

Further up, Further in

Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

"THE SWEET TORTURE OF GRAPPLING WITH GOD"

For individual study or discussion

For the George Long Preaching Series, our study with Reverend Eric Youngblood finds us delving deeper into the topic of prayer.

In Colossians 4:12, Epaphras is commended to us by Paul as a "servant of Christ Jesus" who is "always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured." Epaphras, like Paul, struggled in prayer on behalf of God's people (Rom. 15:30) and is given the highest commendation by Paul as a "faithful minister of Christ" (Col. 1:7) as well.

If Epaphras is our New Testament example of a prayer warrior, David is our Old Testament example. One has to look no further than the psalms to see David's heart continually poured out to God in prayer.

Note how in Psalm 35 David starts the psalm with the word "contend." Other translations use "strive" or "plead my cause" so as to bring a judicial suit to Jehovah the Judge against those who "fight against me." Both David and Epaphras remind God of his promise for deliverance through fervent supplication which is persistent, persevering, and particular.

- When you read Psalm 35:9-10 and compare the passage to Isaiah 61:1-2 (our sermon text from October 24), what parallels do you see between David's expectations and Isaiah's prophecy?

John Gill was an English preacher and theologian who pastored at New Park Street Chapel (later called Metropolitan Tabernacle), a century before the "Prince of Preachers," C.H. Spurgeon, served in that pulpit. In his commentary on Psalm 35, Gill states that "Christ is the salvation of his people; he is the only person appointed, provided, promised, and sent to be the Saviour; and he is alone author of salvation; it is wrought out by him, and it is in him, and in him only."¹

- Having confidence in God's promise of salvation for his people, do you ask God to speak to you as David does, "Say to me, 'I am your salvation'" (v. 3)?
- How does having the objective truth of his promise of salvation reorient you to God? And what does it mean to you personally to know that he speaks to you with promises of deliverance?

Verses 4-8 are a call for God's judgment. Some of David's prayers are imprecatory, meaning that they call upon God's judgment against his enemies.

- How do we reconcile imprecatory prayers with God's call for his church to "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you" (Lk. 6:27)?

Gill gives us clarification of David's imprecatory prayers by explaining, "His [David's] petition, and what follows, which seem to be by way of imprecation, are to be considered as prophecies of what would be, and as expressions of faith that so it should be; and are not to be drawn into examples, and to be imitated by private persons; nor are they contrary to those evangelical rules, which require men to love their enemies, and pray for them."²

In verses 9-10, David's confession of praise shows us the correct posture in how we should approach God and others when he says, "I am poor and needy."

- What do you think David is trying to convey by numbering himself among the "poor and needy"?
- How does assuming the right posture in prayer personally affect your prayer life?
- As you pray this week, meditate on the hymn, "Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy":

Come, ye sinners, poor and needy, weak and wounded, sick and sore;

Jesus ready stands to save you, full of pity joined with pow'r:

He is able, he is able, he is able,

He is willing: doubt no more; he is willing: doubt no more.

DATE: November 14, 2021

SPEAKER: Eric Youngblood

SERIES: George Long

PASSAGE: Ps. 35:1-10/Col. 4:12

Family Dinner Table

George Muller, an evangelist and advocate for the orphans in late nineteenth century England, was one of the greatest prayer warriors of his time.

Known for keeping a prayer journal with two-page entries (one page for the petition and the date, the opposite page for the answer to prayer), Muller testified that 50,000 of his prayers had been answered in his lifetime.

Muller believed that nothing was too insignificant to bring before God in prayer, and as a result of his 63-year ministry he was able to:

- financially support missionary operations in 26 different countries.
- participate in the instruction of 121,683 pupils.
- distribute 281,652 Bibles and 111,489,067 tracts and pamphlets.
- oversee the conversion of 2,813 orphans.
- raise \$2.5 million for orphanages.

He lived according to the passage, "In all things by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6). "Real trust in God is above circumstances and appearances," he affirmed. His victories came through prayer and trust in God's unailing promises.

- Start a prayer journal that reminds you of God's unailing promises.

PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

Prison Prevention Ministries, supported missionary partners

PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

Debbie and Neal, supported missionary partners

^{1,2} Gill, John. *Gill's Commentary*, Vol. III. Baker House, 1980, p. 121, 123.