



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing



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Worship Music

Prayer

Lord, I am so very thankful to You for all the progress I've already seen in my life. But today I am turning my eyes to the future because I know You have so much for me to do. I don't want to miss anything You have designed for me, so I am choosing to turn my attention to the vision and to run my race with all my might. Help me remove anything that would hinder my race so I can press forward toward the prize of the high calling of God for my life, in Jesus' name. Amen.

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1 THE ALLOTMENT for the people of Joseph went from the Jordan by Jericho, east of the waters of Jericho, into the wilderness, going up from Jericho into the hill country to Bethel;

2 Then it went from Bethel to Luz and passed on to Ataroth, the border of the Archites.

3 And it went down westward to the territory of the Japhletites as far as the outskirts of Lower Beth-horon, then to Gezer, and ended at the sea.

4 The descendants of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, received their inheritance.

5 The boundary of the Ephraimites according to their families was thus: on the east side their border was Ataroth-addar as far as Upper Beth-horon.

6 Then the boundary went from there to the sea; on the north was Michmethath; then on the east the boundary went out to Taanath-shiloh, and eastward to Janoah,

7 Then it went down from Janoah to Ataroth and to Naarah, touched Jericho, and ended at the Jordan [River].

8 The border went out from Tappuah westward to the brook Kanah and ended at the [Mediterranean] Sea. This is the inheritance of the Ephraimites by their families,

9 With the towns set apart for the Ephraimites within the inheritance of the Manassites, all those towns with their villages.

10 But they did not drive out the Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites to this day, and they became slaves required to do forced labor.



Chapter 16

In chapter sixteen he describes the areas that were given then to Manasseh, and to Ephraim, the sons, or the descendants of Joseph. Now part of the tribe of Manasseh settled on the east banks of the Jordan River, but the other part settled on the west banks of the Jordan from the area of Jericho, on up through Bethel, and the area basically just north from the area of Jerusalem, and going north from there north of Judah.

So verse ten, chapter sixteen,

They drove not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer: but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites unto this day, and they serve under tribute (Jos 16:10).

So again the failure of totally conquering the land. As we get into the book of Judges, we'll see the cost of this disobedience of failing to totally take the land, but allowing some of the people to remain. As the scripture predicted they did become thorns in their sides, and pricks, and they became a real problem to them in time to come. We'll cover that as we move on into Judges. But we'll finish the book of Joshua next Sunday.

Now in some of the reading that we skipped over tonight, the listing of all those names, you can't even find the ruins of all those cities anymore. So it's no sense of reading all the things, when you get to those listing of names, just jump over them, else your Bible reading will become tedious indeed. So just jump over whenever you start getting a list of a lot of names.

Now I do suggest that you get a good Bible map of the division of the land to the twelve tribes. And a good map will do a lot more for you to understand the places where the twelve tribes lived than trying to read the borders of the cities that don't even exist anymore. So just get you a good Bible map and you can study it on a good Bible map, the portion out of the land.

Now what they did is that they would draw out the area, and then they would have all the tribes' names in a little box or something, and they'd put, say, "Okay now this area on down from Jerusalem on south", and so forth, and say, "All right now who's gonna have this?" They'd draw the lot and "Oh Judah", "Okay that's Judah's". So they apportioned the land by lot, by the drawing of lots. They would circumscribe an area, then draw lots and it would go to that tribe whose was drawn for that particular area.

So next week we move on to the finishing of the apportioning of the land to the various tribes, and to Joshua's final charge to the people, and his death. Shall we stand?

May the Lord bring you into a special consciousness of His presence, of His love, of His interest in your life. May you walk in the consciousness of God's grace, and be led by His Spirit. May you come into a new relationship with God, a very personal relationship with God. In Jesus' name.

(Through The Bible C-2000 Series; Chuck Smith; Bible Commentaries; 1979-1986)

XII. PAUL, THE TEACHER OF PRAYER

"Fletcher of Madeley, a great teacher of a century and a half ago, used to lecture to the young theological students. He was one of the fellow-workers with Wesley and a man of most saintly character. When he had lectured on one of the great topics of the Word of God, such as the Fullness of God's Holy Spirit or on the power and blessing that He meant His people to have, he would close the lecture and say, 'That is the theory; now will those who want the practice come along up to my room!' And again and again they closed their books and went away to his room, where the hour's theory would be followed by one or two hours of prayer."—Rev. Hubert Brooke.

How instant, strenuous, persistent, and pathetic was Paul's urgency of prayer upon those to whom he wrote and spoke! "I exhort," says he, writing to Timothy, "first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men." This he meant was to be the prime deposit and truth for the Church. First of all, before all things, to the front of all things, the Church of Christ was to be a praying Church, was to pray for men, was to pray for all men. He charged the Philippians to this effect: "Be careful for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." The Church must be anxious about nothing. In everything prayer must be made. Nothing was too small about which to pray. Nothing was too great for God to overcome. Paul lays it down as a vital, all-essential injunction in writing to the Church at Thessalonica, "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks. For this is the will of God concerning you." The Church must give itself to unceasing prayer. Never was prayer to cease in the Church. This was the will of God concerning His Church on earth. Paul was not only given to prayer himself, but he continually and earnestly urged it in a way that showed its vital importance. He was not only insistent in urging prayer upon the Church in his day, but he urged persistent praying. "Continue in prayer and watch in the same," was the keynote of all his exhortations on prayer. "Praying always with all prayer and supplication," was the way he pressed this important matter upon the people. "I will, therefore," I exhort, this is my desire, my mind upon this question, "that men pray everywhere, without wrath and doubting." As he prayed after this fashion himself, he could afford to press it upon those to whom he ministered. Paul was a leader by appointment and by universal recognition and acceptance. He had many mighty forces in this ministry. His conversion, so conspicuous and radical, was a great force, a perfect magazine of aggressive and defensive warfare. His call to the apostleship was clear, luminous and convincing. But these forces were not the divinest energies which brought forth the largest results to his ministry. Paul's course was more distinctly shaped and his career rendered more powerfully successful by prayer than by any other force. It is no surprise then that he should give such prominence to prayer in his preaching and writing. We could not expect it to be otherwise. As prayer was the highest exercise in his personal life, so also prayer assumed the same high place in his teaching. His example of prayer added force to his teaching on prayer. His practice and his teaching ran in parallel lines. There was no inconsistency in the two things. Paul was the chiefest of the apostles as he was chief in prayer. If he was the first of the apostles, prayer conspired to that end. Hence he was all the better qualified to be a teacher on prayer. His praying fitted him to teach others what prayer was and what prayer could do. And for this reason he was competent to urge upon the people that they must not neglect prayer. Too much depended upon it. He was first in prayer for this cause. For the reason that on him centered more saintly praying than on any one else, he became the first in apostleship. The crown of martyrdom was the highest crown in the royalty of heaven, but prayer put this crown of martyrdom on his head.

He who would teach the people to pray must first himself be given to prayer. He who urges prayer on others must first tread the path of prayer himself. And just in proportion as preachers pray, will they be disposed to urge prayer upon those to whom they preach. Moreover, just in proportion as preachers pray, will they be fitted to preach on prayer. If that course of reasoning be true, would it be legitimate to draw the conclusion that the reason why there is so little preaching on prayer in these modern times is because preachers are not praying men? We might stake the whole question of the absolute necessity and the possibilities of prayer in this dispensation on Paul's attitude toward prayer. If personal force, if the energy of a strong will, if profound convictions, if personal culture and talents, and if the Divine call and the Divine empowerment,—if any one of these, or all of them united, could direct the Church of God without prayer, then logically prayer would be unnecessary. If profound piety and unswerving consecration to a high purpose, if impassioned loyalty to Jesus Christ, if any or all of these could exist without devoted prayer, or lift a Church leader above the necessity of prayer, then Paul was above its use. But if the great and gifted, the favored and devoted Paul felt the necessity of unceasing prayer, and realized that it was urgent and pressing in regard to its claims and necessity, and if he felt that it was clamorous and insistent that the Church should pray without ceasing, then he and his brethren in the apostolate should be aided by universal and mighty praying.

Paul's praying and his commands and the urgency with which he pressed upon the Church to pray, is the most convincing proof of the absolute necessity of prayer as a great moral force in the world, an indispensable and inalienable factor in the progress and spread of the Gospel, and in the development of personal piety. In Paul's view, there was no Church success without prayer, and no piety without prayer, in fact without much prayer. A Church out of whose life streams prayer as the incense flames went out of the censer, and a leadership out of whose character, life and habits flames prayer as imposing, conspicuous and spontaneous as the fragrant incense flamed, this was the leadership for God.

To pray everywhere, to pray in everything, to continue instant in prayer, and to pray without ceasing, thus Paul spoke as a commentator on the Divine uses and the nature of prayer.

Timothy was very dear to Paul, and the attachment was mutual and intensified by all their affinities. Paul found in Timothy those elements which fitted him to be his spiritual successor, at least the depository and the leader of the great spiritual principles and forces which were essential to the establishment and prosperity of the Church. These primary and vital truths he would enforce on and radicate in Timothy. Paul regarded Timothy as one to whom fundamental and vital truths might be committed, who would preserve them truly, and who would commit them inviolate to the future. So he gives to Timothy this deposit of prayer for all ages as found in 1 Tim. 2:1. Let it be noted before we go any further that Paul wrote directly under the superintendency of the Holy Spirit, who guarded Paul against error, and who suggested the truths which Paul taught. We hold definitely without compromise in the least to the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, and as Paul's writings are part and parcel of those Sacred Writings, then Paul's Epistles are portions of the

Scriptures or the Word of God. This being true, the doctrine of prayer which Paul affirmed is the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. His Epistles are of the Word of God, inspired, authentic and of Divine authority. So that prayer as taught by Paul is the doctrine which Almighty God would have His Church accept, believe, and practice.

These words to Timothy, therefore, were divinely inspired words. This section of Holy Writ is much more than merely suggestive, and is far more than a broad, bare outline on prayer. It is so instructive about prayer, about how men ought to pray, how business men should pray, and so forceful about the reasons why men ought to pray, that it needs to be strongly and insistently pressed.

Here are Paul's words to Timothy on prayer: "I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks, be made for all men; "For kings and all that are in authority that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God, our Saviour; "Who will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." In this prayer section we have set forth by Paul the inheritance and practice of every Christian in all ages. It is a vade mecum in the great business of praying. It gives us a view of the energy and many-sidedness of prayer. First in point of time in all excellence of all duties is prayer. It must be first in all occupations. So exacting and imperative in its import and power is prayer that it stands first among spiritual values. He that prays not, is not at all. He is naught, less than naught. He is below zero, so far as Christ and God and heaven are concerned. Not simply among the first things does prayer stand on a level with other things, but first of the first, to the very forefront, does Paul put prayer with all his heart. "I exhort that first of all." His teaching is that praying is the most important of all things on earth. All else must be restrained, retired, to give it primacy. Put it first, and keep its primacy. The conflict is about the primacy of prayer. Defeat and victory lie in this one thing. To make prayer secondary is to disown it. It is to fetter and destroy prayer. If prayer is put first, then God is put first, and victory is assured. Prayer must either reign in the life or must abdicate. Which shall it be? According to Paul, "supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks" all these elements of prayer and forms of prayer are to be offered for men. Prayer is offered for things, for all things, for all temporal good, and for all spiritual good and grace, but in these directions Paul rises to the highest results and purposes of prayer. Men are to be affected by prayer. Their good, their character, conduct and destiny are all involved in prayer. In this regard prayer moves along the highest way, and pursues its loftiest end. We are cognizant and consonant with things, with blessings, and bestowments, with matters and things which touch men, but men themselves are here set forth as the objects of prayer. This broadens and ennobles prayer. Men, through the whole sweep and range of their conditions, are to be held in the mighty grasp of prayer. Paul's teaching is to the effect that prayer is essentially a thing of the inner nature. The spirit within us prays. So note Paul's directions: "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, without wrath." "Wrath" is a term which denotes the natural, internal motion of plants and fruits, swelling with juice. The natural juices are warmed into life, and rise by the warmth of Spring. Man has in him natural juices which rise as does the sap. Warmth, heat, all stages of passions and desires, every degree of feeling, these spontaneously rise under provocation. Guard against and suppress them. Man cannot pray with these natural feelings rising in him, cultivated, cherished and continued there. Prayer is to be without these. "Without wrath." Higher, better, nobler inspiration are to lift prayer upward. "Wrath" depresses prayer, hinders it, suppresses it. The word "without" means making no use of, having no association with, apart from, aloof from The natural, unrenewed heart has no part in praying. Its heat and all its nature juices poison and destroy praying. The nature of prayer is deeper than nature. We cannot pray by nature, even by the kindest and the best nature. Prayer is the true test of character. Fidelity to our conditions and trueness to our relations are often evinced by our prayerfulness. Some conditions give birth to prayer. They are the soil which germinates and perfects prayer. To pray under some circumstances seems very fitting. Not to pray in some conditions seems heartless and discordant. The great storms of life, when we are helpless and without relief, or are devoid of assuagement, are the natural and providential conditions of prayer.

Widowhood is a great sorrow. It comes to saintly women as well as to others. True widows there are who are saintly. They are to be honored and their sorrow is divine. Their piety is aromatic and lightened by their bruised hearts. Here is Paul's description of such widows: "Now she that is a widow indeed and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." Here is the striking contrast between two classes of women. One gives herself to supplications night and day. The other lives in pleasure and is spiritually dead. So Paul describes a true widow as being great in prayer. Her prayers, born of her faith and desolation, are a mighty force. Day and night her prayers go up to God unceasingly. The widowhood heart is a mighty appeal to God when that heart is found in the way of prayer, intense, unwearied prayer.

One of Paul's striking injunctions worthy of study is this one, "continuing instant in prayer," or as the Revised Version reads, "Continuing steadfast in prayer," which is his description of prayer. The term means to tarry, to remain, to be steadfast and faithful in prayer, to stick to it strong, to stay at it with strength to the end, to give attention to it with vigor, devotion and constancy, to give unremitting care to it.

Praying is a business, a life-long business, one to be followed with diligence, fervor and toil. The Christian's business by way of preeminence is prayer. It is his most engaging, most heavenly, most lucrative business. Prayer is a business of such high and deserved dignity and import that it is to be followed "without ceasing." That is, with no let up nor break down, followed assiduously and without intermission. To prayer we are to give all strength. It must cover all things, be in every place, find itself in all seasons, and embrace everything, always, and everywhere. In the remarkable prayer in Ephes. 3, he is praying for wide reaches of religious experience. He is there bowing his knees unto God, in the name of Jesus Christ, and asking that God would grant that these Ephesian believers would in their experiences go far beyond the utmost stretches of past sainthood. "Filled with all the fullness of God," an experience so great and so glorious that it makes the head of the modern saint so dizzy that he is afraid to look up to those supernal heights or peer down into the fathomless depths. Paul just passes us on to Him, "who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think." This is a specimen of his teaching on prayer. In writing to the Philippian Church, Paul recounts the situation, and shows the transmuting power of prayer as follows: "Some indeed preach Christ of envy and strife; and some also of good will; "The one preach Christ of contention, not

sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds; "But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the Gospel. "What then? Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. "For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through our prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. "According to my earnest expectation and my hope; that in nothing shall I be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or death." Boldness was to be secured by him and discomfiture and shame prevented by their prayers, and Christ was to be gloriously magnified by and through Paul, whether he lived or died. It is to be remarked that in all these quotations in Corinthians, Ephesians or Philippians, the Revised Version gives us the most intense form of prayer, "supplications." It is the intense, personal, strenuous, persistent praying of the saints, that Paul requests, and they must give special strength, interest, time and heart to their praying to make it bear its largest golden fruit.

The general direction about prayer to the Colossian Christians is made specific and is sharpened to the point of a personal appeal: "Continue in prayer and watch in the same, with thanksgiving; withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds; that I make it manifest as I ought to speak."

Paul is accredited with the authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews. We have it in a reference to the character of Christ's praying, which is illustrative, directory and authenticative as to the elements of true praying. How deep tones are his words! How heart-affecting and how sublime was His praying who prayed as never man prayed before, and yet prayed in order to teach man how to pray, "who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, to Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared." The praying of Jesus Christ drew on the mightiest forces of His being. His prayers were His sacrifices, which He offered before He offered Himself on the cross for the sins of mankind. Prayer-sacrifice is the forerunner and pledge of self-sacrifice. We must die in our closets before we can die on the cross.

XIII. PAUL AND HIS PRAYING

"In the life of Frank Crossley it is told how one day in 1888 he had said good-bye at the station to his friends, General and Mrs. Booth; but before they steamed out he handed a letter to them giving details of a sacrifice he had resolved to make for the Army. He came home and was praying alone. 'As I was praying,' he said, 'there came over me the most extraordinary sense of joy. It was not exactly in my head, nor in my heart, it was almost a grasping of my chest by some strange hand that filled me with an ecstasy I never had before. It was borne in on me that this was the joy of the Lord.' So this servant of God made in his pilgrimage to God an advance from which he never fell back. He thought it likely at the time that the Booths had read this letter in the train and this was an answer to prayer of theirs; afterwards he heard they had prayed for him in the train just after getting wess out of Manchester."— Rev. Edward Shillito.

He who studies Paul's praying, both his prayers and his commands about prayer, will find what a wide, general, minute, and diversified area it covers. It will appear that these men like Wesley, Brainerd, Luther, and all their holy successors in the spiritual realms, were not guilty of fanaticism nor superstition when they ordered all things by prayer great and small, and committed all things, secular and religious, natural and spiritual, to God in prayer. In this they were but following the great exemplar and authority of the Apostle Paul. To seek God as Paul did by prayer, to commune with God as Paul did, to supplicate Jesus Christ as Paul did, to seek the Holy Spirit by prayer as Paul did, to do this without ceasing, to be always a racer, and to win Christ as Paul did by prayer—all this makes a saint, an apostle, and a leader for God. This kind of a life engages, absorbs, enriches, and empowers with God and for God. Prayer, if successful, must always engage and absorb us. This kind of praying brings Pauline days and secures Pauline gifts. Pauline days are good, Pauline gifts are better, but Pauline praying is best of all, for it brings Pauline days and secures Pauline gifts. Pauline praying is worth all its costs. Prayer which costs nothing gets nothing. It is beggarly business at best. Paul's estimate of prayer is seen and enforced by the fact that Paul was a man of prayer. His high position in the Church was not one of dignity and position to enjoy and luxuriate in. It was not one of officialism, nor was it one of arduous and exhausting toil, for Paul was preeminently a praying man. He began his great career for Christ in the great struggle and school of prayer. God's convincing and wonderful argument to assure Ananias was, "Behold he prayeth." These days was he without sight, neither eating nor drinking, but the lesson was learned well. He went out on his first great missionary trip under the power of fasting and prayer, and they, Paul and Barnabas, established every Church by the very same means, by fasting and prayer. He began his work in Philippi "where prayer was wont to be made." As "they went to prayer," the spirit of divination was cast out of the young woman. And when Paul and Silas were put in prison, at midnight they prayed and sang praises to God. Paul made praying a habit, a business and a life. He literally gave himself to prayer. So with him praying was not an outer garb, a mere coloring, a paint, a polish. Praying made up the substance, the bone, the marrow, and the very being of his religious life. His conversion was a marvel of grace and power. His apostolic commission was full and royal. But he did not vainly expect to make full proof of his ministry, by the marvels of conditions and by wonderful results in the conversion, nor by the apostolic commission signed and sealed by Divine authority, and carrying with it all highest gifts and apostolic enrichments, but by prayer, by ceaseless, wrestling, agonizing and Holy Spirit praying. Thus did Paul work his work, and crown his work, his life and the death with martyr principles and with martyr glory. Paul had a spiritual trait which was very marked and especially promised, and it was that of prayer. He had a profound conviction that prayer was a great as well as a solemn duty; that prayer was a royal privilege; that prayer was a mighty force; that prayer gauges piety, makes faith mighty and mightier; that much prayer was necessary to Christian success; that prayer was a great factor in the ongoing of God's kingdom on earth; and that God and heaven expected to pray. Somehow we are dependent on prayer for great triumphs of holiness over sin, of heaven over hell, and of Christ over Satan. Paul took it for granted that men who know God would pray; that men who lived for God would pray much, and that men could not live for God who did not pray. So Paul prayed much. He was in the habit of praying. He was used to praying, and that formed the habit of prayer. He estimated prayer so greatly that he fully knew its value, and that fastened the habit on him. Paul was in the habit of praying because he loved God, and such love in the heart always finds its expression in regular habits of prayer. He felt the need of much grace, and of more and more grace, and grace only comes through the channels of prayer, and only abounds more and more as prayer abounds more and more. Paul was in the habit of praying, but he prayed not by mere force of habit. Man is such a creature of habit that he is always in danger of doing things

simply by heart, in a routine, prefatory manner. Paul's habit was regular and hearty. To the Romans he writes, "For God is my witness, that without ceasing, I make mention of you always in my prayers." Prison doors are opened and earthquakes take place by such praying as Paul did, even by such melodious Pauline praying. All things are opened to the kind of praying which was done by Paul and Silas. All things are opened by prayer. They could shut up Paul from preaching, but this could not shut him up from praying. And the Gospel could win its way by Paul's praying as well as by Paul's preaching. The apostle might be in prison, but the Word of God was free, and went like the mountain air, while the apostle is bound in prison and abounds in prayer. How profound their joy in Jesus which expressed itself so happily and so sweetly in praise and prayer, under conditions so painful and so depressing! Prayer brought them into full communion with God which made all things radiant with the Divine presence which enabled them to "rejoice that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name, and to count it all joy when they fell into divers trials." Prayer sweetens all things and sanctifies all things. The prayerful saint will be a suffering saint. Suffering prayerfully he will be a sweet saint. A praying saint will be a praising saint. Praise is but prayer set to music and song. After that notable charge to the elders at Ephesus, as he tarried there while on his way to Jerusalem, this characteristic record is made in Acts: "And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down and prayed with them. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him." "He kneeled down and prayed." Note those words. Kneeling in prayer was Paul's favorite attitude, the fitting posture of an earnest, humble suppliant. Humility and intensity are in such a position in prayer before Almighty God. It is the proper attitude of man before God, of a sinner before a Saviour, and of a beggar before his benefactor. To seal his sacred and living charge to those Ephesian elders by praying was that which made the charge efficient, benignant and abiding. Paul's religion was born in the throes of that three days' struggle of prayer, while he was in the house of Ananias, and there he received a divine impetus which never slackened till it brought him to the gates of the eternal city. That spiritual history and religious experience projected along the line of unceasing prayer, brought him to the highest spiritual altitudes and yields the largest spiritual results. Paul lived in the very atmosphere of prayer. His first missionary trip was projected by prayer. It was by prayer and fasting that he was called into the foreign missionary field, and by the same means the Church at Antioch was moved to send forth Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey. Here is the Scripture record of it: "Now there were in the Church which was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers, as Barnabas and Simeon, that was called Niger; and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manean, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrach, and Saul. "And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. "And when they had fasted and prayed, and had laid their hands on them, they sent them away." Here is a model for all missionary outgoings, a presage of success. Here was the Holy Spirit directing a prayerful Church obedient to the Divine leadership, and this condition of things brought forth the very largest possible results in the mission of these two men of God. We may confidently assert that no Church in which Paul was prominent would be a prayerless Church. Paul lived, toiled and suffered in an atmosphere of prayer. To him, prayer was the very heart and life of religion, its bone and marrow, the motor of the Gospel, and the sign by which it conquered. We are not left in ignorance, for that spirit established churches, putting in them the everlasting requisite of self-denial, in the shape of fasting, and in the practice of prayer. Here is the Divine record of Paul's work on this line: "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. "And when they had ordained them elders in every Church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." In obedience to a heavenly vision, Paul lands in Europe, and finds himself at Philippi. There is no synagogue, and few if any Jews are there. A few pious women, however, have a meeting place for prayer, and Paul is drawn by spiritual attraction and spiritual affinities to the place "where prayer is wont to be made." And Paul's first planting of the Gospel in Europe is at that little prayer meeting. He is there the chief pray-er and the leading talker. Lydia was the first convert at that prayer meeting. They protracted the meeting. They called it a meeting for prayer. It was while they were going to that protracted prayer meeting that Paul performed the miracle of casting the devil of divination out of a poor demon-possessed girl, who had been made a source of gain by some covetous men, the results of which, by the magistrate's orders, were his scourging and imprisonment. The result by God's orders was the conversion of the jailer and his whole household. To the praying apostle no discouragements are allowed. A few praying women are enough for an apostolical field of labor. In this last incident we have a picture of Paul at midnight. He is in the inner prison, dark and deadly. He has been severely and painfully scourged, his clothing is covered with blood, while there are blood clots on his gnashed and torn body. His feet are in the stocks, every nerve is feverish and swollen, sensitive and painful. But we find him under these very unfavorable and suffering conditions at his favorite pursuit. Paul is praying with Silas, his companion, in a joyous, triumphant strain. "And at midnight, Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God, and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was an earthquake, so that the foundation of the prison was shaken, and immediately all the doors were shaken; and every one's ban was loosed. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors opened, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. "But Paul cried out with a loud voice saying, Do thyself no harm; for we are all here." Never was prayer so beautiful, never more resultful. Paul was an adept at prayer, a lover of prayer, a wondrous devotee of prayer, who could pursue it with such joyous strains, under such conditions of despondency and despair. What a mighty weapon of defense was prayer to Paul! How songful! The angels doubtless stilled their highest and sweetest notes to listen to the music which bore those prayers to heaven. The earthquake trod along the path made by the mighty forces of Paul's praying. He did not go out when his chains were loosed, and the stocks fell off. His praying taught him that God had nobler purposes that night than his own individual freedom. His praying and the earthquake alarm were to bring salvation to that prison, freedom from the thralldom and prison house of sin which was prefigured to him by his body emancipation. God's mighty providence had opened his prison door and had broken his prison bonds, not to give freedom, but to give freedom to the jailer. God's providential openings are often to test our ability to stay rather than to go. It tested Paul's ability to stay.

(Prayer And Praying Man; EM Bounds; Chapter 12-13 ; Edward McKendree Bounds (August 15, 1835 – August 24, 1913) was a clergyman of the Methodist Episcopal Church South and author of eleven books, nine of which focused on the subject of prayer.)

(Amplified Bible; Joyce Meyers; 2006; Faith Words; Scripture; Commentaries; pages 340-341)

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