



One of the greatest privileges we have as believers is the ability to petition the Lord God Almighty on behalf of ourselves and others ([Heb 4:16](#)). Throughout Scripture we're shown examples of God hearing the prayers of His people and changing circumstances. Abraham petitioned God on behalf of his nephew Lot ([Genesis 18:16-33](#)), Moses pleaded with God on behalf of the Israelites ([Exodus 32:11-14](#)), Job was restored after he prayed for his friends ([Job 42:10](#)), and so forth. In the New Testament we see similar patterns to pray for others, such as when Jesus prayed for His disciples ([John 17:13-21](#)) and when James, Jesus's half-brother, instructed us to pray for those who are sick ([James 5:14-16](#)).

In [Ephesians 1:15-19](#), Paul gives us another avenue of petition in our prayers:

For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and your love for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. (NASB)

Paul, by means of example, exhorts the Church to pray for fellow Christians to have practical spiritual blessings, and he does so in sincere thanksgiving for their faithfulness. As one of the apostles who suffered most in ministry ([Acts 9:16](#), [2 Cor 11:22-29](#)) Paul seemed far less concerned with the physical circumstances of the Church body and much more concerned about their spiritual health.

While it is certainly important and proper for us to seek the Lord's help with earthly problems (health, finance, family issues, etc.) it is equally important for us to ask for spiritual wisdom, discernment, and understanding for ourselves and others. While we already have been ***blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places*** ([Eph 1:3](#)), Paul is modelling how we should continue to pray for these blessings to be revealed in ways that allow us to better glorify God.

How often do we pray in thanksgiving and expectation for other believers to be given such things as godly wisdom, understanding, revelation, and enlightenment in their knowledge of Christ and God's grace and power? And how often do we ask others to pray for us in these things? We routinely share our worldly problems with other believers and ask them to pray, but if we also asked them to petition God to give us a deeper revelation of Who Christ is, spiritual wisdom and discernment, and that the eyes of our hearts would be open to more clearly understanding His Word and will, perhaps some of our physical issues may be solved in the process or simply become of less concern.



As we saw previously, we are saved for God's glory, and the spiritual and heavenly blessings He pours out on us are likewise for His glory and honor. This is why our prayers must not be self-centered in nature. Jesus told us in [John 14:13](#), ***"Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son."*** The key here is that we are asking in His will ("My name" or "My authority") and for the Father's glory. The spiritual wisdom, discernment, understanding and enlightenment Paul is discussing here in Ephesians are primarily for the glory of God as His saints delight in their salvation.

In our quiet time each day, let's be sure to pray for our Christian brothers and sisters to get a deeper understanding of God's Word, to be wise and biblically discerning, to better understand the hope of His calling, and to appreciate the surpassing greatness of His grace, mercy and power more fully. And likewise, ask these things for yourself. God gives these gifts freely to those who ask in faith and according to *His will*.

But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. [James 1:5](#)

~Associate Pastor Jeremy Preece