

Praise & Prayer

Involved in the Church:

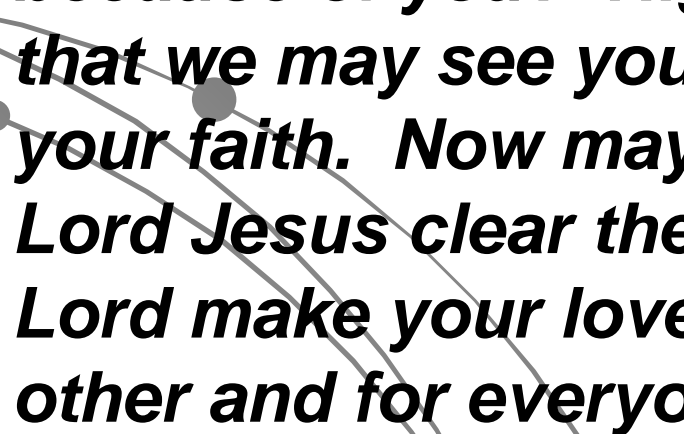
- relationships are hard – people are imperfect
- serving together takes effort – not a default setting
- focus is difficult to maintain – easy to look at others

Prayer Times – always ask for praise and prayer

- Paul patterns this praise and prayer thing for us

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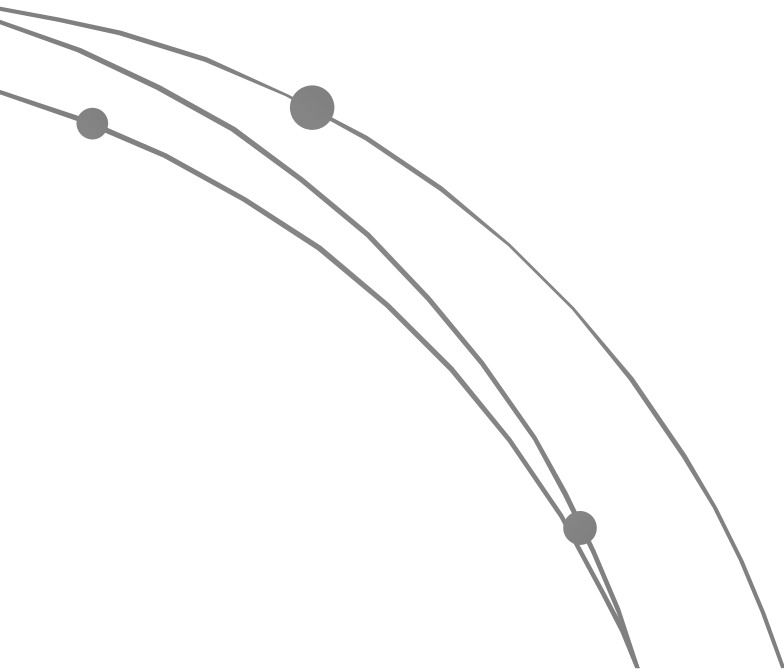
“Therefore brothers, in all our distress and persecution we were encouraged about you because of your faith. For now we really live, since you are standing firm in the Lord. How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith. Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you. May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you.”



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“May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.”

1 Thess. 3:7-13



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Paul's Pattern & Praise vs.7-9

a) Grateful for Growth

- standing firm, growing – not stagnant or stalled

b) Grateful for the Thrill of Being Involved

- now we really live – no greater thrill for us

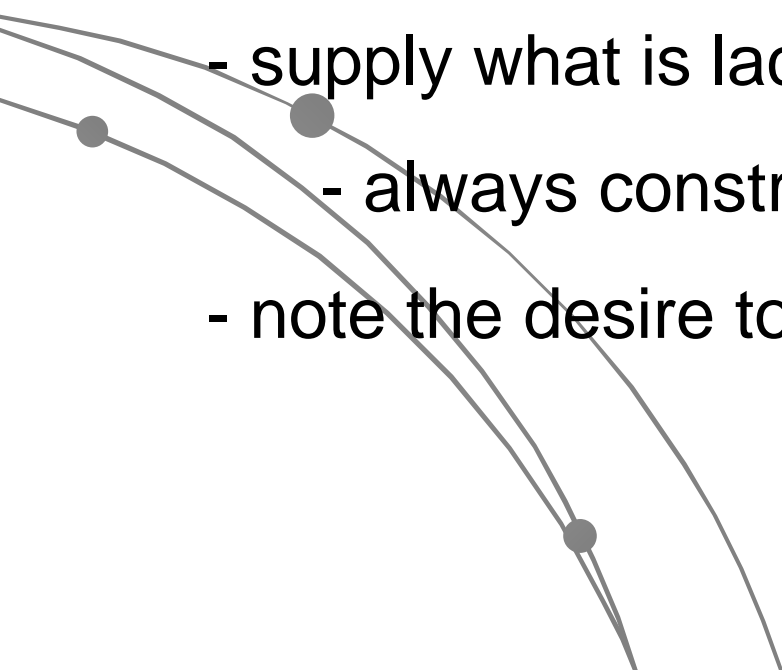
c) Grateful for the Encouragement

- in distress and persecution – encouraged by you
- joy in the presence of God – because of seeing you

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Paul's Pattern & Prayer vs.10-13

1. Asking That We Might Stay Involved

- be together in person – investing in each other
 - asking for a miracle – God to clear the way for this
 - supply what is lacking – adjust, equip, furnish, mend
 - always constructive towards full readiness
 - note the desire to be in relationship – miss one another
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2. Asking for Abounding Love vs.12

- Towards Each Other

- increase – see one another in God's eyes
- overflow – uncontained or unable to hide this

- Towards Others

- 'just as ours does for you' – we loved you
- may you see others that way, and reach for them

*Key Truth – if our love abounds – our treatment of one another changes, and the world observes that!

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3. Asking For Power For Holy Living vs.13

- Strengthen Your Hearts

 - motives and passions drive and direct us

 - deepened hearts for God – new direction & passion

- Found Right in God's Eyes

 - blameless – forgiveness, grace, obedience

 - holy – power for living right in relationship with God

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So What

1. Praise Depends On Perspective

- thankful for God's work in mans lives - transforming
- filled with joy at being involved – see where God active

2. Prayer Pattern For Our Lives

- Continued Involvement in God's work in others
 - Love that fills and overflows lives – evident and real
 - Empowerment of God for right motives and actions
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