



WEEKLY SERMON

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Pastor David Miklas

Message: Book of Philemon - #2

Phone: 717-715-3317

e-mail: pastormiklas@aol.com

Text: Philemon Verse 3

SIXTEEN Scriptural ways to Pray for Your Pastor - Part 2

9. In Jesus' name I speak to church hurts, abuse, and ungrateful forces to move. I speak to mountains of criticism and inordinate expectations to be cast into the sea. I speak to stress, excessive phone counseling, and fatigue to be cast into the sea, and I believe every need, vision, and dream of _____'s will be completed (**Mark 11:22-24, Philippians 4:19**).

10. Forgive those who hurt _____ and speak against him, and may my pastor walk in forgiveness (**Ephesians 4:32-5:1**).

11. Guard my pastor from futile thinking (**Ephesians 4:17**) and a vain imagination. Let every thought be taken captive to obey Christ (**2 Corinthians 10:3-5**). Let _____'s confidence not be eroded by the daily resistance to the gospel or his vision. Let the mind of Christ be strong in my pastor (**1 Corinthians 2:16**). Allow my pastor to fear God more than people. Give _____ boldness to confront sin and church controllers.

12. Father, heal my shepherd's heart of any grief caused by ministry. Bestow on my pastor a crown of beauty instead of ashes and anoint him with the oil of gladness instead of mourning. Clothe my shepherd with a garment of praise instead of a spirit of depression.

13. Lord, I stand against the enemies of my pastor's prayer life: "busyness" (**Acts 6:2-4**), compromise (**Acts 5**), unnecessary phone calls, chronic counselees, fatigue, sleepiness (**Matthew 26:41**), appetites, television, late meetings, over-commitments, and doubt. Let nothing hinder _____ s time with You.

14. Give my pastor the time, the desire, and the place to pray (**Acts 16:16**). I rebuke in the name of Jesus any distractions from my pastor's devotional life.

15. Bless my pastor with rich study time (**Acts 6:4, 2 Timothy 2:15**). And as _____ preaches, let him proclaim Jesus Christ (**Colossians 1:28**). Let my pastor's preaching be in the power of the Holy Spirit.

16. Lord, as You have promised, grant my beloved shepherd lasting fruit (**John 15:16**). Let my pastor's converts become disciples who in turn disciple. Bless my pastor with disciples who grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Quotes to consider:

*A Lot of **KNEELING** will keep you in good **STANDING**.

*If you are patient in one moment of anger, you will escape a hundred days of sorrow.

*The OLD Testament opens with man made in the image of God, The New Testament opens with God in the image of man.

*The greatest ability is dependability. It is a sin to do less than your best. - Bob Jones SR

In His Amazing Grace – *Pastor David Miklas*

"The Benediction"

INTRODUCTION: Again, please turn in your Bible to the one-chapter book of Philemon where we read verses 1-3.

"Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellowlabourer, (2) And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house: (3) Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Paul was a prisoner in Rome, his friend **Philemon** was in Colossi, and the human link between them was a runaway slave, named **Onesimus**.

The details are not clear, but it appears that **Onesimus** robbed his master and then fled to Rome, hoping to be swallowed up in the crowded metropolis. But in the providence of God, he met Paul and was converted to Jesus Christ.

Now the **Apostle Paul** writes this letter to **Philemon** in order to pave the way for **Onesimus** going back; to ask **Philemon** to take **Onesimus** back not as a slave but as a Christian brother.

Notice again verse 2.

"And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house:"

Apphia was Philemon's wife. **Archippus** was his son. According to Colossians 4:17, he was also the pastor of the church in Colossi that was located in Philemon's home.

Having said that, perhaps the title "**The Benediction**" for this second message from Philemon is somewhat confusing.

Normally when you think of the prayers given in a church service – the opening prayer is the **invocation** and the closing prayer is the **benediction**. So why are we calling this second message from verse 3 "**The Benediction**"?

The word **BENEDICTION** simply means **BLESSING**. You can check this out – every single epistle written by the Apostle Paul begins with a benediction and interestingly begins somewhere in the opening verses with the same benediction.

"Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

In this message, we are going to consider the placement of this benediction in the book of Philemon.

In this benediction we have the **BLESSING**: The blessing in this verse consists of two terms **GRACE** and **PEACE**.

FIRST, note the word GRACE: What would be your definition of **GRACE**? Let me suggest a few definitions.

Grace is the free, unmerited favor of God through which salvation is bestowed upon the lost.

The acrostic definition of **Grace** that I use all the time in soul-winning is – G-God's, R-riches, A-at, C-Christ's, E-expense.

Grace is what everybody needs and what nobody deserves.

These are all good definitions of the word **GRACE**. However, Grace need not be narrowed to only include the salvation that is yours, or the assurance of everlasting life you have.

Grace includes all that but there is more.

GRACE is for **ALL** the **UNDESERVED BLESSINGS** that come your way, that come in to your family by the hand of God.

GRACE is the strength God gives you day by day to face all the aspects and eventualities of life.

GRACE is the **POWER OF GOD** that we find in God's Word.

GRACE in the New Testament is unmerited favor; getting something we don't deserve.

GRACE is the very essence of the gospel, what we have all received through Christ.

Here is a good illustration to define **GRACE**.

Suppose that you were to look out of your window just in time to see a young fellow making off with your car. You phone the police and report the theft, giving the car's make, model, color, and license number. Then you sit back and await developments, not too hopefully perhaps. But the unexpected happens. You receive a phone call from the local police station. The sergeant says, "Sir, we have recovered your car and also have the young man in custody. Can you come down?"

You arrive at the police station and examine the car. No damage has been done. You go inside and the officer says, "Here's the young man. Do you want to press charges?" At this point, you have three alternatives.

If you say, "Yes, he stole my car, he deserves to be punished," that would be *justice*.

If you say, "Well, look here, officer, he doesn't seem to have done any harm. I don't think I want to have him booked," that would be *forgiveness*.

But suppose that you were to say to the young man, "Look here, son, you don't need to steal a car. I have two. I'll give you one of mine. Also, I'll fill it up with gas for you and buy you a year's insurance." That would be *grace*. That would be giving him something that he did not deserve. That is exactly how God has treated us—with grace!

Paul uses the word because, in a paragraph or two, he is going to ask Philemon to treat Onesimus using this very principle of grace. He is going to ask him to give Onesimus something that he did not deserve.

A little over 240 years ago a man by the name of Bobby Robinson wrote a hymn that underscored what **GRACE** is. The hymn I am referring to is "Come Thou of Fount of Every Blessing." Notice the 1st, 3rd and 4th stanzas:

Come, Thou Fount of every blessing
Tune my heart to sing Thy GRACE.
Streams of mercy, never ceasing
Call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet
Sung by flaming tongues above.
Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it
Mount of Thy redeeming love.

Oh, that day when freed from sinning
I shall see Thy lovely face.
Clothed then in the blood washed linen
How I'll sing Thy wondrous GRACE.
Come, my Lord, no longer tarry
Take my ransomed soul away.
Send Thine angels now to carry
Me to realms of endless day.

In the fourth stanza Robinson puts his finger on what grace is and how we ought to act as believers.

Oh, to GRACE how great a debtor

Daily I'm constrained to be
Let that goodness like a fetter
Bind my wandering heart to Thee
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it
Prone to leave the God I love
Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it
Seal it for Thy courts above

The lyrics of “**Amazing Grace**” were penned by the Englishman John Newton. Newton’s mother, a Christian, taught him the Bible as a young boy. But when Newton was seven years old, his mother died from tuberculosis. At 11, he left school and began taking voyages with his father, a merchant navy captain.

Newton lived as an arrogant sinner until 1747, when his ship was caught in a fierce storm and he finally surrendered to God. After his conversion, he eventually left the sea and became an ordained Anglican minister at the age of 39.

In 1779, together with the poet William Cowper, Newton published 280 of his hymns in the popular *Olney Hymns*. “**Amazing Grace**” was part of the collection. Here are just five of many stanzas

Amazing GRACE How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

‘Twas GRACE that taught my heart to fear,
And GRACE my fears relieved.
How precious did that GRACE appear
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
‘Tis GRACE hath brought me safe thus far
And GRACE will lead me home.

When we’ve been there ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun,
We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise
Than when we’ve first begun.

Here is another hymn on **GRACE**, one of my favorites written by Julia Harriet Johnston “**Grace Greater Than our Sin**”.

Marvelous GRACE of our loving Lord,
GRACE that exceeds our sin and our guilt!
Yonder on Calvary’s mount outpoured,
There where the blood of the Lamb was spilled.

Sin and despair, like the sea waves cold,
Threaten the soul with infinite loss;
GRACE that is greater, yes, GRACE untold,
Points to the refuge, the mighty cross.

Marvelous, infinite, matchless GRACE,
Freely bestowed on all who believe!
You that are longing to see His face,
Will you this moment His grace receive?

Refrain: GRACE, GRACE, God’s GRACE,
GRACE that will pardon and cleanse within;

**GRACE, GRACE, God's GRACE,
GRACE that is greater than all our sin.**

SECOND, note the word PEACE: Again, in verse 3 we read, “**Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**”. There are commentators who have written that the word **GRACE** is derived from the Greek, and the word **PEACE** is derived from the Hebrew meaning “Shalom” and the Apostle Paul, by linking these two words together, unifies the **JEWS** and the **GENTILES**.

But there is something else commentators say almost without exception. Every time this benediction is found in the New Testament, **GRACE** always comes first and **PEACE** follows thereafter. It is always **GRACE** and then **PEACE** from God our father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is to signify that you cannot be at peace with God, yourself, or with others unless you became a recipient of the **GRACE** of God. Grace comes first, for in Ephesians 2:8 we read,

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: (9) Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

Again, **GRACE** comes first. Thereafter comes the **PEACE** of God that passes all understanding.

Now in all this, commentators are absolutely correct in what they wrote. However, in this message, we are not concerned with what this benediction **USUALLY** implies. Rather, we are interested in what it implies or suggests here in the book of Philemon.

Since Philemon's household had been disrupted by a robbery, and a member of their household had runaway, the **PEACE** in this household was destroyed. The peace was gone.

So it seems to me, that this family needed to have **PEACE** restored. They needed **PEACE** in their lives.

As a believer, I believe we would say that we are constantly in need of the Mercies of God. In Lamentations 2:23-24 Jeremiah the prophet tells us,

“It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. (23) They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.” God's mercies are there every morning.”

But, because we are not all the same, our lives are different, you don't think the same way I think, you don't feel exactly the same way I feel, our jobs are different, our families are different, our backgrounds are different.

Thank God, the streams of mercies are there, and the grace of God is there. Yet in all possibility, you might need **PEACE** as well.

Maybe you need the power of God to resist some temptation that besets you. Where you work, you testimony is not shared, you don't speak out for the Lord, and people see you as no different than everyone else. You need the power of God in your life to be a witness. Day by day, you need the courage of God just to carry on.

Maybe your home life is terrible. There are those in your home that are either unsaved or not living for the Lord.

Maybe you need hope today. Maybe you need patience today.

Maybe you need peace over some major change – financial, or physical that has taken place in your life, or in the life of your family.

The Apostle Paul recognized that Philemon's family not only needed streams of mercies, but they also needed **PEACE** restored to the household

A specific benediction was needed for that occasion and a specific blessing of GRACE and PEACE is also needed in our lives.

Number 1. In this benediction, we recognize the **BLESSED**. Beyond the **BLESSING** there are the **BLESSED**. Who had the right to be the recipient of this benediction? Notice the Apostle Paul says Grace and Peace to **YOU**.

It is interesting to note that the word **YOU** is plural. Grace and Peace were given to Philemon, to his wife Apphia, to his son Archippus and to all those in Philemon's household. **May streams of mercy come into all your lives!**

Today, may the grace of God and the streams of mercy come into all of you who are either listening or reading this message. May that same everyday Grace and mercy come into the life of your families and into the life of your church. **He is saying GRACE to all of you!**

You may be thinking, "Pastor, we are talking about the people mentioned in the book of Philemon. They are all dead; they are relics of the past. What about me? I have some difficult circumstance to face this coming week. How is this for me?"

Well, I believe there is something that God's people have over-looked that has been given to them by God as a result of their salvation experience. Because, in the Gospel of John 1:12 we read,

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:..."

For the most part, you understand this. You have received Jesus Christ into your life. However, there is another concept of receiving that most overlook which is found in verse 16, **"And of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace."**

Not only have we received Christ in salvation, but we have also received **"Grace for Grace"**. How? Let me try to explain this.

The preparation **"for"** in the middle of those two words could just as readily be translated as **"upon."** So, you could read, **"after we have received Christ as Saviour and been placed into the family of God as a child of God, we received His fullness."** And what is that fullness? It is **"Grace UPON Grace."**

Streams of mercy upon streams of mercy, like the waves of the ocean, one wave breaking upon another, one pulsation of God's grace after another pulsation of God's grace is to be breaking upon our lives. That is the fullness that God has for us. The fullness of Grace upon Grace, upon Grace.

That is What God has for you.
That is what God has for your family.
That is what God has for the church of Jesus Christ.
That is what God has for the individual for all times.

Question: Are you personally experiencing "Streams of Mercy" from God? This is not some theological jargon. It is a truth to be embraced.

There is another verse to consider, found in II Corinthians 9:8, where the Apostle Paul writes,

“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:...”

Don't minimize the power of God that is able to send streams of mercy toward you. God is able to make all GRACE abound towards YOU!

I encourage you to take that verse, believe it, memorize it, claim it, repeat it all the time, and pray that God's word would become a reality in your life. And He will!

Number 2. In this benediction we have the **BLESSOR**: The Apostle Paul began this **BENEDICTION** with the **BLESSING** – “Grace and PEACE.” Then he moves to the **BLESSED** – “You”. Now he concludes this **BENEDICTION** with the **BLESSOR** – “...from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Did you notice in this verse the word “**FROM**”? This word comes from the Greek word “**Apo**” meaning “**DOWN**.” Here the Apostle Paul is saying the blessings you now desire in your life, they come **DOWN** from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. They come **DOWN** from them into your life.

If you are thinking, “So what”? Please listen carefully.

What is so important with this for those who are a child of God, is that either we be in fellowship with and live-in communion with God or else you and I forfeit in our lives the PEACE, the STRENGTH, the JOY, the COURAGE, the LOVE, the SATISFACTION, whatever it is, we forfeit that when we are spiritually careless.

Whatever your need is, God can meet it. He is **ABLE** He has the **BLESSING** for those who are a Child of God. On the other hand, if you are out of fellowship with God, then the blessings are withheld.

Now as we draw this message to a close, hold your place in Philemon verse 3, and turn to Philippians 4:19 where we read, “**But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.**”

With that verse before you, I want you to draw two mental pictures in your mind. On the first picture, depict:

**All your BILLS,
All the TRIALS you have right now in your life,
All the BURDENS which are before you,
All the HEARTACHES, and
All the TRIBULATIONS you are experiencing.**

Over that picture I want you to write “**YOUR NEED**”.

Now create another mental picture in your mind. On that picture, I want you to depict:

**All that God did for you,
All that God has for you, and
All that God wills for you.**

Over that picture I want you to write the word, “**MY GOD**”.

Imagine those two paintings in the front room of your mind. Keep them there to remind you of the great Benediction given to us in Philemon verse 3, **“Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”**

If God has spoken to your heart, after reading the sermon **“The Benediction”** right now talk to God about what He has spoken to you.

Do you have the assurance that one day you will go to heaven? If you have no assurance that you know Jesus Christ, then I trust you will decide to accept Him as your personal Savior. The Bible tells us in

Acts 16:31, **“...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...”**

Romans 10:13, **“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”**

This prayer is here for those who need to ask Jesus to be their personal Savior: **“I do want to go to Heaven. I know I am a sinner, and I do believe Jesus Christ died for me. I realize I cannot buy this great salvation, nor can I earn it. Knowing Jesus died on the cross and arose from the grave to pay my sin debt and to purchase my salvation, I do now trust Him as my Savior, and from this moment on I am completely depending on Him for my salvation.”**

If you made the decision to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, please let me know. Please send an e-mail to pastormiklas@aol.com and I will send you some literature that will help you in your Christian life.

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