

THE EPIC LIFE – BOB HALLMAN

Directed Prayer

1 Thessalonians

2010

Introduction

Paul has a heart of prayer for others:

1 Thess 3:10 “Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith.”

Paul has a need for prayer from others:

1 Thess 5:25 “Brothers, pray for us.”

Directed Prayer In Pairs or Triads:

I'll be guiding us through a series of brief devotionals followed by a response time of prayer in pairs.

1. Ground rules:

- a. Pray with your spouse or someone of the same sex
 1. If you are uncomfortable praying out loud, join another pair
- b. Don't spend your time talking -- get right to prayer.
- c. Keep your prayers brief. Instead of praying one long prayer, share shorter prayers back and forth-- don't be a prayer hog!

2. Begin by praying that:

- a. God will bless your time of prayer.
- b. God will use this time in a very powerful way to draw you closer to Him.
- c. God will lead you by His Holy Spirit

3. Pray with your partner

I Paul Thanked Them For Their Ministry: 1 Thess 1:3

They were remembered before God for: [1 Thess 1:3]

A. Their **work** produced by faith

2 Thess 1:11 “With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith.”

B. Their labor prompted by **love**

Labor = Kopus = “Toil that produces fatigue and physical exhaustion”

1. Love for God: Vertical

John 14:21 “Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me.”

2. Love for others: Horizontal

John 21:16 “Again Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you truly love me?” He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” Jesus

said, "Take care of my sheep."

- C. Their **endurance** inspired by hope in the Lord Jesus Christ
Endurance = Hupo = "Under" **Meno** = "To stay, remain, abide"
 It means to remain under a trial without giving in, running away or complaining -- regardless of the **intensity** or **duration** of the testing.

Application: Heb 12:1 "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance [hupomone] the race marked out for us."

Prayer #1:

1. Take time to thank your prayer partner for their 1) Work produced by faith, 2) Labor prompted by love and 3) Endurance inspired by hope.

II Paul Inspired Them To A Life Of Modeling: 1 Thess 1:4-8

- A. Paul reminded them of his **example** while among them [Verse 5b]
Example = Tupos = "To stamp or imprint"

Paul often appealed to people's first-hand knowledge of his life and conduct and wasn't shy about presenting himself as a reliable "tupos" or model of Christ-likeness (Acts 20:17-21).

- B. Paul encouraged them because: [Verse 6-7]

1. They became **imitators**:
Imitators = Mimites = "To mimic or copy"
 - a. Of Paul who was bold in his example:
 1. "I urge you to imitate me" - 1 Cor 4:16
 2. "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ" - 1 Cor 11:1
 3. "Join with others in following my example" - Phil 3:17
 Phil 4:9 "Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me — put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.
 - b. Of the Lord who was bold in his example:
 Luke 9:23-24 "Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it."

2. They became a **model** to all the believers in Asia
Model = Tupos = "Type, model, example or pattern"

The sequence is as follows:

1. Paul imitated God and Christ – Eph 5:1; 1 Cor 11:1
2. Silas and Timothy imitated Paul
 - 1 Tim 4:12 “Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.”
 - 1 Peter 5:3 “... not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.”
3. The churches imitated the apostles - 2 Thess 3:9
4. The churches became models for other regions

Prayer #2:

1. Share briefly with your partner who you are modeling your Christian life after and who, in turn, is modeling their Christian life after yours.
2. Ask God to give you an eager, humble and teachable heart to grow in Christ-likeness and to make you a reliable model of Jesus to those who are looking to you.

III Paul Encouraged Them In Their Faith: 1 Thess 2:10-12A. He **exhorted** them

Exhort = Parakaleo = “To call near, invite, entreat”

Exhorting means to be urging strongly, to be giving warnings or advice. While most people enjoy being encouraged, many do not like to be exhorted. But ministers of the gospel are commanded by God to exhort people.

B. He comforted them

Comfort = Paramutheomai = “To encourage or console”

Encouragement keeps us going, it gives us strength to do what's right. You coaches know how encouragement helps your players perform more skillfully. You teachers know how encouragement helps your students try more diligently. You employers know how encouragement helps your employees work more cheerfully. How much more do the people of God need to be encouraged by others!

Examples of Paul comforting:

1. He encouraged Antioch church to remain true to the Lord - Acts 11:23
2. He encouraged the Philippians in their suffering - Acts 16:40
3. He encouraged the Colossians to be united in love - Col 2:2

Application: We are to encourage one another daily - Heb 3:13; 10:25

C. He **urged** them to live lives worthy of God**Examples of Paul urging believers to live lives worthy of the Lord:**

- Eph 4:1 “As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.”
- Phil 1:27 “Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the

gospel of Christ.”

Col 1:10 “And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way.”

Application: A time for mothering and a time for fathering

1. Sometimes people need us to cheer for them: Exhorting
2. Sometimes they need us to help them get up after a disappointment: Comforting
3. Sometimes they need a kick in the pants: Urging

Prayer #3:

1. Share with your partner what you need most today: Exhortation, comforting, urging in your walk with God.
2. Respond to your partner’s request and then pray for that one specific area of need.

V Paul Comforted Them With The Rapture: 1 Thess 4:13-18

A. A relational response to the coming of Christ:

1. **Encourage** one another

Encourage = Parakaleo = “To call near, exhort, console, give aid”

Paul uses this word 8 times in 1 Thess (2:12; 3:2, 7; 4:1, 10, 18; 5:11, 14).

Heb 10:24-25 “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another -- and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

2. **Build** each other up

Build up = Oikodomeo = “To construct, erect, restore or strengthen”

Rom 14:19 “Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.”

Note: The verb form for “encourage” and “build up” are identical:

- a. It is in the command form: It is not optional
- b. It is in the present tense: It implies continuous action

Application: Make disciples!

1. Lay a foundation of discipleship
2. Construct a life built upon the Word of God

B. A personal response of the coming of Christ:

1. Be **joyful** always [Verse 16]

OT: Ps 34:1-3 “I will extol the LORD at all times; his praise will always be on my lips. My soul will boast in the LORD; let the afflicted hear and rejoice. Glorify the LORD with me; let us exalt his name together.”

NT: Phil 4:4 “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!”
It could be worse -- you could be burning in hell!

2. Pray continually [Verse 17]

Two types of prayer:

1. Scheduled prayer: Blogging
 - a. Daniel prayer (3 times a day): Dan 6:10
 - b. “Closet” prayer: Matthew 6:6
2. Spontaneous prayer: Twittering

Eph 6:18 “And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests ...”

3. Give thanks in all circumstances [Verse 18]

- a. For this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus

Note: We don't give thanks *for* everything, but in everything!

What enables a believer to be thankful? Our conviction that ...

1. God is loving: Nothing happens that isn’t permitted by God or that we can’t handle with His strength - Phil 4:13
2. God is faithful: Nothing happens that doesn’t advance God’s plan for our lives and His kingdom - James 1:2-4
3. God is sovereign: Nothing happens by chance or that is beyond the power of God to turn for our good and Christ-likeness - Rom 8:28

Prayer #4:

1. If you were to name one thing that has caused you to lose perspective and forfeit a joyful, prayerful and thankful life, what would it be?
2. Read Phil 4:6-7 together and then pray that verse for one another in light of what you just shared.

V Closing Prayer

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