



WEEKLY SERMON

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Message: The Family of God # 9

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Text: Acts 6:1-7

Here is the account of how this beautiful hymn was written from the hymn writer, C. Austin Miles, himself. "One day in April 1912, I was seated in the dark room where I kept my photographic equipment, and also my organ. I drew my Bible toward me and it opened at my favorite book and chapter, John chapter twenty. I don't know if this was by chance or by the work of the Holy Spirit. I will let you the reader decide. That story of Jesus and Mary in [John 20](#) had lost none of its power and charm.

"It was though I was in a trance, as I read it that day, I seemed to be part of the scene. I became a silent witness to that dramatic moment in Mary's life when she knelt before her Lord and cried, "Rabboni". I rested my hands on the open Bible, as I stared at the light blue wall. As the light faded, I seemed to be standing at the entrance of a garden, looking down a gently winding path, shaded by olive branches. A woman in white, with head bowed, hand clasping her throat, as if to choke back her sobs, walked slowly into the shadows. It was Mary. As she came unto the tomb, upon which she placed her hand, she bent over to look in and ran away.

John, in a flowing robe, appeared looking at the tomb. Then came Peter, who entered the tomb, followed slowly by John. As they departed, Mary reappeared leaning her head upon her arm at the tomb, she wept. Turning herself, she saw Jesus standing there, so did I. I knew it was He. She knelt before Him, with arms outstretched, and looking into His face cried, "Rabboni".

I awakened in sunlight, gripping my Bible with my muscles tense, and nerves vibrating, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. I wrote as quickly as the words could be formed the lyrics exactly as it is sung today. That same evening, I wrote the tune. It is sung today as it was written in 1912."

**I come to the garden alone,
While the dew is still on the roses,
And the voice I hear falling on my ear
The Son of God discloses.**

**He speaks, and the sound of His voice
Is so sweet the birds hush their singing,
And the melody that He gave to me
Within my heart is ringing.**

**I'd stay in the garden with Him,
Though the night around me be falling,
But He bids me go; through the voice of woe
His voice to me is calling.**

Refrain:

And He walks with me, and He talks with me,

And He tells me I am His own;
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known.

In HIS Amazing Grace,
Pastor David Miklas

PS: "Christian Character" It has been said, "**Your reputation is what men think you are; your character is what God knows you to be.**" Guard carefully your character and God will take care of your reputation. "**When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.**"

1. **Christian character** is developed as an individual comes to the conviction that there is a standard of truth to govern our behavior and that standard of truth must permeate and influence one's total life.
2. **Christian character** holds that truth is an unchanging quality; therefore, right is always right and wrong is always wrong.
3. **Christian character** is demonstrated by consistency because it is dominated by one grand passion and that is to strive after the chief goal of revealed truth.
4. **Christian character** is not intimidated by society, materialism, education, politics, majorities, minorities, popular opinion, humanism, opposition, economics, discouragement, or peers.
5. **Christian character** is not ruled by thoughts such as, what is the easy way, the popular way, the comfortable way, the profitable way, or the acceptable way, but rather what is the right way.

PS: "You Cannot Hide from God" – Psalm 139:1-18

You can hide from God,
though mountains cover you.
His eyes our secret thoughts behold;
His presence all our lives enfold;
He knows our purposes untold.
You cannot hide from God.

You cannot hide from God,
No matter what you do.
He meets you at life's every turn;
He knows your thoughts that blight and burn;
He weeps when His own Son you spurn.
You cannot hide from God

You cannot hide from God,
though quietly you go.
He notes your footsteps ere they fall;
He hears your silent, heartfelt call;
His knowledge rules high over all.
You cannot hide from God.

You cannot hide from God.
This one thing you can do;
If you would save your sinful soul,
If you would be made pure and whole;
If you would reach the higher goal,
Your soul must hide in God.

"How to Pray for Your Pastor in the Family of God"

INTRODUCTION: In our continuing study on "How to Treat One Another in the Family of God" we are delving into the subject of prayer. In Psalms 61:1-2 we read, "Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock that is higher than I."

Prayer is our absolute dependence upon God.

Prayer is that wonderful means provided by God to meet the NEEDS, the DIFFICULTIES, the TRIALS, the ADVERSITIES, the TEMPTATIONS and the PROBLEMS of life.

There is nothing more important in the Christian life than the times of prayer. Likewise, there is nothing more important in our Christian service than prayer.

Prayer is the power behind our service.

Prayer is the power behind our witnessing.

Prayer is the source of power behind our preaching.

Prayer is the means by which we share our burdens, worries and concerns with God.

Prayer is the means we enter into the lives of others and share their needs before the throne of God.

Perhaps the greatest privilege that one individual can do for another is to sincerely pray for him. In the last message we examined James 5:16,

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

In this message from the word of God, I would like to challenge you to focus on "**How to Pray for Your Pastor.**" The text is found in Acts 6:1-7,

"And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. (2) Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. (3) Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. (4) But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. (5) And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: (6) Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. (7) And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." Again notice verse 4 of the text, "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."

The early church found that the disciples were just too caught up in the physical work of the church. In their "business" they were neglecting the real work of the ministry. Therefore the early church was challenged to choose seven men to become what we now know as deacons. These men were to carry out the physical burdens of the ministry. This in turn allowed the disciples to give themselves to the ministry of **PRAYER** and the ministry of the **WORD OF GOD**.

As you read through the Book of Acts on the early church, you will discover that:

The early church was a place of **WORSHIP**. They set their focus on God, and the resurrected Christ. The early church was a place of **INSTRUCTION**. It was a place of **Teaching and Preaching the WORD**.

The early church was a place of **FELLOWSHIP**. They were together. One of the key phrases used to describe the church in the early chapters of Acts is **"of one accord."**

The early church was a place of **EVANGELISM**. This missionary church carried out the direction of the Lord in Acts 1:8 to be **"...witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth."**

The early church was a place of **PRAYER**. It appeared their motto was **"Pray and Proclaim or Persecution and Prayer."**

Prayer created a **spirit of unity** in the church, Acts 1:14, **"These all continued with one accord in prayer..."**

Prayer created a **spirit of power** in the church, Acts 2:42, **"And they continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."**

Prayer created a **spirit of boldness** within the church, Acts 4:31, **"...when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with BOLDNESS."**

Prayer created a **mission directive** within the church, Acts 13:2-3, **"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away."**

These early disciples saw the need of prayer, and the need to minister the Word of God if they were to be effective in their ministry of teaching and preaching the Word of God. The dynamic results were evident as we see in Acts 6:7, **"And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."**

This was God's plan for the church then, as it is now. The plan has not changed. If your pastor is to be effective among you, he must give himself to the ministry of prayer and to the study of the Word of God. In other words, he must be in touch with God before he can minister to the people of God.

In Acts 12 we find that Peter was in prison. However in verse 5 we read, **"Prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him."** The church prayed for the preacher back then. Certainly this time in which we now live is no different. I cannot help but wonder how much more effective and fruitful our pastors, missionaries, evangelists, and Christian schoolteachers might be if we took seriously our responsibility to pray for them. It is possible that there are some Christian leaders who might have been protected from the assault of the wicked one on their lives, marriages, and ministry, had they been adequately covered by our prayers.

Numerous New Testament passages highlight the importance of praying for those who have been called to gospel ministry, as well as those who bear spiritual responsibility for our lives. Over and over again, Paul wrote and appealed to the churches where he had ministered, **"Brethren, pray for us..."** I Thessalonians 5:25. The Apostle Paul felt the need of the prayers of God's people. He strongly hinted of this in his letters.

We read in Romans 15:30, **"Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the Love of the Spirit, that you strive (literally agonize or wrestle) together with me in your prayers to God for me."** Paul said when others prayed for Him, they **FOUGHT HIS BATTLE WITH HIM AND ENTERED INTO HIS LABORS**. Literally Paul was encouraging these folks to **share in the battle, share in the burden**.

In Ephesians 6:18-19, Paul points to our responsibility to intercede on the behalf of others, here even giving a personal request. **"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints, and for me (Here Paul asks these people to intercede in a very specific way.) that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel,"**

He wrote the Colossians asking the saints there to pray for him in Colossians 4:2, "**Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.**"

He sought prayer support from the Corinthians people in II Corinthians 1:11, "**Ye also helping together by prayer for us that, for the gift bestowed upon us by means of many persons, thanks may be given by many on our behalf.**"

He sought prayer help from the Thessalonians in II Thessalonians 3:1, "**Finally brethren, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you.**"

He showed his confidence in the prayers of his friend, Philemon, in Philemon 22, "**But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you.**"

I have often made this comment to the leadership of the churches where God has given me the privilege to serve as Senior Pastor. "**The only way I am going to succeed as Pastor of this church is by the sovereignty of God, the power of the Holy Spirit, and the prayers of the leadership and the congregation.**" I have a concern for the people of this church to develop a deep commitment to the ministry of prayer not just for the ministry as a whole, not just for one another, but also for your PASTOR.

In **II Corinthians 11:16-33**, the Apostle Paul gave us his testimony regarding the conflicts, problems and burdens he had been through. In verse 28 we read, "**Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.**" Paul carried the burden for many churches and the care and concern of the people of those churches. Your pastor carries the burden of your church and the burden for the people of your church.

To your pastor you are not just some statistical number on the membership role. You are not just someone who comes and occupies a pew for the services and then walks out and you are forgotten until the next week. As your pastor, not only do I see you on Sunday or Wednesday, but also throughout the week I seek to walk with you. As your pastor, I am concerned for the fears, worries, burdens and the problems you have. Therefore:

I must seek to meet your needs and burdens by making your burdens my burdens.

I must seek to meet your needs by praying for you, as I am well aware of I Samuel 12:23, "**God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you.**"

I must seek to meet your needs by preaching to you from the word of God.

Charles Finney said, "**To arouse one man or woman to the tremendous power of prayer for others is worth more than the combined activity of twenty average Christians.**" I believe we need more believers in the school of "knee-ology."

I am eternally grateful for all a congregation can and will do for me as your pastor or for the work of the ministry. I deeply appreciate you. **But the greatest thing you can do for me as your pastor is to PRAY FOR YOUR PASTOR.**

Please notice again our text verse found in **Acts 6:4**. Let's apply it to the congregation making it our motto, "**We will give ourselves continually to prayer.**" Not everyone can be a pastor, or an evangelist, or a song leader, or a Sunday School teacher, or ministry leader. But there is one ministry that has plenty of openings. That is the ministry of prayer. Here are three questions to consider.

Will you be committed to praying one for another?

Will you be committed to praying for your pastor, missionaries, all those who are in leadership positions in a Christian ministry, and for those who watch over your souls?

Will you be committed to pay the price of time and effort for effectual prayer? Your commitment will make this church "**a place of prayer for all nations!**"

It has been well said, "A praying church creates an atmosphere most favorable to preaching." Prayer gives liberty to the preacher. A preacher ought to love to preach the Word of God. But his preaching will not be effective unless he prays, and unless you pray for him.

With all that said, here are **EIGHT** areas for which you can pray for your pastor.

Number 1: PRAY THAT YOUR PASTOR WILL BE A MAN OF PRAYER. Do you want to have a great pastor? Then pray that he will reach Heaven on his knees.

As we read in Matthew 7:7-8, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: (8) For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." The implication is if we ask when we pray, we receive. If we do not ask we do not receive.

Someone said, "Every man mighty for God was mighty in prayer." Remember, if God is going to do a work it is going to be done in His time, and in His power. If it is going to be done, it will be done in the power of prayer.

Number 2: PRAY THAT YOUR PASTOR WILL BE A MAN OF POWER. There are two things I pray for constantly.

First, I pray for **WISDOM**, in ministry, in message preparation, and for wisdom in decision-making.
Second, I pray for **POWER**, that is power in my teaching and preaching.

As I come to church and even at times while I sit on the platform during the service, I am praying "Lord help me, Holy Spirit I need you. I need your power, please give me the power to preach the Eternal Word of God to these people." Praise God! There is no shortage of His supernatural power. Jesus said in Matthew 28:18, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

Continuing in our text of Acts 6, in verse 8 we read of one of the men chosen to assist the disciples, Stephen, who was "full of faith and power, (and) did great wonders and miracles among the people." In verse 8 we read, "And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." This is the kind of power your pastor needs in his ministry and preaching.

Wouldn't it be great to see the Power and Glory of God burst forth in this church because God's people were praying for the power of God to fall upon the pastor and this ministry? As you consider praying for your pastor, may the words of this hymn challenge you to recognize the importance of an earnest prayer life.

Teach me to pray, Lord, teach me to pray;
this is my heart cry day unto day;
I long to know Thy will and Thy way;
Teach me to pray, Lord, teach me to pray.

Power in prayer, Lord, power in prayer,
Here 'mid earth's sin and sorrow and care;
Men lost and dying, souls in despair,
O give me power, power in prayer!

Number 2: PRAY THAT YOUR PASTOR WILL BE A MAN OF PASSION. By passion I mean a man who has an intense feeling of emotion in his love for God, his love for the Word of God, and his love for the people of God. Pray he will be a tenderhearted man, and a man of compassion for the souls of man. As a pastor:

I feel for the older generation who need to be encouraged and comforted in their sunset years. I desire to see the young families of the church growing and developing in the Word of God, and in their walk with Christ.

My heart goes out to the youth of this ministry. I am concerned for the second, third, and in some cases, the fourth generation of children and youth that they become godly in their walk with the Lord.

I look over this community and realize there are still hundreds that we need to reach for Christ. Oh, how I long for us to see men and women, boys and girls coming forward to receive Christ as their Saviour.

Pray your Pastor can have a heart of passion and compassion that will penetrate your hearts to get a burden to reach those mentioned above. Pray your pastor will have the heart of Psalm 126:5-6, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing bringing his shares with him."

Number 4: PRAY THAT YOUR PASTOR WILL BE A MAN OF PERSISTENCE. In II Timothy 4:1-7, the Apostle Paul writes his last charge to his son in the faith, Timothy:

"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; (2) Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. (3) For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; (4) And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. (5) But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. (6) For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. (7) I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:" Again notice the words in verse 5, "But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."

In the face of problems and opposition, Paul is urging Timothy to "remain faithful and don't quit!" This ought to be the prayer you have for your pastor.

Pray that He will be a man of persistence.

Pray that he will not be a quitter.

Pray that he will keep-on keeping-on.

Pray that he will press on in the work, despite all opposition.

Pray that he will be faithful to God's calling in his life and ministry.

Number 5: PRAY THAT YOUR PASTOR WILL BE A MAN OF PRINCIPLE. In I Timothy 6:11-12 Paul leaves another challenge to his son in the faith, Timothy: "But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called..."

Pray that your pastor will have the courage of convictions to obey and live by the principles of the Word of God.

Pray that I will have the courage to fight the good fight of faith.

Pray that your pastor will be willing to fight, not for preferences and prejudices, but for the **PRINCIPLES** of the Word of God.

Number 6: PRAY THAT YOUR PASTOR WILL BE A MAN OF PERCEPTION. Perception is good judgment, understanding, discernment, and wisdom. When you come to me for counsel, I want you to know that the wisdom I express has come from God.

Pray for discernment in his leadership of the church. Pray for discernment in the planning and the preparation of his messages. A pastor needs to hear from God, before he preaches to you. James reminds us in James 1:5 "If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God."

Number 7: PRAY THAT YOUR PASTOR WILL BE A MAN OF PATIENCE. Again in II

Timothy 4:2 we read, **“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. In this passage the word “longsuffering” means “patience in reference to people.”**

Pray your pastor will have longsuffering or patience with the people of God, with their **circumstances**, with their **problems**, with their **needs** and with their **burdens**.
Pray your pastor will have patience with the interruptions that disturb his study.
Pray God will apply Psalm 37:7 in his life, **“Rest in the LORD and wait patiently for him.”**

Number 8: PRAY THAT YOUR PASTOR WILL BE A MAN OF PREACHING. Again in II Timothy 4:2 we read, **“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”** To a pastor, except for prayer, there is nothing like preaching. But without prayer, there is not much to preaching.

Pray that your pastor’s preaching will **“be instant in season, out of season...”** and that every message from God will be just right.
Pray that your pastor’s preaching will **“reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”**
Pray that in his study and from the pulpit your pastor will proclaim the Word of God, the Gospel of the Cross of Christ in the power of the Spirit of God.

E.M. Bounds in his book **“Power through Prayer”** said, **“What the church needs today is not more machinery or better, not new organizations or more and novel methods, but men whom the Holy Spirit can use, men mighty in prayers. The Holy Spirit does not flow through METHODS, but through MEN. He does not come on MACHINERY, but on men. He does not ANOINT plans, but men of prayer.”**

He goes on to say, **“We must learn anew the worth of prayer, entering anew the school of prayer. There is nothing which takes more time to learn. And if we would learn the wondrous art of prayer we must not give a fragment here and there, “A little talk with Jesus”, but we must demand and hold with iron grasp the best hours of the day for God in pray, or there will be no praying worth the name.”**

Would you make a commitment to pray for your pastor this week and every week, perhaps even daily remembering him in light of what Paul wrote in Ephesians 6:18-19,

“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; (19) And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, (20) For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”

Then each and every time before your pastor stands to preach think of the words of the hymn **“Brethren, We have met to worship”** and pray for God’s power upon him as he preaches the Word of God.

**Brethren, we have met to worship And adore the Lord our God;
Will you pray with all your power, While we try to preach the Word?
All is vain unless the Spirit of the Holy One comes down;
Brethren, pray, and holy manna, Will be showered all around.**

If God has spoken to your heart after reading the sermon, **“How to Pray for Your Pastor in the Family of God,”** right now talk to God about what He has spoken to you. Ask God to give you the conviction of heart to pray for your pastor - daily, weekly and every time he stands to speak.

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 let me know? Please send an e-mail to, pdmikBBM@aol.com and I will send you some literature that will help you in your Christian life.

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