

## **Epistle's Conclusion: The Fellowship of Prayer, Commendation, and Blessing**

**Summary of what we will learn:** Although the Apostle cannot be with the saints whom he deeply desires to see, they still share in common the One Lord Christ. They share in Paul's prayers for them (ch. 1) and he may share in their prayers for him and his ministry in chains. They share in the ministry also by receiving the "faithful minister," Tychicus, whom Paul commends to them. And they share in the blessing of the Lord Jesus which Paul imparts to them in the written word.

***Ephesians 6:18-24*** <sup>18</sup> praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, <sup>19</sup> and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, <sup>20</sup> for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

<sup>21</sup> So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord will tell you everything. <sup>22</sup> I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage your hearts.

<sup>23</sup> Peace be to the brothers, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup> Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible.

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### ***Fellowship in Prayer***

What is prayer and why is it so important to a Christian's life?

Should only the Apostles, Pastors, and Called Ministers of Christ be engaged in prayer?

**Dr. Winger:** "Thus while Paul considers prayer part of his apostolic duty for those under his care, he also sees prayer as a priestly, intercessory task. The priesthood of all the baptized stand before God through Jesus, their High Priest, to beg for help for their brothers and sisters in Christ. Like Christ, they pray principally for others, and the body of Christ is built up as each member is bound to the other through intercessory prayer (4:15-16)."

What specific requests does Paul ask them to remember in their prayers?

Compare Ephesians 6:18-20 with Romans 15:30-32; Colossians 4:2-4; 1 Thessalonians 5:25; 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2; and Philemon 22.

**Dr. Winger:** "A pattern emerges. Paul does not request prayers for his personal welfare, for his own health or prosperity. He prays, first, for the success of the Gospel. Second, he prays that God would thwart the evil plans of his enemies that would obstruct the proclamation of that Gospel. And third, he prays that his present trials as a prisoner for the Gospel would be turned into an opportunity to proclaim Christ and earn freedom for that message to be preached freely throughout the world."

### *Fellowship in Commendation of Minister Tychicus*

<sup>21</sup> So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord will tell you everything. <sup>22</sup> I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage your hearts.

Who is Tychicus again? (Eph. 6:21 and Col. 4:7; also Acts 20:4; 2 Tim. 4:12; and Titus 3:12)

What is Tychicus' mission or objective?

**Dr. Winger:** "On hearing the tragic news of Paul's arrest, then, it is quite likely that the Ephesian Christians would have felt a double sense of guilt: that he was suffering for preaching the Gospel to them and that one of their own members was the trigger. Paul has previously explained at great length that such fears are groundless, inasmuch as he preaches to the Gentiles because Christ mandated him to do so (3:1-13), and so his afflictions are for their benefit and for their glory (3:13). It is this message that Tychicus is to reinforce by comforting their hearts (6:22). And by joining with the Ephesians in public worship as he reads and explains Paul's letter, Tychicus would become the instrument for reestablishing and exercising the Christian fellowship they had with Paul in the body of Christ. When Tychicus communed with them, he did so as Paul's representative, reminding them that by the body and blood of Christ held in common, they were not truly separated from their apostolic father."

### *Fellowship in the Benediction of the Lord*

Peace be to the brothers, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup> Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible.

These conclusions are no mere "sign-off" like "kindest regards," or "sincerely yours". What are they?

Who do this "peace" and "love with faith" come from?