

A Pastor's Prayer

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

Nigel Unrau, Lead Pastor – February 5, 2023

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

⁹For 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, ¹⁰as we night and day keep praying most earnestly that we may see your face, and may complete what is lacking in your faith? ¹¹Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you; ¹²and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also *do* for you; ¹³so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

1 Corinthians 15:50-53, 58

⁵⁰Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, ⁵²in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.

⁵⁸Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not *in vain* in the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 2:13

For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted *it* not *as* the word of men, but *for* what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

1 Thessalonians 3:6

But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us good news of your faith and love, and that you always think kindly of us, longing to see us just as we also long to see you,

1 Thessalonians 3:9-10

⁹For 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, ¹⁰as we night and day keep praying most earnestly that we may see your face, and may complete what is lacking in your faith?

A pastor's prayer is for God's people to be continually growing.

A. In Christian maturity.

Colossians 4:12-13

¹²Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. ¹³For I testify for him that he has a deep concern for you and for those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis.

Colossians 1:28-29

²⁸We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. ²⁹For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.

1. By the ministry of the gospel.

Acts 20:18b-21

^{18b}“You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time, ¹⁹servicing the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews; ²⁰how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, ²¹solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 20:25-27

²⁵“And now, behold, I know that all of you, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, will no longer see my face. ²⁶Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. ²⁷For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.

Romans 1:8-12

⁸First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world. ⁹For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the *preaching of the gospel* of His Son, is my witness *as to* how unceasingly I make mention of you, ¹⁰always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to you. ¹¹For I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established; ¹²that is, that I may be encouraged together with you *while* among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.

2. By the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

B. In Christ-like charity.

1 Thessalonians 3:11-12

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 people, just as we also *do* for you;

Ephesians 5:1-2

¹ Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; ² and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

1. The love of Christ for us compels us to love those around us.

2 Corinthians 5:14-15

¹⁴ For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; ¹⁵ and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

1 John 4:19-21

¹⁹ We love, because He first loved us. ²⁰ If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. ²¹ And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.

Luke 10:25-37

²⁵ And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" ²⁶ And He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?" ²⁷ And he answered, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF." ²⁸ And He said to him, "You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE." ²⁹ But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" ³⁰ Jesus replied and said, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead. ³¹ And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³² Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion, ³⁴ and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on *them*; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.' ³⁶ Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' *hands*?" ³⁷ And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do the same."

C. Into complete sanctity.

1 Thessalonians 3:13

so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

1 John 3:1-3

¹ See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and *such* we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. ² Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope *fixed* on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

"Where there is holiness, there is assurance."

Warren Wiersbe

2 Peter 1:5-11

⁵ Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in *your* moral excellence, knowledge, ⁶ and in *your* knowledge, self-control, and in *your* self-control, perseverance, and in *your* perseverance, godliness, ⁷ and in *your* godliness, brotherly kindness, and in *your* brotherly kindness, love. ⁸ For if these *qualities* are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ For he who lacks these *qualities* is blind *or* short-sighted, having forgotten *his* purification from his former sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; ¹¹ for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.