

What praying do you do for believers you have never met? How can you improve in that area?

What connections do joyful thanksgiving and faithful endurance have with prayer?

Why does Paul thank God for these things? Do you reflect on the grace of God and have this influence your prayers?

Each week in your study in a group or alone it is important to conclude your time in prayer.

Study 7: **Prayer – A challenging Prayer.**
Sermon – 2nd June 2024

Reading: 1Thessalonians 3:9 – 13
Colossians 1:3 - 14

Paul has a passion for people, and this is reflected in his prayers. As noted last week Paul often starts his letters and/or ends the letter with prayer for those he is writing to.

For Paul the church, the ministry he is involved in revolves around people. This is so important to remember when we pray particularly for ministry as it is so easy to get caught up in programs, or buildings or numbers in general rather than praying for the people specifically.

Paul also passionately prays for those he does not know personally as we will see reflected in our reading today.

What topics or subjects dominate your prayers? Do you spend time in praying for members of the church, both local and distant even when you don't know them?

Read 1Thessalonians 3:6 - 13:

In v6 what news does Timothy bring from Thessalonica? How has this invigorated Paul?

In what ways does Paul's prayer in 1Thessalonians 3:9 – 13 show his passion for people?

According to this passage, what is Paul's source of joy? What is yours? How is our source of joy likely to be related to what we pray for?

Read Colossians 1:3 - 14:

How is this prayer of thanks similar to the one we read in 1Thessalonians?

Paul gives thanks for the fruit that the gospel brings. How is this tied to the growth in the people rather than numbers?

Do you think Paul had met the Christians in Colossae or only knows by the report of others?

Granted that one aim in praying is that you might be utterly pleasing to the Lord Jesus, what concrete things in your life should you be praying about?

As already mentioned, Paul clearly has not met the Christians in Colossae, yet warmly prays for them. What things does he pray for?