

**PRAYER FOR MINISTRY:
ROMANS 15:30-33**

15th November 2006

Context

- Ministry is wider than ministers – “royal priesthood”
- Prayer in Romans 15:30-33 concludes Paul’s letter to a church he had not met!
- Follows encouragement to them and Paul’s plans for mission
- A moving request for prayer for his ministry

The prayer

- “I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. Pray that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea and that my service in Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints there, so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and together with you be refreshed. The God of peace be with you all. Amen.”

The Trinity

- I urge you, brothers, by our **Lord Jesus Christ** and by the love of the **Spirit**, to join me in my struggle by praying to **God** for me. Pray that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea and that my service in Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints there, so that by **God's** will I may come to you with joy and together with you be refreshed. The **God** of peace be with you all. Amen.”

Fruits of the Spirit

- I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the **love** of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. Pray that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea and that my service in Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints there, so that by God's will I may come to you with **joy** and together with you be refreshed. The God of **peace** be with you all. Amen.”

The key points

1. Prayer for ministry is effective at a distance
2. Prayer for ministry is engaging in a struggle
3. Ministers need prayer against enemies
4. There is a need for prayer for acceptance of ministry
5. Prayer is essential for ministry plans

Prayer for ministry at a distance

- Romans 1000 miles from Jerusalem but Paul knew their prayers were effective
- Wednesday's world prayer groups for the suffering church has same ministry
- 'Pilot' Jemy, from the Philippines
 - Often threatened with death by his Islamic neighbours
 - Travels far across often stormy seas to attend Christian training courses
 - Pilots a small boat taking Christians to services

Wednesday 11.00 - pray for 'Pilot' Jemy



- Or prolong coffee, read another article, check email.....

Prayer for ministry as a struggle

- Paul: “join me in my struggle by praying to God for me”
- “Fixedness, faith and fervency in prayer”
 - Jacob – and Ephesians 6: “Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”
- Combat is best conducted in a platoon – Rambos don’t survive!
 - Christian leaders in the front line of the struggle, need prayer support “join me”!

- LST applications:
 - Prayer support for Derek and staff
 - Prayer support for struggling fellow students
 - Prayer support is needed for any outreach of the college or your church.
- LST opportunities:
 - Monday morning “Solar” at 8.00
 - Class prayer Monday 11.00
 - Renovare to support each other
- Don’t leave the same people to battle alone!

- Motivation for committing to the struggle
 - Not our own resources – as prayer is a spiritual battle, anything is more attractive!
 - We can only be motivated “by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit”.
 - Jesus, our saviour, himself bids us to struggle in prayer for the ministers who do his work
 - The Holy Spirit equips us by his love to do so with the full armour of God that Ephesians 6 outlines to us

Prayer for ministers against enemies

- Engagement in ministry = opposition
 - Paul: “that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea”
- LST: ill will from individuals but also Satan’s role – he longs to see the downfall of this college
 - using some of us to serve his purposes through our weaknesses
 - seeking to prolong lecturer’s illnesses
 - prolonging bouts of depression

- Remember Christ's victory over Satan:
 - “Having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.” (Col 2:15)
- And ultimately:
 - “The devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulphur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.” (Revelation 20:10)
- Till then we must pray for protection from evil...
- ...and not doubt the existence of it!!

Prayer for acceptance of ministry

- Ministry can be undermined by lack of appreciation:
 - “Pray that...my service in Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints there”
- Prayer for softening of hard hearts in receipt of gifts....
-examine our own hearts – do we have anything against our leaders or each other, which could undermine LST’s or your church’s ministry?

Prayer for ministry plans

- Paul's errand to Jerusalem, and thereafter visiting Rome and mission in Spain
- God expects ministers to plan prayerfully, not "holy autopilot"!
- Our plans:
 - In short run the ministry for those leaving
 - In longer term the building project

A positive message for bold plans!

- Jesus said in Mark 4:12 “Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.” (Isaiah 6:9)
- Paul says in Romans 15:21: “Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand.” (Isaiah 52:15)
- Red to Green! We are in the era of hearing and understanding due to Christ’s work and the coming of the Holy Spirit!
- "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." - out there!

Answered prayer

- Was the outcome a stern message that prayer may not be answered?
- ...or rather that God answers in his own way?
 - Paul was rescued
 - Paul's gifts were well received
 - Paul came to Rome although in chains, and “For two whole years...he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.”
- A personal example of prayer for ministry

Summary

- Pray for ministers, for the ministry of the college, and for one another, for we are all ministers
- Pray energetically that the college will be protected from evil, and that our message will be well received
- Pray that God will indeed send from here workers into his harvest field
- Pray for God to preserve our integrity so that we might be true ambassadors of Christ
- **Pray that we would all be filled with the Holy Spirit so in prayer God's power is released among us to undertake these ministries**