

What do the Prayers of Others Reveal About Your Claim of Christianity?

Philippians 1:3 – 11

Paul's prayer of joyful gratitude and heartfelt petition reveals that if we are genuine Christians, then we will glorify God by sharing in the Gospel and reproducing Christ's righteousness (1:3 – 11)

- I. Paul is joyously grateful to God for the Christians at Philippi for their partnership in the Gospel (3 – 8)
 - A. Paul is grateful for these people who have a place in the church (3a)
 - B. Paul's prayer of joy (4 – 6)
 - C. Paul now restates his attitude—justifying why he has a right to feel this Gospel joy (7 – 8)
- II. Next week, we will continue as we see Paul's earnest prayer continues (9 – 11)
- III. Conclusion
 - A. Do people in your life pray prayers (like Paul's prayer) about you?
 - B. If I asked everyone of us here: "do you want to live a God-exalting, Christ-praising life" I know that everyone would nod their head "yes"—but wanting isn't doing—do our thoughts, deeds and words reveal that we want God to be praised and exalted...or ourselves?
 - C. Do people pray this for us: "Dear God, my son, my daughter, my wife, my husband, my friend, my _____, is desperately in need of being more holy—so little of their lives look like the Gospel—God I know you can change them—I know that if you began a good work in them you will complete it—please work in them!"

- D. Or do people pray for us more often like this: "Dear God, my son, my daughter, my wife, my husband, my _____ has been showing such good evidence that you have saved them! God what a great God you are! Please continue this work in them until the day when Jesus returns!"

What would the prayers of other Christians reveal about us?

1. When people pray for us—there should be something thankworthy about our lives.
2. When people pray for us—there should be something about our attitudes and actions which would bring others joy.
3. When people pray for us—there should be some evidence (beyond our simple claim on salvation) that the Gospel is truly affecting us
4. When people pray for us—are they asking God: "if they are truly born-again, then please God show yourself powerful and help them to return from sin to obedience—and God, since it is hard to tell sometimes if they are truly born-again, maybe their profession is false—if so, then God please convict them of sin and bring them to call on Jesus for true salvation"
5. When people pray for us—can they shout to God how right it is that they love us and see us as having the Gospel in common with them?
6. When people pray for us—can they point out to God and to others how often we lived out God's grace to them, through our Christian kindness, unselfish love and sympathy?
7. Perhaps you know a Christian friend who has been harassed, oppressed or even persecuted for the Gospel—can your friend praise God that you too—with them—have lived for the Gospel in such a way that you identified with some of Christ's own sufferings?
8. When people pray for us—like Paul, they should be able to call God as witness to why they can feel this way about us

As we begin this New Year...

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