



2022 PRAYER GUIDE

WEEK FIVE

A CALL TO PRAYER

COLOSSIANS 1:9-14



Week 5: Pray for the church

The Holy Spirit, through the Apostle Paul's letter to the Colossians, reminds us of the value that Jesus places on the church. We are called His Body. In much the same way that Jesus, in His brief life on earth, is the image of the invisible God, we are Jesus' representatives to others. When we come to Jesus in repentance and faith, and God makes us new, the Holy Spirit "moves in." He joins us with other believers into local assemblies (churches) for His glory. Scripture calls the church "God's temple" and states "God's Spirit dwells in you." (1 Cor. 3:16) We need to make sure that we learn to value and love the church as Jesus does.

Jesus loves the church. In Ephesians 5 Paul tells us that, "*...Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.* That is enough reason for us to grow in love for the church.

One of the ways we express this love is to intercede on behalf of the church. We are to continually be praying for each other and for the church as a whole. As we go through our prayer time this week we will be focusing on specific aspects of church life. It is my prayer and confident expectation that we will see God's hand increasingly working in us as we approach Him with united hearts in prayer.

Day 1

Acts 2:42 - They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

There are four things that characterized a Christian gathering in the early church. First, there was the teaching of the Word that was given by the Apostles, who themselves were qualified to teach God's people. Second, fellowship with others, sharing a meal or a meaningful church experience, helped to create bonds that were strong and lasting. Third, the breaking of bread was the act of taking the Lord's Supper together. Finally, prayer for the church and for one-another helped to develop a love and commitment that was long-lasting.

Teaching, fellowship, the Lord's Supper, and prayer are all necessary activities that are needed in our church so that we too can build a fellowship that glorifies God, showing love for each other as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Holy God, help us to develop the characteristics of love and fellowship that the early church practiced. Help us create close bonds with our brothers and sisters, developing a fellowship that can only come from an understanding of Your Word and the love that You help us to have for one another.

Day 2

Matthew 18:20 - *For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.*

Christian community is not measured by large numbers. In this verse the Lord Jesus tells us that where just two or three are gathered in His name, He is there. Sometimes we think that two or three people meeting in fellowship is insignificant; that a big church is somehow more “spiritual” than a small church. We see here that Christ works just as powerfully in a small church as He does in a bigger one. As a matter of fact, He is with us in our small group meetings, in our one-on-one encouragement of a friend, in our family devotional.

Anywhere followers of Jesus gather together to praise His name, He is there.

Lord, You are good. You bless our fellowship with one another with your presence. Please help us to remember that when we gather in Your name, we are in your presence. Help us to glorify You as we develop deeper bonds with one another, and as we fellowship with one another help us to grow in our knowledge and love for You.

Day 3

1 Thessalonians 5:11 - *Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.*

As brothers and sisters in Christ, we are to come alongside one another, providing comfort, exhortation, and encouragement whenever it is needed. We are called to bear one another's burdens, as well as provide encouragement for one another in order to strengthen the church. We have a responsibility to build one another up; to encourage one another in our Christian walk. In addition, we should communicate with one another our Christian knowledge and our life experiences. We should be praying for one another, and praising God with one another. In times of trouble and tribulation, we should be comforting and supporting one another. Being a member of community means that we are responsible to and for each other.

Father God, help me to be aware of the needs of those around me. Help me to know how to comfort, how to build up, and how to help those in my Christian community. As I learn to be in fellowship with other believers, help me to love and care for them the way that You love and care for me.

Day 4

Proverbs 11:10-11 -

*“When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices,
and when the wicked perish there are shouts of gladness.*

*¹¹ By the blessing of the upright a city is exalted,
but by the mouth of the wicked it is overthrown.”*

By our good works people will see and glorify God. When we are following Christ Jesus we do good in our family, church, and community. Upright people are a blessing to those around them. Through their kindness, their care and advice, their example, their prayers, and their service, good people are a blessing to those they serve. It is only through the blessings that God provides that goodie can help others. It is only because God first loved us, that we can show love to others. God has placed us in a community where there will be wicked people that try to influence others for bad. Let's be a church of Christ-lovers who influence the community for good, for the sake of building God's kingdom.

Lord, we love You and we want to influence our community, and our city for good. Help us to be aware of the needs of our neighbors and help us to be a blessing to others for the sake of Your Holy Name. Help us to be good, mirroring Your righteousness, for Your glory.

Day 5

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5 - Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you, ² and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men. For not all have faith. ³ But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one. ⁴ And we have confidence in the Lord about you, that you are doing and will do the things that we command. ⁵ May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ.

We will face challenges and troubles as we obediently follow Christ in becoming "fishers of men." Paul asked the believers in Thessalonica to pray for him, both for the Word of the Lord to be spread, and for protection from his opponents. You, too, will face opposition, and when you do, remember that God is faithful. It is His work to keep your feet planted, and even to be your guard. So, even as we pray for His protection, we ask God to keep our hearts focused on His love, and Jesus' faithfulness.

Father, You are faithful. As the great hymn says, "there is no shadow of turning with Thee." You are steadfast, unmovable, unchanging, and totally dependable. I ask that Your Word will spread throughout the West End, and that you let me be a big part of that. I ask that you protect me and our church when we face opposition of any kind. I trust You to establish me and guard me. I ask that you keep my heart directed to your love. I pray your protection on our neighborhood. I ask that You make it a safe place for the spread of your Gospel, for open doors for relationships, and for families to live.