher. Primarily, he is dealing with prayerless people — with people of whom it is said, "God is not in all their thoughts." Such people he meets everywhere, and all the time. His main business is to turn them from being forgetful of God, from being devoid of faith, from being prayerless, so that they become people who habitually pray, who

believe in God, remember Him and do His will. The preacher is not sent to merely induce men to join the Church, nor merely to get them to do better. It is to get them to pray, to trust God, and to keep God ever before their eyes, that they may not sin against Him.”

“The work of the ministry is to change unbelieving sinners into praying and believing saints.”

Closing Exhortation

Personal holiness, protection, and prayer life - these things I do pray in my own life. As I pray these in my own life, please pray for me.

[Romans 15:30](#) Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;

Dear brothers and sisters, I beseech you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. I beg you to labor with me, to agonize with me in prayer to God for me. Pray for my personal holiness, protection, and prayer life, for Christ's sake and the love of the Spirit. Do this because of your love for me, given to you by the Holy Spirit.

AMEN!