

Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this teaching series you may learn to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. A teacher will teach from the Bible that a disciple of Jesus prays. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme.

Jesus says, "Ask and it will be given to you" (Matthew 7:7). Paul says, "Pray continually" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). And James says, "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" (James 5:16). The Bible teaches much about prayer. The second series of 6 teachings is about "The focus of prayer". There are prayers that focus on God, prayers that focus on your own needs and prayers that focus on the needs of other people. Every topic will be in two parts. Today we will learn about "A DISCIPLE PRAYS FOR OTHER PEOPLE - PART 2". Although all prayers are directed to God, in these prayers, you intercede with God for other people. The prayers that focus on other people's needs can be divided into five kinds: prayers for God's interests, prayers for Christian workers, prayers for your fellow-Christians, prayers for needy Christians and prayers for non-Christians. In part 2 we will study the last three parts.

### **POINT 3 continued. A DISCIPLE PRAYS FOR HIS FELLOW-CHRISTIANS**

In part 1 we learned about praying for their protection, sanctification, unity and continual strengthening. In part 2 we will continue to learn about prayer for your fellow-Christians.

#### **Third. Pray for the continual growth of Christians.**

Let us read Paul's prayer for the Colossian Christians. In Colossians 1:9-12 Paul says, "I have not stopped praying for you, and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power ... so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father." "Asking" is making specific requests to God and

Paul makes seven specific requests for these young Christians:

*One. He prays for their knowledge, wisdom and understanding.* He prays that their knowledge, wisdom and understanding in spiritual matters may increase. "Knowledge" is to have a clear insight into God's revealed plans in the Bible as well as knowing those truths by personal experience. "Wisdom" is the ability at all times to use the best means to attain the highest goals. "Understanding" is the ability to grasp truth quickly and to consider truth before applying it. In his prayer to the Philippians 1:9-10, he also prays "that you may abound more and more in ... depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best ..." Literally it says, "that you may approve of what is best and what really matters, after you have discerned it".

*Two. He prays for their behaviour.* He prays that their knowledge may result in living a life, which honours God. "Living worthy of the Lord," means to behave as the Lord expects them to behave and to glorify God in everything they do.

*Three. He prays for their motivation.* He prays that whatever they do, their motive should be to please the Lord. He prays that they will consciously make God glad in everything they undertake.

*Four. He prays for their fruitfulness.* He prays that they may do all kinds of good works at home, in the church as well as in society.

*Five. He prays for their growth.* He prays that they will not only begin to know God, but that they may continually grow in knowing God and God's will better and better.

*Six. He prays for their strength.* He asks God to give them increasingly more strength and courage, so that they can endure and be patient. "Endurance" is to persevere doing your God-given task in spite of difficult circumstances. "Patience" is to refuse to yield to irritation or anger towards those who oppose or molest you.

*Seven. He prays for their thankfulness.* He asks that they may joyfully give thanks to the Father for his salvation and inheritance.

#### **Fourth. Pray constantly for the purpose and faith of Christians.**

Let us read Paul's prayer for the Thessalonians in 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12. "We constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfil every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith. We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you." Paul prays for these Christians that no resolution or determination, which the Holy Spirit has created in their hearts, will be left unfulfilled. He prays that no action, which has been inspired by faith, be left unfinished. The Holy Spirit creates constantly new resolutions in our hearts and desires that we will act upon them. Likewise, you too should pray that your brothers and sisters would act upon their resolutions.

#### **Fifth. Continually thank God for the progress of the Christians.**

Paul thanks God for the grace he has given to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 1:4). He always thanks God for the faith, love and hope of the Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3) and that their faith is growing more and more and that their love for each other is increasing (2 Thessalonians 1:3). He thanks God for the partnership of the Philippians in the proclamation of the gospel from the beginning onwards (Philippians 1:4-5). And the Christians in Judea will give thanks for the financial support of the Christians in Greece and Asia Minor (2 Corinthians 9:12-15).

Especially in which areas does the apostle Paul want to see progress? In 1 Timothy 4:15-16 we read, "Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers." The two areas which are very important in every Christian's life are his life and his doctrine. If a person's doctrine is not true, then he cannot live a true Christian life. If he does not live the Christian life, then his doctrine is useless and dead. Therefore, every Christian must read and study the Bible, so that he can make progress in his doctrine. And every Christian must devote himself to live a life in obedience to the Christian doctrine. Trusting God and obeying his Word are indispensable for every Christian.

Conclusion. You should especially pray for the growth of Christians. More than anything else, God desires that they grow in character to Christlikeness and grow in service of God that is fruitful.

#### **POINT 4. A DISCIPLE PRAYS FOR NEEDY CHRISTIANS**

Christians should especially pray for the needy members of the Body of Christ.

##### **First. Pray for Christians who commit sin.**

Let us read 1 John 5:16. "If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not lead to death, he should pray and God will give him life." The sin that leads to death is the sin of continually hardening your heart against the Holy Spirit. If a person does that, then a time will come that he can no more repent and turn. It is the sin the Pharisees committed when they ascribed the work of the Holy Spirit to the devil (Matthew 12). However, anyone who sincerely repents of his sin will never be turned away. Therefore, when we see our brother or sister commit a sin, then we should first pray for that person and then we should go to that person and help him to turn away from that sin. James 5:16 says, that when a brother or sister confesses sin in your presence, then you should pray for that person.

In Galatians 6:1-2 and 5 we read, "Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted." Some Christians are not as strong and consistent in their walk with God as others. They can be overtaken by a particular sin. Their own sin can ensnare them before they even realise how wrong they are or how much they have injured another person. The word "sin" in this context rather refers to a less serious trespass, an error or a fault. The Christians who are more consistent in being led by the Spirit (5:16) should restore him gently. The word "restore" means "to mend what is broken". In a positive, loving and encouraging way, they should bring him to his former position of wholeness or soundness. Thus, *praying for a sinner and restoring a sinner are the practical ways of carrying their burdens.*

However, Christians should not feel totally responsible for another person's behaviour. The Bible says, "Carry each other's burdens" in verse 2, but "each one should carry his own load" in verse 5. A person's "burden" could be a severe temptation to sin, a difficult experience, like sickness or the loss of a beloved or persecution by some enemy. Christians should help him carry such "burdens". However, a person's "load" is his own thoughts, attitudes, beliefs, needs, choices, values and what he does with his time, possessions, talents, body and behaviour. While I am responsible to help carry as best as I can the tragedies, crises and losses of others, I am not responsible to carry their responsibilities for their own lives. I should never seek to control another person's life. But I should help him when he falls into sin or suffers persecution.

### **Second. Pray for Christians who are sick.**

Let us read James 5:14-15. "Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven." The elders of every church have a special task to pray for the sick. But also you may pray for the sick. Christians may also pray for good health. In 3 John 3 is written, "Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well." A very practical way to pray for the sick is at their homes and in the hospitals.

### **Third. Pray for Christians who are suffering.**

Let us read Hebrews 13:3. "Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering." In many places today, Christians are persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ. They are beaten severely, their property is confiscated (Hebrews 10:14), they are put in prison, and some are even killed. Others suffer, because people falsely say all kinds of evil against them because they are followers of Christ (Matthew 5:11). Sometimes it is possible to visit prisoners or write letters to them. But we can always pray for them. When Peter was imprisoned, many people gathered in a house and earnestly prayed to God for him. And God rescued him (Acts 12:5,12).

Conclusion. You should also pray for Christians who are committing sin and for those who are sick or suffering.

## **POINT 5. A DISCIPLE PRAYS FOR NON-CHRISTIANS**

### **First. Pray for those in authority.**

In 1 Timothy 2:1-4 we read that Christians should pray for kings and for those in authority, so that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. The reason that we should pray for them is twofold:

One. God also wants people among the leaders in the world to be saved and to become his followers. In the past history and today many political leaders are genuine followers of Christ. They set an example in their own families; and they hate corruption, lies and every kind of unrighteousness. There are many scientists today who are committed followers of Christ. There are leaders on farms, leaders in villages, leaders in the army, leaders in the hospitals, etc. who are enthusiastic believers in Jesus Christ. Many of them have become Christians, because others have prayed for them. God wants the leaders in the world to come to knowledge of the truth!

Two. God wants the Christians, who live in the world, to live quiet and godly lives. He does not desire war, rebellion and persecution. Therefore, Christians should pray that God give these leaders wisdom to make the right decisions and to be fair and just in their actions.

### **Second. Pray for those who are enemies of Christians.**

Let us read Matthew 5:44 and Luke 6:27-28. "Pray for those who persecute you. ... Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you." Jesus prayed for his enemies on the cross and said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). Likewise Christians should do four important things to their enemies: love them instead of hating them, do good to them instead of seeking revenge, bless them instead of cursing them and pray for their salvation.

### **Third. Pray for God's judgements and the relief from God's judgements.**

Let us read James 5:17-18. "Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops." Elijah prayed for the judgement of God on the wicked king Ahab only because God had told him to do so. It was God who judged, not the prophet Elijah. Christians should be very careful to pray the judgements of God over other people, because God might do to them what they wished would happen to others. Therefore it is better to pray for relief from God's judgements, like Moses and other prophets did.

Conclusion. You should pray for non-Christians, especially for those in authority and for those who persecute you.

### **ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Make a list of people God wants you to pray for. Think of your Christian brothers and sisters, especially those who need to grow and those who suffer. Think of Christian workers. Think of your family members, neighbours and colleagues. Think of people in authority and your enemies. Pray for them regularly.

Second. See the workbooks “Go and make disciples” and Internet on [www](#). etc

Third. Listen on short wave radio every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY to “Discipleship training on the air”.