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THE PRAYER LIFE OF ST. PAUL

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of New Testament Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Divinity

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Prayer played an important role in the life of St. Paul. Already at his conversion Luke records that Paul prayed. In the ninth chapter of the Book of Acts the Lord spoke to Ananias and said, "Rise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for a man of Tarsus named Saul; for behold, he is praying." A survey of the Pauline corpus reveals that Paul repeatedly prays or speaks concerning prayer. The frequency with which Paul refers to prayer indicates that Christian prayer was an integral part of his service in the gospel. The purpose of this thesis is to correlate, catalog, and analyze all references to prayer in the Pauline Epistles and the Book of Acts. The Apostle's prayers and commands to pray give insight into his prayer life and point up the Christ-centeredness of his faith.

Much has been written on prayer in general, however, the literature on Biblical prayer is scanty. This is especially true of Pauline prayer. There are many books written about Paul, biographies such as Conybeare's¹ and

¹W. J. Conybeare and J. S. Howson, The Life, Times, and Travels of St. Paul (New York: E. B. Treat and Co., 1869).

Farrar's² are voluminous, but they speak little of his prayer life. Since there is little written on Pauline prayer this writer found it rewarding to investigate the prayer life of St. Paul as it is presented in his writings and the Book of Acts.

In order that this study follow some logical progression, a catalog and exegetical study is presented first. This is followed by a study of the Greek words used by Paul to designate and speak of prayer. The last two chapters give an analysis of Paul's praying and point up several basic characteristics of Pauline prayer. The compilation of Paul's prayers and references to prayer was made by a careful reading of the Pauline corpus and the Book of Acts. Also helpful in cataloging the prayers were the works by Schmoller,³ Harder,⁴ and Manz.⁵ The Greek text used and

²F. W. Farrar, The Life and Work of St. Paul (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1869).

³Alfred Schmoller, Handkonkordanz zum Griechischen Neuen Testament (Neunte Auflage: Stuttgart: Privilegierte Wuertembergische Bibelanstalt, 1951).

⁴Gunther Harder, Paulus und das Gebet (Guetersloh: Verlag C. Bertelsmann, 1936).

⁵James George Manz, "Paul's Conception of Man's Stand Before God as Revealed in His Prayers." Unpublished Master's Thesis, Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary, Maywood, 1947.

and quoted is Nestle's,⁶ the translations are from the Revised Standard Version.⁷

This study has revealed that Paul was a man of prayer. From the time of his conversion when he spent three days in fasting and prayer until his death the Apostle continued in unceasing prayer. The prayers and references to prayer in the Pauline corpus show that Paul was a master in the art of thanksgiving and intercessory prayer. He prayed frequently, at every and any occasion. His prayers were Christ-centered and dealt not only with his personal needs and problems, but also with the spiritual condition and growth of his readers. And in all his prayers he is primarily concerned with the advancement of God's Kingdom.

⁶ Erwin Nestle, Novum Testamentum Graece (Twenty-first edition; Stuttgart: Wuerttembergische Bibelanstalt, 1953).

⁷ The Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version. (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1952).

CHAPTER II

AN ANALYSIS AND CATALOG OF PAULINE PRAYER

In order to investigate and understand the prayer life of the Apostle Paul it is necessary to have before us some systematic arrangement of his prayers. This chapter represents an attempt to catalog any Pauline reference to prayer and to list the extant prayers of the Apostle as they are found in his writings. In many instances it is difficult to determine exactly where a prayer begins or ends, therefore the choice in many cases is arbitrary. The sequence of the Epistles in the catalog follows a probable theory of authorship. However, the references to prayer in the Book of Acts are listed first for in that book we have the history of Paul's life and the framework into which his Epistles are woven.

A brief exegetical analysis of Paul's references to prayer accompanies the listing. This is an attempt to give a general overview and understanding of Pauline prayer. In most cases the references are quoted in full to give the reader a more comprehensive insight into the prayer life of Paul. This analysis and listing should be especially beneficial to the reader in the later chapters. Key words are given in Greek to point up certain distinctions and to emphasize certain truths.

Acts

9:4-8	21:5
9:11	22:3-21
13:3	22:17
14:23	26:13-18
16:13	27:35
16:16	28:8
16:25	38:15
20:36	

Acts 9:4-8 is the story of Paul's conversion. Paul addresses God as "Lord." The Lord answers: "I am Jesus."

Acts 9:11. The Lord instructs Ananias to seek out Paul, "for behold, he is praying." The present tense indicates continuous prayer. Compare 1 Thess. 5:17, "pray constantly."

Acts 13:3. In the church at Antioch the prophets and teachers fasted, prayed, and laid hands on Barnabas and Saul and sent them on their first missionary journey.

Acts 14:23. Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in every church, engaged in prayer and fasting, and committed the elders unto the Lord.

Acts 16:13. In Philippi the apostles went to the riverside on the sabbath day, "where we supposed there was a place of prayer."

Acts 16:16. A slave girl who had a spirit of

divination met the missionaries as they "were going to the place of prayer."

Acts 16:25. "But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them." Paul and Silas had been cast into prison after a cruel beating by the rods of the lictors. In this situation the missionaries addressed God in prayer. The praying and the singing of hymns are not described as separate acts. The singing of hymns, probably Psalms, was their prayer.¹

Acts 20:36. Paul knelt down with the elders at Ephesus "and prayed with them all." This touching reference to prayer took place on Paul's third missionary journey. Paul had addressed the elders and when he had finished speaking he knelt and prayed with them. Undoubtedly he prayed about the things spoken of in his address, and asked God that he would keep the Ephesians faithful. And one can hardly picture the apostle praying without asking God's blessing on the arduous journey which lay ahead for him and his companions. The account relates that "they all wept and embraced Paul" because he had said that they would never see his face again.

Acts 21:5. As Paul departed from Tyre after spending seven days with the band of Christians in that place, we

¹Marvin R. Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), 1, 534.

are told that he knelt and prayed with whole families.

"And they all, with wives and children, brought us on our way till we were outside the city; and kneeling down on the beach we prayed and bade one another farewell." This certainly was an example of Christian witness, of Christian love and fellowship.

Acts 22:3-21. Paul's story of his conversion is again told. Paul, after hearing the prophecy of Agabus, proceeded to Jerusalem and entered the temple. A false rumor arose in the crowd that Paul had brought Trophimus the Ephesian, a pagan, into the temple. An uproar followed and in Paul's defence to the people he recounts his conversion and mentions his prayer. He says in verse 17, "When I had returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, I fell into a trance and saw him saying to me, 'Make haste and get quickly out of Jerusalem, because they will not accept your testimony about me'." It is interesting to note that Paul prayed in the Temple after his conversion, and there received communication that he should go unto the Gentiles, since the Jews would not receive his testimony. The incident tells us that Paul offered prayers in the Holy place of prayer of the Jews, and that he received direct communication from God on this occasion. Paul undoubtedly mentioned the prayer in the Temple to show the Jews that the Temple was still for him the place of prayer and worship, and it should have shown them that he who prayed in the Temple would not

profane it as they had accused him of doing.

Acts 26:13-18. Paul tells Agrippa of his conversion. It is noteworthy that Paul uses the same words as spoken at the conversion, "And I said, 'Who are you, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting'" (verse 15).

Acts 27:35. This account of prayer occurred on the journey to Rome, shortly before the ship-wreck at Malta. After fourteen days of drifting, trouble, fasting, Paul took bread, gave thanks to God and began to eat. Luke tells us that "they all were encouraged and ate some food themselves." The act of thanksgiving was the normal thing for a Jew or Christian to do before a meal, and in this instance undoubtedly had a great influence among those who witnessed and heard the prayer.

Acts 28:8. Here prayer is mentioned in connection with the account of a miracle. This occurred during the ship-wreck on the island of Malta. "It happened that the father of Publius lay sick with fever and dysentery; and Paul visited him and prayed, and putting his hands on him healed him." The content of the prayer is not mentioned, we may assume that the Apostle prayed that God might perform the miracle through him. This is one of the few instances in which Paul was given the miraculous divine power of healing.

Acts 28:15. The last mention of prayer in Acts follows Paul's departure from Puteoli on the last leg of his journey to Rome. "And so we came to Rome. And the

brethren there, when they heard of us, came as far as the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns to meet us. On seeing them Paul thanked God and took courage." The thanksgiving to God was prompted by the arrival of Christians from Rome. And well he might be thankful, for this was assurance that he was not friendless in Rome.

In conclusion it may be well to note that nowhere in the Book of Acts are we told the exact content of Paul's prayer. Usually the context or the situation gives us a clue as to what the prayer might have been, but we do not have the exact words recorded as is often the case in the Epistles. This may be due to the fact that the connection sufficiently indicates the nature and contents of the prayer. We can be sure that the prayers of Paul were suited to the occasion. They were, in all probability, not set or fixed prayers, but were spoken by the Apostle with regard for the particular situation and the need of the moment.

Paul's prayers were offered, in every situation recorded in the Book of Acts, in the presence of witnesses. Paul lived his faith. When the situation or need for prayer arose, Paul prayed, regardless of the situation or the people involved. Paul prayed after his conversion when visiting in Jerusalem, he prayed in prison, he knelt on the beach with families, he gave thanks before he ate, and he prayed for God's grace in the healing of a sick man. In all cases Paul's prayer life was a witness of the Christ who

lived in him. That his prayer had an effect on those who witnessed is evident in almost every situation mentioned in the Book of Acts. The prisoners listened to Paul and Silas pray, sailors on the ship were encouraged, and families were strengthened in their faith at Tyre. Prayer seems to have been a definite way of witnessing for Paul.

Finally, it is interesting to note that the word *προς εὐχόμεναι* is used almost exclusively in the Book of Acts in reference to prayer. The two exceptions are Acts 27:35 and Acts 28:15 where *εὐχαριστέω* is used.

Galatians

1:3

6:16

1:5

6:18

1:24

The introductions to Paul's Epistles usually contain a prayer or make mention of prayer. There are two exceptions to this rule, Galatians and Titus. These do, however, include the apostolic blessing (Galatians 1:3; Titus 1:4). In Galatians there are no thanksgivings, no mention of prayers offered previously, no special admonition or requests for prayers. There are several passages that should be considered, however.

Galatians 1:3. "Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ." This apostolic blessing

may be considered in the scope of Paul's prayers, for he is pronouncing grace and peace upon his readers. "These two terms, grace and peace, constitute Christianity. Grace involves the remission of sins, peace, and happy conscience."²

Galatians 1:5. "To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." Paul ascribes glory to God. At the mention of His name thanksgiving and praise are immediately on the lips of Paul. Expressions of praise and gratitude such as these are common in the Pauline Epistles.

Galatians 1:24. "And they glorified God because of me." This probably refers to prayers of thanksgiving offered by believers for his conversion.

Galatians 6:16. "Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God." The Israel of God is a term designating the Israel of the New Testament, the Holy Christian Church. Paul asks that mercy and peace be upon those devout believers who have put off the law.

Galatians 6:18. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen." The sentence is a prayer that the Galatians may have the indwelling gracious presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. The concluding benedictions of all letters written by the Apostle Paul are alike in that they include the invocation of grace, which, except

²Martin Luther, A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, abridged translation from the Latin by Theodore Graebner (Third edition; Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.), p. 15.

in Colossians and the Pastoral Epistles, is specifically called "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ." "Phil. 4:23 and Phm. 25 are like Galatians in using *μετὰ τοῦ πνεύματος ὑμῶν* instead of the usual *μετ' ὑμῶν*."³ Only Ephesians includes the invocation of peace, which is regularly found in the opening salutations of the Apostle's letters.

First Thessalonians

1:1	5:16-18
1:2-3(10)	5:23-24
2:13	5:25
3:9-10	5:28
3:11-13	

First Thessalonians 1:1. "Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace." This is the greeting to the Thessalonians and may be considered as a type of prayer. The general form of the Pauline letters consists as a rule of an address or greeting, a thanksgiving, special contents, personal salutations and an autographic conclusion. All the Pauline letters manifest this

³Ernest De Witt Burton, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians," The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, c.1920), p. 362.

general form with perhaps the exception of Galatians and Titus which follows a slightly different pattern. The above salutation, or superscription, comprises, as in contemporary letters, the name of the writer in the nominative, the people addressed in the dative, and the greeting. Although this is the shortest of the extant Pauline salutations, it contains the more developed forms, not simply the names of the writers and recipients but also the divine names, God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the characteristically Pauline "grace and peace." The Holy Spirit is mentioned in no salutation and in only one benediction (2 Cor. 13:14). The phrase "grace to you and peace" is common to Pauline salutations and bears, like the phrase $\epsilon\upsilon\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omega$, the stamp of Paul's experience.⁴ "Grace" is used here in its widest sense, the favor of God by which he acquits all sinners solely on the principle of faith and grants them freedom from the power of sin and newness of life in Christ or the Spirit. "Peace" is the spiritual prosperity or happiness enjoyed by those in divine favor.⁵

First Thessalonians 1:2-3(10). "We give thanks to God always for you all, constantly mentioning you in our

⁴James Everett Frame, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary of The Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians," The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), p. 71.

⁵Ibid.

prayers, remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." The salutation is followed by a thanksgiving, actually the thanksgiving runs through verse ten, or the whole first chapter. Whenever Paul was at his prayers, he remembered his friends at Thessalonica and thanked God. When he recalled them his first feeling was one of gratitude to God (cf. 3:9) for the Christian record which, as individuals and as a church, they displayed. He bears in mind the spiritual excellence of the readers, their active faith, industrious love, and tenacious hope. He thanks God for their election (verse 4), the certainty of which is inferred from the presence of the Spirit controlling not only the converts who welcomed the gospel in spite of persecutions (verses 6-10), but also the ministers themselves (verses 5,9). And not only Paul alone, the plural implies that all three missionaries prayed together. The missionaries gave thanks "always." (cf. 2 Thess. 1:3; 2:13; 1 Cor. 1:4; Eph. 5:20; Phil. 1:3), "constantly mentioning you in our prayers." (cf. Rom. 1:9; Eph. 1:16; Phlm.4). The preposition ($\epsilon\pi\iota$) "retains here a slightly local sense 'at,' 'when engaged in,' cf. Rom. 1:10."⁶ Each time that they were engaged in prayer, the writers mentioned the

⁶George Milligan, St. Paul's Epistles to the Thessalonians (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1953), p. 6.

names of the converts and gave thanks for them. The word for "prayers" is *προσευχή* and in the New Testament is used only of prayer to God, and is a more general term than *δέησις*.⁷ Thus in this thanksgiving Paul and his friends express their joy at the Thessalonian converts' steadfastness and energy in Christian grace and witness.

First Thessalonians 2:13. "And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God which is at work in you believers." Paul and his fellow-missionaries thank God that the Thessalonians welcomed the gospel as a word from God. Paul was so accustomed to hearing his message denounced as man-made, not only by non-Christian Jews, but by many Jewish Christians as well, that he found it especially encouraging when it was sincerely welcomed as the good news of God.

First Thessalonians 3:9-10. "For what thanksgiving can we render to God for you, for all the joy which we feel for your sake before our God, praying earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith." The faith of the converts gave Paul and his associates much joy. This joy, which is not so much personal as religious, and which therefore finds its constant

⁷Ibid.

outlet "before our God," is so excessive that Paul is unable to give God that adequate thanks which is his due. It is in the atmosphere of intense joy that he prays "earnestly night and day," not simply that he might see their face (as in 2:17), but also that he might make up the deficiencies of their faith (cf. 5:8).⁸ The Greek word used for "praying" in this passage is *δεόμενοι* which may be better translated "beseeching." This Greek word is stronger than *προσευχόμενοι*, and embodies a sense of personal need. Except for one usage in Matthew (9:38) the verb is confined in the New Testament to Luke and Paul.⁹

First Thessalonians 3:11-13. "Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you; and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all unblamable in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints." Paul now passes to the prayer which he prays. Both the desire to see them and the desire to amend their deficiencies are resumed as he turns in prayer to the supreme authority, God and Christ. The emphasis is put less on the longing to see them than on the shortcomings of their faith. This change of emphasis is undoubtedly used to prepare the way for the exhortations that are to follow

⁸Frame, op. cit., p. 134.

⁹Milligan, op. cit., p. 42.

in chapter four and five. It is striking to note that the prayer is addressed to Christ and the Father and that these two should be united by a verb in the singular $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma$. . . $\kappa\alpha\tau\epsilon\upsilon\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\nu\alpha\iota$. The singular implies that God and Jesus count as one in this connection (cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17). The purpose of the prayer is that their love may "increase and abound" to all men, and that their hearts should be established "unblameable in holiness before our God and Father" in view of the return of Christ.

First Thessalonians 5:16-18. "Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." The injunction to constant joy and prayer and to thanksgiving in every circumstance is characteristic of Paul. Paul exhorts the Christians to rejoice always. The way to constant joy in the midst of persecution is constant prayer, expressed or unexpressed. The exhortation to be steadfast in prayer (Rom. 12:12; Col. 4:2), to pray at all times (Eph. 6:18), is characteristic of Paul's teaching and practice (3:10; 2 Thess. 1:11). The ability to pray is made possible because of the indwelling Christ, $\epsilon\acute{\nu}\ \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}\ \text{'}\text{Ιησοῦ}$ (cf. Rom. 8:26; Eph. 6:18). Furthermore they are to "give thanks," in every circumstance of life, even in the midst of persecution and suffering. "Even when $\tau\acute{\omega}\ \theta\epsilon\acute{\omega}$ is not expressed, it is to be understood after $\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\ \chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\epsilon}\iota\upsilon$

(cf. Rom. 1:21; I Cor. 10:30; 11:24; 14:17; Eph. 1:16)."¹⁰ Constant joy with constant prayer leads to the expression of thankfulness to God in every situation and condition in life. The stimulating cause of thanksgiving is the Christ within them. Paul reminds them that this is not his will but the "will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

First Thessalonians 5:23-24. "May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, and he will do it." Following the exhortations (4:1-5:22) the Apostle turns in characteristic fashion to the Divine Power in which alone they can be fulfilled. The prayer in general asks that God would consecrate them through and through, and then specifically that he may keep their spirit, the divine element, and the soul and body, the human element, intact as an undivided whole in order that they might be blameless when the Lord comes.¹¹ The prayer will certainly be answered, for God is faithful. This faithfulness of God has already been manifested when in keeping with his eternal choice (1:4) he called them (2:12) through the preaching of the gospel (2 Thess. 2:14). But if the caller is faithful he may also be relied upon to perform the very thing

¹⁰Frame, op. cit., p. 202.

¹¹Ibid., p. 209.

involved in the call, namely, that for which Paul prayed, that they be sanctified and kept blameless until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

First Thessalonians 5:25. The Epistle closes with three requests, the second being, "Brethren, pray for us." When the brethren pray they are to bear in mind not only themselves but Paul and his fellow-missionaries as well.

First Thessalonians 5:28. Paul closes the letter with the benediction, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."

Second Thessalonians

1:2	2:16-17
1:3(- 10)	3:1-2
1:11-12	3:5
2:13(14)	3:16
	3:18

Second Thessalonians 1:2. Paul opens his Epistle with the usual salutation, "grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Second Thessalonians 1:3-10. Following the salutation there comes the usual thanksgiving which, while recalling the thanksgiving of the First Epistle, presents certain independent features. Paul begins the thanksgiving thus: "We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren,

as is fitting, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing." Special stress is now laid on the progress of the Thessalonians' faith and love with the consequent boasting of the writers on their behalf (verses 3 and 4). The mention of the afflictions which the Thessalonians were suffering is a perfect opportunity for an emphatic appeal to the righteous judgment of God, by which the persecuted will be recompensed and the persecutors condemned (verses 5 to 10).¹²

Second Thessalonians 1:11-12. Paul concludes chapter one with a prayer for his brethren, a characteristic so common with Paul. "To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his call, and may fulfill every good resolve and work of faith by his power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." With a view to the glorious consummation spoken of in verse ten, Paul prays as the converts were praying not only that God may deem them worthy of His call, that is, acquit them on the last day, but that they may be morally perfect. The ultimate purpose of the prayer is found in verse twelve, "that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him." The reference

¹² Milligan, op. cit., p. 42.

is primarily to the Parousia, but Paul's prayer would be fulfilled then only if the Lord's name were glorified in them day by day through life.

Second Thessalonians 2:13(14). "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning to be saved, through consecration by the Spirit and belief in the truth." Turning from the events preceding the last judgment Paul gives thanks to God on the converts' behalf in view of the salvation which He has worked for them, a salvation beginning in His eternal choice, and to be completed by their sharing in the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself (verse 14). "These two verses thus form 'a system of theology in miniature' (Denney), and in characteristic Pauline fashion lead up to the practical exhortation to the Thessalonians to hold fast to what they have been taught (v. 15)."¹³

Second Thessalonians 2:16-17. Another prayer is interjected that the preceding exhortation may be fulfilled in the Thessalonians. "Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word." Paul prays that Christ and God who in grace had already loved them in the

¹³Ibid., p. 106.

sending of the Son to death, and had granted them assurance through the Spirit and hope for the ultimate glory of God, may strengthen them in works and words of righteousness. The "comfort" spoken of "is the courageous confidence, inspired by the Spirit, that nothing, whether persecutions (I:4 I 3:3) or disquieting utterances touching the time of the Parousia (vv. 2-3) can prevent the beloved and elect from sharing the future glory of Christ."¹⁴

Second Thessalonians 3:1-2. In addition to offering prayers on their behalf, Paul asks them to pray for the continued success of the gospel and (verse 2) for its agents' safety (cf. Is. 25:4). "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed on and triumph, as it did among you, and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men; for not all have faith." This appeal for the prayers of the readers is characteristic of Paul (1:11; 1 Thess. 5:25; Rom. 15:30; Col. 4:3; Phlm. 22; 2 Cor. 1:11; Phil. 1:19). It is noteworthy that in the first place Paul prays for the furtherance of their work rather than for any ease or advantage to themselves. The second and more personal need for which the prayers of the Thessalonians are solicited are found in verse two. It is probably with special references to dangers at Corinth that he requests the prayers "to be delivered from wicked and

¹⁴Frame, op. cit., p. 286.

evil men." As in Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians (1:11) where prayer is requested for deliverance from the perils of death, and as in Romans (15:30) where it is for deliverance from those that are disobedient in Judea, so here person and cause are inseparable.¹⁵ It appears that Paul in these two passages is attempting to widen the horizon of the Thessalonians by enlisting their sympathy and interest on behalf of the apostles. They are not the only sufferers, or the only people who need prayer and help.

Second Thessalonians 3:5. "May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ." This short prayer reminds the Thessalonians that though he has confidence in the Lord that they will do what he commands, yet he knows that the help of the Lord is indispensable to incline their hearts to keep his commandments. They need especially a sense of God's love for them and a reminder that Christ can give them an endurance adequate to face the persecutions.¹⁶

Second Thessalonians 3:16. Paul takes leave of the Thessalonians with a prayer for their blessing. "Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways. The Lord be with you all." The prayer for peace is directed to Christ, the Lord of peace, and is prompted by

¹⁵Ibid., p. 292.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 296.

the situation which the command (verses 6-15) is designed to meet. However, the command alone will not restore harmony among the brethren, the Lord of peace must give them a sense of inward religious peace, at all times, in all the situations of life. He appends, "the Lord be with you all." This undoubtedly was done with a special purpose, for both the majority and the idlers needed the personal presence as well as the peace of Christ as a surety for harmony and concord within the brotherhood.¹⁷

Second Thessalonians 3:17. The final benediction is identical with the one of the First Epistle with the exception of the word "all." The "all" is inserted as in verse sixteen to include all, even those whom he had found it necessary to censure. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."

First Corinthians

1:3	11:13
1:4-7	11:24
7:5	14:13-18
10:16	15:57
10:30	16:23-24
11:4-5	

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 311.

First Corinthians 1:3. Paul's customary greeting is found here. "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

First Corinthians 1:4-7. "I give thanks to God always for you because of the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, that in every way you were enriched in him with all speech and all knowledge, even as the testimony to Christ was confirmed among you, so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ." This Pauline thanksgiving is a prelude to the whole Epistle. The Apostle says that he continually thanks God for the results of the preaching of the gospel in Corinth, through which the grace of God was received by many. He had been told by God, "I have many people in this city" (Acts 18:10), and this was a source of joy to him. Because they were God's people it meant an enrichment of their lives, their speech, and their knowledge, in accordance with the testimony which the Apostle gave of Christ, which was confirmed in them (verse 6). The Corinthian Christians exhibited a full Christian faith, and lived in the expectation of Christ's return (verse 7).

First Corinthians 7:5. Paul mentions prayer here in speaking about marriage and its problems. "Do not refuse one another except perhaps by agreement for a season, that you may devote yourselves to prayer . . ." The meaning is

unclear. Lenski¹⁸ suggests it may refer to private devotions, when a family may have set aside a week for fasting, prayer, and the like. Plummer¹⁹ is inclined to think that it is a reference to ordinary, usual prayer. Though it's impossible to determine the exact meaning, it is noteworthy that Paul mentions prayer in connection with marriage. Prayer to Paul enters every aspect of life, it was an integral part of every life and situation.

First Corinthians 10:16. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ?" Paul speaks here of a blessing, benediction, prayer in connection with the Lord's Supper. The "blessing" of the cup refers to the utterance of Christ, in which He gave thanks and blessed God. (What words of blessing the apostolic Church used Paul doesn't say.)

First Corinthians 10:30. Paul mentions prayer in connection with meals. "If I partake with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of that for which I give thanks?" Paul has been speaking about liberty and its limits and here discusses the matter of eating at an unbeliever's table.

¹⁸F. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Paul's First and Second Epistle to the Corinthians (Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, 1935), p. 283.

¹⁹Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians," The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1911), p. 135.

It shows that Paul gave thanks at meals, even though he may have eaten at the table of an unbeliever. Paul apparently strives here to point out that all food, whether sacrificial or not, is sanctified, if it be received with thanksgiving (cf. 1 Tim. 4:4).²⁰

First Corinthians 11:4-5 (13). "Any man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head, but any woman who prays or prophesies with her head unveiled dishonors her head . . ." In this section of chapter eleven Paul is speaking of disorders in public worship. The question of veiled and unveiled men and women is discussed. This passage adds little to an understanding of Paul's prayers, although it does speak of corporate prayer and mention both men and women as praying. The reference in verse thirteen is noteworthy, "Judge for yourselves; is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered?" Usually *πρὸς εὐχόμεαι* has no case after it, but here "to God" *τῷ Θεῷ* is added undoubtedly to emphasize the principle that when she is addressing God she ought not to be asserting her equality with men or trying to draw attention to men (cf. Matt. 6:6).²¹

First Corinthians 11:24. "And when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is broken for

²⁰Ibid., p. 223.

²¹Ibid., p. 234.

you. Do this in remembrance of me." The thanksgiving here is doubtless the same blessing spoken of in the tenth chapter (verse 16). Again, the words refer to the prayer or thanksgiving of Christ.

First Corinthians 14:13-18. The fourteenth chapter of First Corinthians deals with the speaking in tongues. This practice of speaking in a tongue was apparently common at Corinth and was obviously a highly prized gift. There are nine references to prayer and thanksgiving in the section which reads thus: "Therefore, he who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret. For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful. What am I to do? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also; I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also. Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how can any one in the position of an outsider say the "Amen" to your thanksgiving when he does not know what you are saying? For you may give thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified. I thank God that I speak in tongues more than you all." Heiler summarizes the meaning of these verses as follows:

The consciousness of the presence of God and the effort after mutual edification by common prayers demands some order in the conduct of worship. Paul exhorts the Christians--"Let all things be done decently and in order." Common prayer does not consist in a confusion of voices, each addressing God in its own words--that would be the individual prayer of many but not at all common prayer. This latter is the prayer of one member of the congregation which the

others follow with attention and devotion. In the primitive Church every male Christian, when moved by the Spirit had the right to preach and to pray. The custom of general free prayer is the clear background of the fourteenth chapter of First Corinthians in which the Apostle revives the problem of public worship; "when you come together each one hath a psalm." Paul does not question the right of free prayer of the laity; he only demands that each should pray in language generally understood and not in unintelligible glossolalia.²²

One might summarize by saying that the important thing stressed here by Paul is that one must pray thoughtfully. And when done publically it must be understandable to all, that all may be edified.

First Corinthians 15:57. At the end of the great resurrection chapter in First Corinthians Paul breaks forth in an unexpected thanksgiving. "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." The sudden transition to a thanksgiving is similar to three others found in the Pauline Corpus (2 Cor. 2:14; Rom. 7:25; 1 Tim. 1:17). In this passage as in the parallel passages the thanksgiving is directed to God, rather one might say the whole emphasis is upon God. Our victory over death is assured "through our Lord Jesus Christ."

First Corinthians 16:23-24. "Having uttered the great watchword of the waiting church, Maranatha, Paul adds his

²²Frederich Heiler, Prayer: A Study in the History and Psychology of Religion, translated from the German Das Gebet by Samuel McComb. (New York: The Oxford University Press, 1932), p. 307.

personal benediction upon the readers. "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen." The Apostle does not end his letter with a word of warning or severity but adds the usual benediction. "Like a true teacher, as Chrysostom says, he helps not only with counsels, but with prayers."²³ This benediction is shorter than usual, however, the shortest of the Pauline benedictions are found in Colossians (4:18) and First Timothy (6:21), "Grace be with you." Paul adds to the Apostolic benediction a personal blessing of love, "my love be with you all in Christ Jesus." Paul's prayer embraces all of them, even the most faulty, for it is "in Christ Jesus," the "bond of perfectness" and the "bond of peace." "And, being 'in Christ Jesus,' it has nothing of the partiality or fickleness of human affection."²⁴

Second Corinthians

1:2	9:12-15
1:3-11	12:7-9
2:14	13:7
4:15	13:9
8:16	13:14

²³Robertson and Plummer, op. cit., p. 401.

²⁴Ibid., p. 402.

Second Corinthians 1:2. Paul uses the same salutation for the Second Epistle to the Corinthians as the First Epistle. "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Second Corinthians 1:3-11. St. Paul's habit is to begin his letters with an expression of thankfulness for the Christian progress of his correspondents. In First Timothy (1:12) the cause of his thankfulness is the exhibition of the Divine mercy to himself; and this epistle begins with a like thought, from which he passes (verse 14) to his confident belief that the Corinthian Christians are still his boasting. Actually the thanksgiving is divided into two parts, verses three to seven which speak of Paul's thanksgiving for Divine comfort, and verses eight to eleven which speak of the Divine deliverance afforded Paul. Of special note is verse eleven which reads as follows: "You must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessings granted us in answer to many prayers." The exact translation of this passage in the Greek is debatable.²⁵ In general one might say that St. Paul claims here that the sympathy of his converts with him shall be exhibited by their prayers for him. It is noteworthy that the word

²⁵ Alfred Plummer, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians," The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), p. 20.

for prayer here is $\delta\epsilon\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$. Plummer has the following remark concerning this word as used for prayer:

As a word for 'prayer,' $\delta\epsilon\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$ is almost as general as $\pi\rho\alpha\rho\epsilon\upsilon\chi\eta$, with which it is often joined. It is commonly an expression of personal need (see on Lk. 1:13), but is often used of intercession; ix. 14; Rom. x. 1; Phil. i. 4 (see Lightfoot); 2 Tim. i. 3; Heb. v. 7.²⁶

Lenski²⁷ enlarges on the idea of personal need by remarking that it is "petition," "supplication" as of a begger asking for alms. It may be used of asking men as well as of asking God.

Second Corinthians 2:14. In his letters Paul is continually finding cause for thanksgiving. "But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumph, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere." St. Paul generally writes $\chi\alpha\rho\iota\varsigma\ \tau\omega\ \Theta\epsilon\omega$ (cf. 8:16; 9:15; Rom. 6:17; 7:25), but here as in the First Epistle (15:57) in a sudden transition to a thanksgiving he puts $\tau\omega\ \Theta\epsilon\omega$ first with great emphasis.²⁸ The two thanksgivings are similar, for both are irrepressible exclamations of thanksgiving. The thanksgiving here is evoked by the meeting of Titus and the news that all was well in

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Lenski, op. cit., p. 853.

²⁸Plummer, op. cit., p. 67.

Corinth. The remembrance of the victory of God's cause at Corinth leads him to think of the triumph of the Gospel generally. Paul thinks of the progress of the Gospel as a magnificent procession moving onward through the world. Undoubtedly the image the Apostle had in his mind was that of a Roman triumph. He thinks of God as the Victor entering the City into which the glory and honor of the nations is brought. The Apostle as "in Christ," as a member of the Body of Christ, is one of the captives, by means of whom knowledge and fame of the Victor is made manifest. He rejoices that he has been so used by God, as would appear from the tidings which Titus has brought him.

Second Corinthians 4:15. Thanksgiving is here mentioned as increased by the grace of God to the glory of God. "For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God."

Second Corinthians 8:16. "But thanks be to God who puts the same earnest care for you into the heart of Titus." Paul here thanks God for filling Titus with such earnestness for the Corinthians, because he is sending Titus back to Corinth from where he had just come (verse 6). There seems to be a delicate touch in the "for you." The Corinthians might think that the zeal of Titus for the relief-fund was on behalf of the Jerusalem poor; but it was really on their behalf. The Corinthians would be the chief losers if a

suitable sum was not raised.²⁹

Second Corinthians 9:12-15. In the ninth chapter of the Second Epistle Paul speaks of the collection for the saints in Jerusalem. In the latter part of the chapter Paul describes the spirit in which Christians should give for the needs of others and how the grateful receiving of such gifts by these others should lead them to prayer on behalf of the donors. Thus a two-way blessing is created, and the Apostle glorifies God as he contemplates this blessed result. "For the rendering of this service not only supplies the wants of the saints but also overflows in many thanksgivings to God . . . while they long for you and pray for you, because of the surpassing grace of God in you. Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift." One can hardly imagine the joy that must have welled up in the heart of Paul as he contemplates the glorious picture before his eyes. Jewish and Gentile Christians abandoning their mutual distrust and dislike and drawing together in mutual love and help. An expression of the thankfulness burst forth to God, for at last Paul begins to see unity in Christendom for which he has labored so perseveringly; "neither Jew nor Greek," but "all in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28; 1 Cor. 12:13). "Thanks be to God for this inexpressible gift." The "gift" spoken of is the gift of God, not of men. The "inexpressible" gift (cf.

²⁹Ibid., p. 247.

Rom. 11:33; Eph. 3:20) for which the Apostle bursts out here into a characteristic doxology or thanksgiving is the gift of Christ Himself. It is the gift of salvation in Him, thankful appreciation of which had borne such abundant fruit in Christian lives.³⁰

Second Corinthians 12:7-9. The reference here speaks of Paul's thorn in the flesh and reads as follows: "And to keep me from being too elated by the abundance of revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to harass me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I besought the Lord about this, that it should leave me; but he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' I will all the more gladly boast of my weakness, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." There has been endless discussion of Paul's "Thorn in the flesh," and in the final analysis there can be no certain answer to the many problems involved. Plummer in remarking on σκόλοψ τῆ σαρκί' points up the important issues.

These three words raise three questions, two of translation and one of interpretation, which have elicited a very large amount of discussion; and, when all has been said, no certain answer to any one of the three can be given. What is the exact force of the dative?

³⁰ J. H. Bernard, "The Second Epistle to the Corinthians," The Expositors Greek Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), III, 94.

What is the right translation of *σκόλοψ*? What form of suffering is meant by the metaphor?³¹

Of special interest for this paper is verse eight where Paul says, "Three times I besought the Lord about this, that it should leave me." Paul does not say when the thorn was inflicted, but he tells us that he "besought" the Lord three times for its removal. It is noteworthy that Paul uses the Greek word *παρακαλέω*. This is analogous to frequent usage in the Gospels by those who besought Christ for help (cf. Mk. 1:40; 5:18,23; 6:56; 7:32; 8:22). Generally in the New Testament the word is used of exhorting or beseeching men, not God.³² Undoubtedly Paul is following the influence of the Gospel narratives here; the context also substantiates this idea. In verse nine we are told that the thing prayed for is refused, but something much better is bestowed, God's grace, God's forgiveness. God's power has reached its goal. Paul gladly bears the thorn because God's grace has been reached, effected in his weakness. How the Lord conveyed the reply to Paul's prayer we are not told, "but to Paul it was real, and it is not extravagant to believe that, as on the road to Damascus, Christ conversed with him."³³

In crystallizing this discussion let us remember that Paul's thorn in the flesh, affliction, the character of

³¹Plummer, *op. cit.*, p. 348.

³²*Ibid.*, p. 353.

³³*Ibid.*, p. 354.

which is unknown to us, drove him to pray for himself in the midst of his labors. On three occasions Paul made this infirmity the object of special petitions, as our Lord prayed three times in the garden. After the third time God gave His answer. He didn't remove the thorn, He rather taught Paul the sufficiency of His grace in Christ, and showed him that God's strength was made perfect in weakness. This may be considered one of Paul's most personal references to prayer in the Pauline corpus.

Second Corinthians 13:7. In Paul's closing appeal to the Corinthians there are two references to prayer, here and in verse nine. Verse seven reads, "But we pray God that you may not do wrong - not that we may appear to have met the test, but that you may do what is right, though we may seem to have failed." Paul prays that they may do no wrong. Paul is not speaking in general about doing any kind of evil; he is speaking about the specific act, of some way siding with the impenitent sinners in Corinth, so that when Paul arrives he will have to show himself approved by dealing harshly with them. The motive of his prayer was not that his ministry should be accredited by its success, but that they "may do what is right." Paul prays for them, that they may do what is good, noble. Undoubtedly he is thinking of the impenitent sinners in their midst, hoping that when he gets to Corinth he will find the congregation cleansed of impenitent unbelievers, thus making it unnecessary to

exercise his authority.

Second Corinthians 13:9. Paul assures the Corinthians that he prays for them, especially for their improvement, that they may be strengthened and do the things which are God-pleasing. "For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. What we pray for is your improvement." To pray for their improvement, to pray that they may go on to perfection is much more than merely praying that they may do no more evil (verse 7). St. Paul prays that they may continue to grow in all holiness, that God may completely fit out the Corinthians with all the graces they needed.

Second Corinthians 13:14. Paul closes the Epistle with a unique benediction. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." Paul always ends his Epistles with a prayer that Christ's grace may rest upon the recipients. This benediction is the fullest in wording and meaning in the Pauline Epistles. Here only in the Pauline corpus does he expand the benediction to include the three persons of the Trinity. The only other benediction that comes near this in fullness is the one in Ephesians (6:23,24), which however, makes no mention of the Holy Spirit. The benediction includes all, no one is excluded. Though he said some harsh and stern things to some of them, yet his blessing is sent to all, even to the bitterest of his opponents.

Romans

1:7	11:33-36
1:8-12	12:12
1:21	14:6
7:25	15:5-6
8:15-16	15:13
8:26-27	15:30-33
8:34	16:4
10:1	16:20
	16:25-27

Romans 1:7. The salutation found here is similar to the form adopted in all the Pauline letters. "To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." Nygren³⁴ commenting on this says that this benediction is not merely "a powerless wish," but it speaks of "an actual sharing of a spiritual reality." He further remarks: "In this benediction at the beginning of his letter we see, in concise form, the content of the gospel which is to be developed as the letter continues."

Romans 1:8-12. Nothing can take precedence over thanksgiving when Paul thinks of the Roman Christians or any other

³⁴Anders Nygren, Commentary on Romans, translated from the Swedish by Carl G. Rasmussen (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1949), p. 58.

Christian Church, so Paul begins with thanksgiving to God.³⁵ "First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God's will I may now at last succeed in coming to you. For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you, that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine." The Apostle expresses his gratification concerning the Roman Christians, every one of them, because their faith is not hid in a secret corner but is public property. They have testified of their faith to the world that God, whom he worships in his spirit by the preaching of His Son, is "witness" to his continual mention of them in his prayers (cf. 1 Thess. 1:2; Eph. 1:16; Phlm. 4). The burden of his petitions is that God would speed him in due course to a meeting with them, the reason for this meeting being twofold. He desires to strengthen them by imparting to them a spiritual gift, and also to share with them the comfort of mutual faith and edification.

Romans 1:21. This reference to thanksgiving states only as a fact that the heathen, natural humanity, do not

³⁵ James Denney, "St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans," The Expositors Greek Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), II, 587.

thank God or give him due honore. "For although they knew God they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened."

Romans 7:25. "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. . . ." This sudden exclamation of thanksgiving is similar to those found in the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (cf. 2 Cor. 2:14; 8:16; 9:15). This thanksgiving to God arises out of the realization that God has delivered him from sin, death, and the flesh.

Romans 8:15-16. The eighth chapter of Romans speaks of prayer and the Holy Spirit. The first reference to the activity of the Holy Spirit in prayer is found in the fifteenth verse. "For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, "Abba! Father! it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God." The "Abba, Father" occurs also in Mark (14:36) and in Galatians (4:6). This may be considered a prayer. Luther remarked on the "Abba, Father" thus:

The Spirit cries in us because of our weakness. Because of our infirmity the Holy Ghost is sent forth into our hearts to pray for us according to the will of God and to assure us of the grace of God.³⁶

³⁶Luther, op. cit., p. 159.

He furthermore pointed out:

The Spirit intercedes for us not in many words or long prayers, but with groanings, with little sounds like "Abba." Small as this word is, it says ever so much. It says: "My Father, I am in great trouble and you seem so far away. But I know I am your child, because you are my Father for Christ's sake. I am loved by you because of the Beloved." This one little word "Abba" surpasses the eloquence of a Demosthenes and a Cicero.³⁷

Luther stressed the idea that every Christian prays, and asserts with the Apostle Paul that every Christian prays because the Holy Spirit dwells in them, intercedes for them.³⁸ Paul further elaborates on the activity of the Holy Spirit in prayer, verses twenty-six, twenty-seven, and thirty-four of chapter eight.

Romans 8:26-27. "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words. And he who searches the hearts of men knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God." Paul at a high point in His prayer life "experienced that he did not pray himself, but that God gave Him the prayer."³⁹ He realized

³⁷ Ibid., p. 160.

³⁸ William Arndt, Christian Prayer (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1937), p. 20.

³⁹ Adolf Deissman, The Religion of Jesus and the Faith of Paul, translated by William E. Wilson (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1923), p. 247.

the specific help of the Spirit was needed. The Spirit's intercession is within us, praying for us. Paul says we do not even know "how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words." We are not alone in our struggles. The Holy Spirit rescues us in our helplessness, for left to ourselves we do not know what prayers to offer or how to offer them. But in those inarticulate groans which rise from the depths of our being, we recognize the voice of the Holy Spirit. He makes intercession for us, and we are assured that we will be answered, for God Who searches the heart (verse 27) can interpret His own Spirit's meaning. He is sure that His Will governs the petitions, and that they are "offered for men dedicated to His service."⁴⁰ The presence of the Spirit was a very real thing for Paul and he commands the Ephesians (6:18) to "pray at all times in the Spirit." The presence of the Spirit controlling, motivating, activating his prayer life is clearly seen from this eighth chapter of Romans. Koberle sums up the necessity of the Holy Spirit in prayer thus:

Without the gift of the Holy Ghost there may be the most intense attempts at concentration, the strivings of ascetic exercise, the excited emotions of the soul

⁴⁰William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans," The International Critical Commentary (Fifth edition; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1895), p. 39.

but there will be no real, spiritual praying and supplication. God Himself must aid our weakness, must enkindle in us an unspeakable groaning, a great desire and longing that we may be drawn upwards toward God.⁴¹

Romans 8:34. There is a final reference to intercession in the eighth chapter of Romans, the intercession of Christ on behalf of those who are in Christ, saints, the Church, not mankind in general. "It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us?" Paul glories in the assurance of God's eternal, unchangeable love in Jesus Christ. He takes security in the living, powerful Christ who is constantly making intercessions unto the Father for him and all the saints on earth.

Romans 9:5. There are many problems of interpretation and punctuation in this passage.⁴² It is probably best to take this as a doxology to Christ. The doxology undoubtedly flows from Paul's heart when he realizes the privileges which Israel enjoyed.

Romans 10:1. In this verse we see Paul's desire that the Jews might be saved. "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved." Paul cannot get over the plight of the Jews. His "heart's

⁴¹Adolf Koeberle, The Quest for Holiness, translated from the third German edition by John C. Mattes (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1936), p. 172.

⁴²Sanday and Headlam, op. cit., pp. 232-38.

desire," longingly laid before God, is for their salvation.

Romans 11:33-36. A glorious doxology is found in these verses, probably one of Paul's greatest songs of praise. "O the depths of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements and how inscrutable his ways! 'For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?' 'Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?' For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen." The Apostle has now ended his argument. He has vindicated the justice and mercy of God in the rejection of the Jews and the election of the Gentiles on the basis of the merciful purpose of God. He has shown that even unbelief and sin are overruled for Good. Paul then concludes with praise. The eternal decrees of God are beyond man's understanding, but they are both wise and good. The divine acts are all-mysterious. If God condemns, who shall question or annul the decree? We behold His work of redemption and are utterly baffled, for He is God, unsearchable and inscrutable. All things originate from Him, continue through Him, and arrive at their consummation unto Him, for His glory. The ascription of praise is called forth from the Apostle's heart. This noble doxology stands forth as a memorial of the goodness and majesty of God.

Romans 12:12. Paul reminded the Romans that prayer was especially needful, helpful in time of persecution.

"Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer." The Greek word for "constant," *ἵπποκράτειον* is a rather strong word and not only stresses the constancy with which they are to pray, "but the effort that is needed to maintain a habit so much above nature."⁴³ For parallel usage see Colossians (4:2) and Acts (1:14; 2:42).

Romans 14:6. "He who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. He also who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God; while he who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God." Paul connects thanksgiving with a meal, and seeks to show that thanksgiving to God consecrates every meal, whether it be one who abstains from flesh and wine or one who uses both. It is the thanksgiving that consecrates the meal to God.

Romans 15:5-6. A short Pauline prayer is recorded here. "May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Paul has spoken of Christian unity in the latter part of chapter fourteen and the first three verses of chapter fifteen: he is especially concerned about the unity between the two

⁴³Denny, op. cit., p. 692.

great sections of the Church, the Jewish and Gentile Christians. Paul sums up his teaching with the above prayer in which he prays for unity, harmony "in accord with Christ Jesus." As a result of the harmony of life there will be unity and harmony of worship.⁴⁴

Romans 15:13. Paul concludes the section on unity with a benedictory prayer. "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope." The Apostle invokes a blessing upon his hearers, "that their faith may give them a life full of joy and peace, that the power of the Holy Spirit may abound in hope."⁴⁵

Romans 15:30-33. The latter part of chapter fifteen deals with Paul's future plans. In this section Paul asks that they pray to God for him, and then he concludes with a short prayer of his own for the Roman Christians. "I appeal to you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf, that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company. The God of peace be with you all. Amen." Paul's requests

⁴⁴Sanday and Headlam, op. cit., p. 396.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 399.

are first, that he might be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea, i. e., the Jews who were still rejecting the claims of the Messiah; secondly, that his missionary contribution be acceptable to the saints at Jerusalem; thirdly, that his western visit might be unto edification by God's will, and that they both might be refreshed. Paul concludes his request for prayer with a prayer of his own for them. "Peace," a keynote of the Epistle, is one of his last thoughts for them.

Romans 16:4. In the personal greetings at the end of the Epistle Paul sends his greetings to Prisca and Aquila, "who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I but also all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks." Note that the churches united with Paul in this expression of gratitude.

Romans 16:20. St. Paul closed the warning against false teachers with a simple benediction, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."

Romans 16:25-27. The Epistle concludes in a manner unusual in Paul with a doxology or ascription of praise. St. Paul's letters usually end with a benediction although doxologies are not uncommon in the Epistles (Gal. 1:5; Rom. 11:36).⁴⁶ Generally they are not so long or so profound,

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 433.

however, there are parallels (Eph. 3:21; Phil. 4:20; 1 Tim. 1:17). This mighty doxology reads thus: "Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed and through prophetic writings is made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about obedience to the faith - to the only wise God be glory for evermore through Jesus Christ! Amen." Nygren remarks: "In great sentences Paul here allows the total message of the Epistle to the Romans to pass before our eyes."⁴⁷ In considering this mighty doxology Sanday and Headlam sum up as follows:

The doxology sums up all the great ideas of the Epistle. The power of the Gospel which St. Paul was commissioned to preach; the revelation in it of the eternal purpose of God; its contents, faith; its sphere, all the nations of the earth; its author, the one wise God, whose wisdom is thus vindicated--all these thoughts had been continually dwelt on. And so at the end feeling how unfit a conclusion would be the jarring note of vv. 17-20, and wishing to 'restore the Epistle at its close to its tone of serene loftiness,' the Apostle adds these verses, writing them perhaps with his own hand in those large bold letters which seemed to have formed a sort of authentication of his Epistles (Gal. vi. 11), and thus gives an eloquent conclusion to this great argument.⁴⁸

⁴⁷Nygren, op. cit., p. 457.

⁴⁸Sanday and Headlam, op. cit., p. 436.

Philippians

1:2	4:6
1:3-11	4:20
1:19	4:23

Philippians 1:2. The usual Pauline salutation. "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Philippians 1:3-11. Paul follows the salutation with his customary thanksgiving. "I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, thankful for your partnership in the Gospel from the first day until now And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, . . . to the glory and praise of God." Thanksgiving was an outstanding trait of the Apostle's spiritual life, constantly, in every letter with the exception of the Epistle to the Galatians, he inspires his readers to the cultivation of the grace of gratitude. Every prayer of his is suffused with this spirit. The thanksgiving found in this Epistle shows particular earnestness. "The Thanksgiving in this epistle is more than usually earnest," remarks Lightfoot.⁴⁹ Paul's

⁴⁹ J. B. Lightfoot, Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians (London: Macmillan and Co., 1927), p. 82.

earnest thanksgiving is first of all expressed (verses 3-8) to God for the "partnership in the gospel" which he has enjoyed with his converts at Philippi. Paul's thanksgiving is inspired by memory (verse 3), expressed in prayer (verse 4), accompanied with joy (verse 4), and strengthened by the conviction that God Himself will make perfect His work of grace in their lives (verse 6). Paul reveals that this all-pervasive spirit of thanksgiving was constantly with him in all his devotions and led him to specific prayer. "And it is my prayer . . ." (verse 9). Paul prays that their love may grow warmer than it was, but that it be tempered with "knowledge and all discernment." Thus those for whom Paul prayed, being enriched with love, would possess three things: a critical faculty (verse 9-10a), a guileless character (verse 10b), and an upright life (verse 11). The praiseworthy graces and Christian conduct of the Philippians would redound to "the glory and praise of God."

Philippians 1:19. Paul refers to the prayers of the Philippians in this verse. "For I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance." Paul prayed for the Philippians in his supplications (verse 4). Here he assumes that their partnership with him in the furtherance of the Gospel (verse 5), and their partaking with him of grace (verse 7)

is calling out their supplications for him.⁵⁰

Philippians 4:6. This is an interesting verse, for Paul uses four different Greek words to indicate different types or shades of prayer. "Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer [$\tau\eta\ \pi\rho\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\chi\eta$] and supplication [$\tau\eta\ \delta\epsilon\eta\sigma\epsilon\iota$], with thanksgiving [$\epsilon\upsilon\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\tau\iota\alpha\varsigma$] let your requests [$\tau\alpha\ \alpha\iota\tau\eta\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$] be made known to God." Lightfoot in discussing this passage remarks:

While $\pi\rho\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\chi\eta$ is the general offering up of the wishes and desires to God, $\delta\epsilon\eta\sigma\epsilon\iota$ implies special petition for the supply of wants. Thus $\pi\rho\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\chi\eta$ points to the frame of mind in the petitioner, $\delta\epsilon\eta\sigma\epsilon\iota$ to the act of solicitation. The two occur together also in Ephes. vi. 18, I Tim. ii:1, v. 5. In $\alpha\iota\tau\eta\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$, again the several objects of $\delta\epsilon\eta\sigma\epsilon\iota$ are implied.⁵¹

For Paul it seems that $\pi\rho\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\chi\eta$ is the most general and sacred term. It is unrestricted as to content, and is never used of prayer to man, but is addressed to God alone. The word $\delta\epsilon\eta\sigma\epsilon\iota$ implies entreaty of real need, supplication in urgent petition, while $\alpha\iota\tau\eta\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$ indicates a definite plea. It is characteristic of Paul that he reminds the Philippians that their prayers must be accompanied with thanksgiving. Vincent sums up the idea thus:

⁵⁰ Marvin R. Vincent, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Epistles to the Philippians and to Philemon," The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1897), p. 24.

⁵¹ Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 160.

The thanksgiving is to go with prayer, in everything (comp. Col. iii. 17); for although the Christian may not recognise a particular ground of thanksgiving on the special occasion of his prayer, he has always the remembrance of past favors and the consciousness of present blessings, and the knowledge that all things are working together for good for him. (Rom. viii. 28). This more comprehensive application of *εὐχαριστία* may explain the absence of the article, which appears with both *πρωτοκλιμα* and *σημα*, and which Paul uses with *εὐχαρι*, in only two instances (1 Cor. xiv. 16; 2 Cor. iv. 15), where the reason is evident. . . . Thanksgiving expresses, not only the spirit of submission, which excludes anxiety, because it recognises in the will of God the sum of its desires.⁵²

Paul throughout all his letters continually lays great stress upon thanksgiving (cf. Rom. 1:21; 14:6; 2 Cor. 1:11; 4:15; 9:11,12; Eph. 5:20; Col. 2:7; 3:17; 1 Thess. 5:18; 1 Tim. 2:1).

Philippians 4:20. Paul concludes the main body of the Epistle with a short doxology. "To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Philippians 4:23. The closing benediction is almost identical with those found in Philemon (25) and Galatians (6:18). "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."

Philemon

3	22
4-7	25

⁵² Vincent, op. cit., pp. 134-35.

Philemon 3. The salutation: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Philemon 4-7. The Pauline thanksgiving in this Epistle reads as follows: "I thank my God always when I remember you in my prayers, because I hear of your love and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and all the saints, and I pray that the sharing of your faith may promote the knowledge of all the good that is ours in Christ. For I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you." "All that the apostle heard of Philemon caused him to add thanksgiving to his prayers."⁵³ Verse six indicates the content of the prayers mentioned in verse four, "that the sharing of your faith may promote the knowledge of all the good that is ours in Christ." The Apostle prays that, working in the sphere of full knowledge, the sharing of Philemon's faith may prove itself effective.⁵⁴

Philemon 22. Paul hoped to visit Colossae aided by their prayers. "At the same time prepare a guest room for me, for I am hoping through your prayers to be granted to you."

Philemon 25. A common benediction closes the Epistle, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."

⁵³Ibid., p. 178.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 180.

Colossians

1:2	3:17
1:3-8	4:2-4
1:9-14	4:12
2:7	4:18

Colossians 1:2. The opening salutation, benediction of Paul's letter to the Colossians reads thus: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father." This is the only place where the name of the Father alone is mentioned in a Pauline opening salutation, benediction.

Colossians 1:3-8. The thanksgiving in this Epistle is charged with genuine feeling and is used to lead up gradually to the main theme of the letter. Epaphras had been Paul's representative and had brought the Gospel to the Colossians and then reported back to Paul. Hearing of their spiritual welfare from Epaphras Paul gives thanks to God for their "faith in Christ Jesus" and for the "love which you have for all the saints." The full thanksgiving is recorded thus: "We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love which you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of truth, the Gospel which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world

it is bearing fruit and growing--so among yourselves, from the day you heard and understood the grace of God in truth, as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf and has made known to us your love in the Spirit." The less pleasing parts of Epaphras's report are not mentioned in the thanksgiving but left for later discussion.

Colossians 1:9-14. Good reports from Colossae prompts Paul to prayer. "And so, from the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, to lead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." The Apostle prays for the spiritual advancement of the Colossians. The main content of Paul's prayer is that his readers be fortified against the false teaching so prevalent in Colossae. It is because of the threat to the truth from new speculation that the Apostle prays that they "be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and

and understanding." The purpose of spiritual wisdom is practical, that their conduct be pleasing to God. He also prays that they may be strengthened by the power of God to give them endurance and courage to face provocation and trial. He furthermore exhorts them to give thanks to the Father, for he has made them competent to share the lot of the saints in light. In verses thirteen and fourteen Paul explains how God has qualified them for their share in the heavenly inheritance.

Colossians 2:7. Paul here enjoins the Colossians to thanksgiving; it is a Christian duty. Verse six is included to make the thought complete. "As therefore you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so live in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving."

Colossians 3:17. The recurrent emphasis on thanksgiving is found here. "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

Colossians 4:2-4. Paul asks the Colossians to continue steadfast in prayer and thanksgiving, to which is added the Apostle's request that they would pray for him and his fellow workers in their work of spreading the gospel. "Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving; and pray for us also, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on

account of which I am in prison, that I may make it clear, as I ought to speak." He exhorts the Colossians to be steadfast in prayer, that denotes an earnest adherence and attention to prayer.⁵⁵ Furthermore, they are to be watchful; "they are not to be dull and heavy in this great duty, but wakeful and active; comp. Eph. vi. 18, 1 Pet. iv. 7."⁵⁶ The prayer is to be accompanied with thanksgiving, a concomitant act with which the prayer is to be associated. They are especially asked to pray for Paul and his colleagues "that God may open to us a door for the word." The prayer is not for the personal benefit of the Apostle or his companions, but for the promotion and furtherance of their work. He asks that opportunities for the preaching of the gospel may be given them.

Colossians 4:12. "Epaphras, who is one of yourselves, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always remembering you earnestly in all his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God." Epaphras was undoubtedly a native of Colossae or had settled there. The anxiety, concern which he had for the Colossians is manifest in this mention of his prayers for them. He prays that

⁵⁵Charles J. Ellicott, St. Paul's Epistles to the Philippians, the Colossians, and Philemon (Fifth edition; London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1888), p. 207.

⁵⁶Ibid.

nothing will shake them.

Colossians 4:18. "Grace be with you." This short benediction is identical with those found in the First and Second Epistles of St. Paul to Timothy.

Ephesians

1:2	5:20
1:15-19(23)	6:18-19
3:14-21	6:23-24

Ephesians 1:2. "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." The Epistle opens with a benediction in terms of God's unmerited favour to men, and the peace which it brings in the heart. This is Paul's usual form of greeting. He used the composite greeting of grace and peace which unites the common greeting of the Greeks, "'grace,' with that of the Hebrews, 'peace.'" The close connection of "from the Lord Jesus Christ" with "from God our Father" should be considered as strong evidence of the deity of Christ. Such incidental allusions, making Him "equal with God" (John 5:18), have an evidential value of their own.

Ephesians 1:15-19. "For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for your remembering you in my prayers, . . ." The section from

verse seventeen to nineteen may be considered Paul's prayer, and it is possible to include verses twenty to twenty three in prayer. Essentially it makes little difference whether one includes the last five verses or not. Paul says, "I have heard of your faith, I thank God and pray that you may attain a deeper knowledge of the glory of the inheritance, and of the mighty power of God who confers it upon you."

Verse sixteen and seventeen should be considered briefly. Paul's prayers were particular and pointed, and in them there was direct mention of the churches and the believers in which he was interested (Rom. 1:9; 1 Thess. 1:2; Phm, 40). The solemnity that Paul attaches to prayer and the encouragement he found in it are indicated by the title he gives to God (verse 17). Though he prayed much, Paul never brought prayer into contempt by a spirit of thoughtless and irreverent familiarity. He draws encouragement and hope from the relationship of Jesus Christ and God, the Father to whom glory belongs. The prayer seeks for the believers a special gift of the Holy Spirit in relation to knowledge, a "spirit of wisdom and revelation," not in general, but "in the knowledge of him."⁵⁷ "Revelation" here probably means "unveiling" (cf. 2 Cor. 3:12-17). Paul prays here that the experience he already had been given (Eph.3:3)

⁵⁷ Charles J. Ellicott, A Commentary, Critical and Grammatical, on St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (Philadelphia: Smith, English, & Co., 1862), p. 34.

should be granted to his readers. Elementary faith is not sufficient for the later stages of the Christian life. Paul's thankfulness of verse fifteen does not preclude the prayer of verses eighteen and following. It is the purpose of God that knowledge, and other things too, be added to it (2 Pet. 1:5).

Ephesians 3:14-21. This section is an actual prayer of Paul beginning with Paul's statement "I bow my knees before the father. . . ." The prayer for his readers is one which asks for spiritual blessings. He prays that they might be given spiritual strength; that Christ may dwell in their hearts; and that they may learn to know His love, which surpasses knowledge (verses 14-19).⁵⁸

The phrase, "I bow my knees [in prayer] before. . . ." is noteworthy. The customary attitude of prayer among the Jews was that of standing (Mark 11:25; Luke 18:11), but kneeling is mentioned in the New Testament (Luke 22:41; Acts 7:60; Acts 20:36; Acts 21:5). A kneeling posture was expressive of special solemnity or unusual urgency. Ellicott says the "expression is indicative of the earnestness and fervency of his prayer."⁵⁹

⁵⁸T. K. Abbot, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians," The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1897), p. 93.

⁵⁹Ellicott, op. cit., p. 75.

The prayer is addressed to the Father. The *πρὸς* takes the place of the simple dative which usually follows the phrase *καὶ μὲν πρὸς Ἰησοῦ* (Rom. 11:14; Rom. 14:11), the idea here being that the prayer is directed to the Father.⁶⁰

The prayer ends with a mighty doxology. Paul has prayed for great things, but he is conscious that his highest thoughts and aspirations do not strain the resources of God. So he goes further, and prays that God may work far beyond the hopes and imaginings of any human heart, "far more abundantly than all that we ask or think" (verse 20). His hope and assurance is this fact that the power of the Spirit of Christ worketh in us. God is to be glorified "in the church and in Christ Jesus" (verse 21). The Church is the Body of which Christ is the Head, and the two here are looked upon as inseparable.

Ephesians 5:20. Paul here admonished his readers to give thanks always for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. This passage is a third coordinate clause giving a particular way in which being "filled with the Spirit" (verse 18) should express itself. This special form of praise and thanksgiving is described as a constant duty and has to do primarily with ones attitude or spirit. God is to be thanked for all things, even for

⁶⁰S. D. F. Salmond, "The Epistle to the Ephesians," The Expositor's Greek Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951, III, 312.

what is trival and everyday, rather an attitude of thankfulness must prevail through one's whole life.

Ephesians 6:18-19. "Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, and also for me, that utterance may be given me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel." The words, "Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication," is a further explanation of the manner in which the injunction "stand therefore" (verse 14) is to be carried. "This great requirement of standing ready for the combat can be made good only when prayer, constant, earnest spiritual prayer, is added to the careful equipment with all the parts of the panoply."⁶¹ The phrase "with all" simply refers to prayer of every form and it "simply and correctly denotes the earnest (because varied) character of the prayer."⁶² Prayer, *προσευχή* and supplication *δέσμις* differ in this respect, that the former is used only of prayer, whether supplication or not, to God, while *δέσμις* means "request" and may be addressed to God or man⁶³ (cf. Phil. 4:6). The command to pray

⁶¹Ibid., p. 389.

⁶²Ellicott, op. cit., p. 155.

⁶³Abbot, op. cit., p. 187.

"at all times," in every season, on every occasion, in all circumstances corresponds to 1 Thessalonians 5:17, "pray constantly." Furthermore they are commanded to pray in "in the Spirit." This is not a reference to our spirit, to a human spirit, but to the Holy Spirit (Jude 20). It is only by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that we are enabled to pray (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6), yea, and it is the Spirit Himself who intercedes for us (Rom. 8:26). Furthermore, they are to accompany their prayer with watchfulness ("be alert") in regard to themselves and to others, "saints." Thus their prayer is to be comprehensive, continuous, and moving in the domain of the Spirit of God; there must be supplication for all and watchfulness and perseverance in it. Only when we constantly pray in this way for others can we pray for ourselves.

In verse nineteen Paul passes from the requirement of intercession for all to that of intercession for himself, and that with a view to a special gift from God, namely, that he may have freedom to proclaim the mystery of the Gospel for which he is an ambassador. In connection with this verse it is noteworthy that Paul does not request prayers for others than himself, nor does he mention prayers which he offers with his co-workers. He alone is mentioned in the salutation (Eph. 1:1).

Summarizing this reference to prayer we might say that prayer is not to be only an occasional exercise of the soul,

but the Christian will pray always, on all occasions and in respect of everything. And in all times we are to pray under the guidance and constraint of the Holy Spirit. We are to pray not for ourselves alone, but for "all the saints," and to that end we are to be wakeful and alert amid the temptations of sloth and sleep. The humility and earnestness of the great Apostle is seen in his earnest request for special prayer on his behalf, not indeed for ease or rest, but that he might be enabled to fulfill the purposes God had for him.

Ephesians 6:23-24. This benediction concludes the Epistle. "Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love undying." Paul's benedictions are usually addressed directly to the reader, *μειλ' ἑμῶν* or some similar form being employed. This one is addressed to the brethren in the third person, as is perhaps more appropriate in a circular letter. The form is quite general, in conformity with the object of the Epistle and in contrast to Colossians 4:10-18. "Peace" was the ancient Hebrew greeting as "grace" was the Greek. Instead of using his favorite phrase, "grace and peace," as in chapter one, verse two, Paul here separates the two elements. How much "peace" means as it comes from Paul's pen may be seen by a consideration of earlier passages (2:14-17 and 4:3). "Grace" has the definite article before it in the

Greek, pointing to the specific grace more fully named in many passages as "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 16:23; 2 Cor. 13:14; see also 4:7 and 2 Cor. 8:9). The noun *ἀφθαρσία* with which the Epistle closes is elsewhere translated "immortality" (Rom. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:10), while the adjective "imperishable" is found in 1 Cor. 15:42, 50, 53f. The R S V translation "with love undying" is an improvement upon the King James which translates "in sincerity." The love referred to is therefore not a love that springs from earth, but that love of God that "has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us" (Rom. 5:5).

Titus

1:4

3:15

Titus 1:4. Paul's salutation to Titus is: "To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior." Of interest is the fact that Paul uses "Savior" in describing Christ Jesus. Lock commenting on this says: "Christ is placed on the same level as God; the phrase anticipates the stress on salvation from sin in 2:11-14 3:4-7."⁶⁴

⁶⁴Walter Lock, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles," The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924), p. 128.

Titus 3:15. The only other reference to prayer in this epistle is the benediction. "All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all." This benediction is very similar to those in First and Second Timothy, however, "all" is added. This evidently is to include even those to whom he could not send a warm greeting. "This implies that the substance of the letter would become known to the whole church."⁶⁵

First Timothy

1:2 4:3-5

1:12 5:5

1:17 6:16

2:1-7 6:21

2:8

First Timothy 1:2. "To Timothy, my true child in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord." This salutation has one unique feature, the addition of the word "mercy." The addition of this substantive to the usual form of salutation, "grace and peace," is peculiar to the First and Second Epistles of Paul to Timothy. "It here probably serves to individualize

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 159.

and to mark the deep and affectionate interest of the Apostle in his convert."⁶⁶

First Timothy 1:12. The first eleven verses of chapter one are a call to Timothy to oppose false doctrine. Paul appeals to Timothy to rebuke the false teachers "because their teaching does not promote the central spiritual purpose of the true Gospel committed to the writer himself."⁶⁷ Paul then indirectly proceeds to encourage Timothy to a high yet humble view of his calling and to a continued devotion to its discharge. This he does first by a typical, parenthetical thanksgiving, which is quite in St. Paul's manner. "I thank him who has given me strength for this, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful by appointing me to his service." The thanksgiving is expressive of the Apostle's profound thankfulness for God's mercy toward him, for he has entrusted him with the "glorious gospel." The Greek phrase here for "I thank" is *χαίρις ἔχω*. This phrase is found elsewhere in the Pauline writings only in St. Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy (2 Tim. 1:3). Perhaps this was a little stronger than the usual *εὐχαριστῶ*. "I feel and show, I express gratitude."⁶⁸

⁶⁶Charles J. Ellicott, A Critical and Grammatical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles (Second edition; New York: Hurd & Houghton, 1865), p. 20.

⁶⁷Lock, op. cit., p. 3.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 14.

First Timothy 1:17. Paul breaks forth here in a short, glorious doxology. "To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen." There are many similar doxologies in the Pauline corpus (cf. Gal. 1:5; Rom. 11:36; 16:27; Phil. 4:20; Eph. 3:21; 1 Tim. 6:16). White remarks about this doxology:

This noble doxology might be one used by St. Paul himself in one of his eucharistic prayers. It is significant that in the Jewish forms of thanksgiving לְיְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ is of constant occurrence.⁶⁹

First Timothy 2:1-7. Paul begins his general charges to Timothy with an exhortation to prayer in public worship. "First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way. This is good, and it is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, the testimony to which was borne at the proper time. For this I was appointed a preacher and apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth." Paul

⁶⁹Newport J. D. White, "The First and Second Epistles to Timothy," The Expositors Greek Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), IV, 99.

treats here the importance of prayer for all men. "The key-word in this section, as of the Epistle to the Romans, is universality."⁷⁰ It seems probable that Jewish or gnostic heretical teaching was suggesting the restriction of salvation to a particular race or to particular classes. "St. Paul would naturally be anxious that the Christian Church should not fail, as the Jews had done, in recognizing the universality of its mission."⁷¹

In the first verse Paul uses four different Greek terms for prayer. "First of all, then, I urge that supplications [$\delta\epsilon\eta\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$], prayers [$\pi\rho\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\chi\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$], intercessions [$\epsilon\upsilon\tau\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\xi\epsilon\iota\varsigma$], and thanksgivings [$\epsilon\upsilon\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$] be made for all men."

Lock comments on these words as follows:

Probably $\delta\epsilon\eta\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ emphasizes the sense of need, $\pi\rho\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\chi\acute{\alpha}$ the approach to God $\epsilon\upsilon\tau\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\xi\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ (= $\delta\iota\tau\eta\mu\acute{\alpha}\tau\alpha$, Phil 4⁶) the actual petition, but the distinction was not meant to be emphasized: the triad is a favourite feature in St. Paul's style. The connection with 8-15 and the effect of this passage on the Liturgies makes it clear that the primary reference is to public worship,⁷²

For a fuller discussion of $\pi\rho\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\chi\acute{\alpha}$, $\delta\epsilon\eta\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$, and $\epsilon\upsilon\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$, see notes on Philippians (4:6).⁷³

⁷⁰Lock, op. cit., p. 24.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Supra., p. 52.

It is noteworthy that $\epsilon\nu\tau\alpha\upsilon\acute{\xi}\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ occurs here and chapter four verse five only in the New Testament. It also occurs in the Apocrypha (2 Mac. 4:8; 3 Mac. 6:40), and has the meaning of gaining an audience with a king, to present a petition. Thus $\epsilon\nu\tau\alpha\upsilon\acute{\xi}\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ is "a formal petition, especially to a king."⁷⁴ Thus intercession here is "prayer in which God is, as it were, sought in audience."⁷⁵ It would seem that the four words for prayer may be progressive as well as comprehensive, indicating the supplication of one in need, the general outgoing of prayer to God alone, confident boldness of access to God's presence to make known one's requests, accompanied by consequent thanksgiving for mercies enjoyed and prayers answered. Such prayers should primarily be for all men's salvation; but a complementary duty, if Christians are to be free to live as they ought in this world, is to pray for rulers and for all who occupy "high positions," that by their government and rule they may preserve peace and order.

First Timothy 2:8. Paul continues to give guidance concerning prayer in verse eight. "I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling." Paul here points out that in all congregations it should generally be the men who lead in prayer

⁷⁴Lock, op. cit., p. 25.

⁷⁵Ellicott, op. cit., p. 42.

and those who do it should be careful to do it worthily. Whenever Christians meet for worship they are to lift up holy hands in prayer. To "lift up the hands" was a recognized outward expression of the attitude of prayer (cf. Ex. 17:11,12; 1 Kings 8:22; Ps. 28:2). Vincent remarks:

Among Orientals the lifting up of the hands accompanied taking an oath, blessing, and prayer. The custom passed over into the primitive church, as may be seen from the mural paintings in the catacombs.⁷⁶

The conditions of effective prayer are purity and peace with fellow-men. "Holy hands" combines the idea of moral purity . . . with that of consecration, hands like those of consecrated priests, performing the tasks of holy priesthood (1 P 29).⁷⁷ "Anger and quarreling" will also be absent if they have the consecration of Christian love to pray correctly. Those who pray in public are enjoined to secure a right spirit and character if they are to pray correctly.

First Timothy 4:3-5. Thanksgiving and prayer are mentioned in Paul's warning against false teaching in the opening verses of chapter four. "Some will depart from the faith. . . , who forbid marriage and enjoin abstinence from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it

⁷⁶Vincent, op. cit., III, 221.

⁷⁷Lock, op. cit., p. 30.

is received with thanksgiving; for then it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer." Everything which God has made is good and intended for man's use. Nothing, therefore, is to be rejected as absolutely unusable. Rather, Paul teaches that man is to use everything which God has provided after it has been "received with thanksgiving" and "consecrated by the word of God and prayer." Men are to sanctify things to their use in the spirit of thanksgiving, expressed to God in appropriate prayer, particularly prayer itself learnt from the Word of God. The "word of God" is not used here in its general sense of a divine communication to man, but rather as determining the quality of the prayer. It is a scriptural prayer, a prayer in harmony with God's revealed truth.⁷⁸ One might also say that it is prayer through God's utterance, with God's blessing upon it.⁷⁹

First Timothy 5:5. "She who is a real widow, and is left alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day." In speaking of widows Paul says that the genuine widow, in addition to being alone, will commend herself as worthy of support as one who had acquired the habit of looking hopefully to God,

⁷⁸White, op. cit., p. 122.

⁷⁹Lock, op. cit., p. 49.

and devoting herself to long and frequent prayer. The reference to prayers and supplications undoubtedly refer to prayers spoken at meetings of women and private prayers prescribed for widows in private devotions. There were special hymns of praise prescribed for widows to say at night and in the morning.⁸⁰ Those widows who were eligible for Church support continued in prayer and praise to God, at home and in public worship.

First Timothy 6:16. A brief doxology appears here. "To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen." Verses fifteen and sixteen provide a significant description of the unique majesty of God, and to him is ascribed "honor and eternal dominion."

First Timothy 6:20. Paul closes the Epistle with the simple benediction, "Grace be with you."

Second Timothy

1:2 4:18

1:3-5 4:22

1:16-18

Second Timothy 1:2. The salutation to the Second Epistle to Timothy is almost identical with the one found in the First Epistle. "To Timothy, my beloved child: Grace,

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 58.

mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord."

Second Timothy 1:3-5. The thanksgiving in this Epistle is occasioned by the writer's memory and feeling for Timothy, and by some recent reminder of Timothy's faith. "I thank God whom I serve with a clear conscience, as did my fathers, when I remember you constantly in my prayers. As I remember your tears, I long night and day to see you, that I may be filled with joy. I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you." Paul confesses the depth of his feeling towards Timothy, a feeling to which he continually gives expression in his prayers, a feeling which includes the eager yearning to have the joy of seeing Timothy again, instead of the remembrance of tears which he shed when they parted. Above all Paul thanks God as he is reminded in his prayers of the genuineness and sincerity of Timothy's faith, and of the similar faith of his grandmother and mother before him.

Second Timothy 1:16-18. "May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me; he was not ashamed of my chains, but when he arrived in Rome he searched for me eagerly and found me--may the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord on that Day--and you well know all the service he rendered at Ephesus." Onesiphorus had shown mercy to Paul in his need, the Apostle in turn

prays that the Lord would grant mercy to Onesiphorus's household and to Onesiphorus himself in the coming day of divine judgement and reward. The context implies that Onesiphorus was separated from his family, probably dead. "It does not, however, at all follow that the Romanist doctrine of praying for the dead is in any way confirmed by such an admission."⁸¹ This does not mean that Paul is praying for Onesiphorus's well-being as one dead, a practice completely unsupported elsewhere in Scripture. The prayer concerns not the intermediate state at all, but conduct in this life, and reward on the future day of judgement. Such a desire for adequate and fitting recompense can equally be expressed for living or dead, and is in harmony with the teaching of our Lord and the New Testament.

Second Timothy 4:18. "The Lord will rescue me from every evil and save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory for ever and ever. Amen." This doxology is noteworthy for it is addressed to Christ as God. The glory ascribed elsewhere to God is here ascribed to the Son.

Second Timothy 4:22. Paul's final benediction to Timothy reads as follows: "The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you." This benediction is twofold; the first

⁸¹ Ellicott, op. cit., p. 131.

addressed to Timothy personally, the second to Timothy and those with him.⁸²

The inclusion of the Pastoral Epistles in this thesis is not intended to be a judgement upon their authorship. A critical examination of the authorship of the Pastoral Epistles does not lie within the scope of this thesis, therefore, for the purpose of this study the writer has assumed a Pauline authorship. However, the fact that Paul's approach to prayer in the Pastoral Epistles does not deviate from his other Epistles would seem to add weight to the arguments for a Pauline authorship.

⁸² Ibid., p. 182.

CHAPTER III

A WORD STUDY

An examination of the Pauline corpus reveals that Paul used a number of Greek words to designate prayer. In the Apostle's First Epistle to Timothy (2:1) four of the Greek words are grouped together. They are: *σεΐσεις*, *προσευχή*, *ἐντελέχεια*, *ἐὺχαριστία*. Other Greek words used in the Pauline Epistles to be considered are: *τίτημα σοφίας*, *πᾶς καὶ εὐ*. A brief reference to these words and their meaning has been made in the second chapter. This chapter will attempt to give a fuller understanding of the terms involved.

Προσευχή

In Acts (9:11) the Lord told Ananias to seek Saul, after his conversion, "for behold, he is praying," *ἰδοὺ γὰρ προσεύχεται*. In almost every mention of prayer in Acts, the noun *προσ-ευχή* or its verb *προσ-εύχομαι* is used. A survey of the Epistles shows that the most frequent term used by the Apostle to designate prayer is *προσ-ευχή* or *προσ-εύχομαι*. Paul used the term when he gives general instructions to pray in 1 Thess. 5:17; Rom. 12:12; Col. 4:2; 1 Tim. 2:8; and when he requests the readers to pray for himself (1 Thess. 5:25; 2 Thess. 3:1; Rom. 15:30; Phlm. 22; Col. 4:3). Paul mentions his own praying by using the verb

in 2 Thess. 1:11; 2 Cor. 13:7; Phil. 1:9; Col. 1:3. The Apostle uses the noun $\pi\text{ρος-}\epsilon\upsilon\chi\eta'$ in speaking of "our prayers," or "my prayers" (Rom. 1:9; Phlm. 4; Eph. 1:16).

There are a number of interesting uses of these terms in Corinthians. The Apostle uses the verb in instructing those who speak in an unknown tongue to pray that they may interpret (1 Cor. 14:13), and in speaking of praying in an unknown tongue (1 Cor. 14:14; and 15). In speaking of the prayers of husbands and wives (1 Cor. 7:5), he uses the term $\pi\text{ρος}\ \epsilon\upsilon\chi\eta'$. In 1 Corinthians 11:4; 11:5; and 11:13 he uses the terms in speaking about the proper attire of men and women while praying.

According to Thayer,¹ $\pi\text{ρος-}\epsilon\upsilon\chi\eta'$ is a "prayer addressed to God." The verb $\pi\text{ρος-}\epsilon\upsilon\chi\omicron\mu\alpha\iota$, used in the Septuagint for לָקַחַ אֲרָבָה means "to offer prayers, to pray," and is used everywhere of prayers to gods, "or to God."² Greeven in Kittel³ agrees with this meaning.

The words $\pi\text{ρος-}\epsilon\upsilon\chi\eta'$ and $\pi\text{ρος-}\epsilon\upsilon\chi\omicron\mu\alpha\iota$ are closely connected and derived from $\epsilon\upsilon\chi\omicron\mu\alpha\iota$ and $\epsilon\upsilon\chi\eta'$. The

¹ Joseph Henry Thayer, A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament: being Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti (Corrected edition; New York: American Book Co., c. 1889), p. 545.

² Ibid.

³ Gerhard Kittel, Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1935), II, 806.

word $\epsilon\upsilon\chi\eta'$ occurs once in the New Testament in the sense of a prayer "offered in faith" (James 5:15).⁴ Twice in Acts (18:18 and 21:23) it is used of an oath or vow.⁵ The verb $\epsilon\upsilon\chi\omicron\mu\alpha\iota$ is used in the sense of prayer to God in 2 Cor. 13:7; 2 Cor. 13:9; and Acts 26:29.⁶ The verb also has the idea of "wishing" connected with it. Greeven remarks: " $\epsilon\upsilon\chi\omicron\mu\alpha\iota$ auch die Bedeutung wuenschen, bitten annehmen kann (so schon Pindar)."⁷ Trench summarizes the difference in word meanings as follows:

On the distinction between it [$\epsilon\upsilon\chi\eta'$] and $\pi\rho\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\chi\eta'$, between $\epsilon\upsilon\chi\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$ and $\pi\rho\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\chi\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$, there is a long discussion in Origen (De Orat. 2,3,4), but of no great value, and not bringing out more than the obvious fact that in $\epsilon\upsilon\chi\eta'$ and $\epsilon\upsilon\chi\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$ the notion of vow, of the dedicated thing, is more commonly found than that of prayer.⁸

It is interesting to note that $\pi\rho\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\chi\eta'$ is often mentioned with $\delta\epsilon\iota\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$ in the New Testament (Phil. 4:6; Eph. 6:18; 1 Tim. 2:1; 5:5), and not infrequently in the Septuagint (Ps. 6:10; Dan. 9:21,23). A more precise meaning

⁴W. Arndt and F. Gingrich, A Greek--English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature, advanced proofs.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Kittel, op. cit., p. 776.

⁸Richard Chenevix Trench, Synonyms of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1948), p. 188.

of *προσευχή* will be brought out in the discussion of the next Greek word, *δέησις*. Greeven remarks: "Eine genauere Bestimmung der Wortbedeutung wird am besten durch eine Abgrenzung gegen die Synonyma *δέσμιαι*, *δέησις* gewonnen."⁹

Δέησις

The noun *ἡ δέησις* or its verb *δέσμιαι* appear frequently in the Epistles. The Apostle uses the noun in speaking of his own prayer (Rom. 10:1; Phil. 1:4; 2 Tim. 1:3), and the prayers of other Christians (2 Cor. 1:11; 2 Cor. 9:14; Phil. 1:19). St. Paul uses the verb when he speaks of his own praying (1 Thess. 3:10; Rom. 1:10).

Cremer remarks that *δέησις* is used only in the New Testament of prayer, and this in conjunction with *προσευχή*¹⁰. He further expounds:

Δέησις does not denote simply a kind of prayer, namely petition; but it characterizes also and describes prayer generally, the *προσευχή*, which, by virtue of the relation of man to God is request and supplication, *διὰ δέησεως προσεύχεσθε*, Eph. vi. 18;"¹¹

The verb *δέσμιαι* can mean to ask (Lk. 8:38; Acts

⁹ Kittel, op. cit., p. 806.

¹⁰ Herman Cremer, Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek, translated from the German second edition by William Urwick (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1878), p. 174.

¹¹ Ibid.

26:3), and this idea predominates in the Septuagint.¹² In Acts 21:9; Lk. 8:28; Gal. 4:12; 2 Cor. 5:20 it is used in the sense "(I) beg (of you), or . . . please allow me" ¹³ However, it is used especially of prayer, prayer to God.¹⁴

The distinction between *προσευχή* and *δέησις* is interesting. Trench,¹⁵ following Calvin, makes *προσευχή* a prayer in general while *δέησις* refers to a prayer for particular benefits. A further distinction between these two words is found in the fact that *προσευχή* is restricted to sacred uses, and always refers to prayer to God: *δέησις* has no such restrictions and may be used of a request addressed to men.¹⁶ Greeven's distinction is quite similar to Trench's distinction.

Προσευχή bezeichnet das Gebet im umfassendsten Sinne; *δέησις* kann darüber hinaus noch die speziellere Bedeutung des Bittgebetes haben, und in dieser Möglichkeit besteht die Sonderfarbe dieses Wortes.¹⁷

¹²Arndt and Gingrich, op. cit., p. 155.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Kittel, op. cit., p. 40.

¹⁵Trench, op. cit., p. 189.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Kittel, op. cit., p. 807.

A further discussion of the distinction between these two words may be found in chapter one (cf. Phil. 4:6; Eph. 6:18-19; 2 Tim. 1:1).

Ἐντεύξις

The noun Ἐντεύξις occurs in the New Testament only in St. Paul's First Epistle to Timothy (2:1; 4:5) and is translated "intercessions" and "prayer." The verb ἐντεύχωνται occurs a number of times and does not seem to be a designation for human prayer. It is the word used to describe the intercession of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:26,27) and the intercession of Christ (Rom. 8:34). It is also used in Romans 11:2-4 when Elijah pleads with God against Israel.

For the basic meaning of ἐντεύχωνται Arndt and Gingrich give: "meet, turn to, approach, appeal, petition."¹⁸ In Acts 25:24 it is used with περί τινος, "gen. of person, for the purpose of consulting about a person."¹⁹ Trench in discussion this word says that ἐντεύχωνται means:

to fall in with a person, to draw close to him so as to enter into familiar speech and communion with him (Plutarch, Conj. Praec. 13), implies, it is free familiar prayer, such as boldly draws near to God.

¹⁸ Arndt and Gingrich, op. cit., p. 238.

¹⁹ Thayer, op. cit., p. 219.

²⁰ Trench, op. cit., p. 190.

Paul's use of this word reveals to us the real nature of his communion with God in prayer, and the significance of the Holy Spirit's intercession.

¹ ἔντροχάειν . . . is not to make intercession but to intervene, interfere. Thus, in Romans 8:26 it is not that the Spirit pleads on our behalf, but that He throws Himself into our case; takes part in it. So Heb. 7:25; not that Jesus is ever interceding for us, but that He is eternally meeting us at every point, and intervening in all our affairs on our behalf. In ² ἐν τῷ ἔσει here [1 Tim. 1:2] the idea of interposition is prominent; making prayers a factor in relations with secular rulers.²¹

The use of the word ² ἔντροχάειν in Romans (8:26,27,34) for the intercession of the Holy Spirit and Christ seems to indicate that Paul used this particular word to stress the idea of boldness, freedom with which Christ and the Holy Spirit intercede for us. It is Christ and the Holy Spirit which may even interrupt us in our speaking, praying to intercede for us, thus, this type of intercession becomes the highest type of prayer.

Having discussed the three words, ¹ προσευχή, ² δεήσις, and ³ ἔντροχίς, individually it might be well to sum up the different shades of meaning in the words of Thayer. His comment is as follows:

Δεήσις, προσευχή, ἔντροχίς : πρ, as Prof. Grimm remarks, is unrestricted as respects its contents, while ² δ is petitionary; moreover πρ is a word of sacred character, being limited to prayer to God,

²¹ Marvin R. Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), IV, 216.

whereas δ . may also be used of a request addressed to men. . . . $\epsilon\lambda\tau\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\iota\varsigma$, which expresses confiding access to God; thus, in combination, $\delta\epsilon\lambda\tau\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ gives prominence to the expression of personal need, $\pi\phi\sigma\tau\epsilon\upsilon\kappa\epsilon\iota$ to the element of devotion, $\epsilon\lambda\tau\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ to that of childlike confidence, by representing prayer as the heart's converse with God.²²

$\epsilon\upsilon\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\tau\iota\alpha$

A frequent word found in the Pauline prayer which must be regarded as one manner of prayer is $\epsilon\upsilon\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\tau\iota\alpha$ or its verb $\epsilon\upsilon\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\upsilon\omega$. The noun $\epsilon\upsilon\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\tau\iota\alpha$ is translated by the R S V in Acts 24:3 as "gratitude." The most frequent meaning is "thanksgiving, the rendering of thanks."²³ This thanksgiving, or grateful acknowledgement of past mercies is found in 1 Cor. 14:16; 2 Cor. 4:15; 9:11; Eph. 5:4; Phil. 4:6; Cor. 2:7; 4:2; 1 Thess. 3:9; 1 Tim. 2:1; 4:3; Rev. 4:9; and 7:12. Thanksgiving is mentioned or given in these passages for the blessings of God.

$\epsilon\upsilon\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\tau\iota\alpha$ also has a special meaning, "the observance and elements of the Lord's Supper: Lord's Supper, Eucharist $\pi\omicron\tau\eta\rho\iota\omicron\nu\ \tau\eta\varsigma\ \epsilon\upsilon\chi$. 1 Cor. 10:16. . . ."²⁴

The verb $\epsilon\upsilon\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\upsilon\omega$, which is used in later Greek both in the sense of feeling thankful and in that of giving

²²Thayer, op. cit., p. 126.

²³Arndt and Gingrich, op. cit., p. 288.

²⁴Ibid.

thanks, occurs in none of the New Testament Epistles except those bearing Paul's name. In the Pauline Epistles it is found some twenty six times. It appears once in Revelation, twice in Acts, and more frequently in the Gospels. The Apostle gave thanks "to God" (Acts 28:15; 1 Cor. 14:18; Phil. 1:3; Col. 1:3; 12; 3:17; Phlm. 4). Paul gives thanks before meals (Acts 27:35; Rom. 14:6; 1 Cor. 11:24). St. Paul tells us that he gives thanks through Christ, "by Christ's help (because both the favors for which thanks are given and the gratitude which prompts the thanks are due to Christ . . ." ²⁵ (Rom. 1:8; 7:25; Col. 3:17).

Thanksgiving to God was an integral part of Paul's life. In expressing this thanksgiving the Apostle used the Greek noun εὐχαριστία and its verb εὐχαριστέω.

Αἰτήματα

In Philippians (4:6) the interesting word *αἰτήματα* occurs. *Αἰτήματα* occurs twice in the New Testament in the sense of a petition of men to God, both times in the plural (Phil. 4:6; 1 John 5:15). Staehlin²⁶ says that *αἰτήματα* is a verbal substantive from the verb *αἰτέω* and is used in a passive sense. The meaning of *αἰτήματα* as given by

²⁵Thayer, op. cit., p. 263.

²⁶Kittel, op. cit., I, 193.

Cremer is: "A request, like the German Forderung, in a passive sense, that which I have to ask for, from which . . . does not differ."²⁷ Of special interest is its use in Philippians (4:6). On its use in this passage Cremer remarks:

The meaning is not that *αἰτήματα* are to be presented as prayer and request before God in the form of *Σησεις*, but they are to be presented *μετὰ ἐπισησιασίας*. As the emphasis lies upon *μετὰ* *ἐπισησιασίας* and *αἴτη* differ respectively as form and subject matter.²⁸

The relationship of *αἰτήματα* with the more frequent word used for prayer in the Pauline corpus, *προσευχή*, is found in Trench's discussion of this word.

In a *προσευχή* of any length there will probably be many *αἰτήματα*, these being indeed the seven requests of which the *προσευχή* is composed. For instance, in the Lord's Prayer it is generally reckoned that there are several *αἰτήματα*, though some have regarded the first three as *εὐχαί*, and only the last four as *αἰτήματα*.²⁹

Αἰτήματα always emphasises the object, the thing asked for.

Παπα-Καδέω

Παπα-Καδέω is not a customary term used by Paul for prayer, however, it is noteworthy that he uses this term

²⁷ Cremer, op. cit., p. 73.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Trench, op. cit., p. 191

in speaking of his prayer for the removal of his thorn in the flesh. The Apostle tells us that he "besought" the Lord three times that the affliction might pass from him (2 Cor. 12:8). The verb *παρά-καλέω* in the New Testament usually means "to address, speak to" and frequently, as here, is translated "to beg, entreat."³⁰

It is noteworthy that Paul uses this term, *παρά-καλέω*, when speaking about the one clear petition for an earthly blessing. It would seem that when the Apostle prayed for this blessing even his terminology indicates that such prayer was not so confidently offered as when he asked for spiritual blessings.

δοξάζω

The verb *δοξάζω* ought to be mentioned briefly in connection with words used for expressing prayer. The doxologies of Paul are a type of prayer, praise. The Apostle uses the verb *δοξάζω* a number of times (2 Thess. 1:12; Gal. 1:24; 1 Cor. 6:20; 2 Cor. 9:13; Rom. 1:21; 15:6,9). The verb in its classical sense means to "think," however, this use is foreign to the New Testament.³¹ It primarily means to "praise, extol, magnify, celebrate"³²

³⁰Thayer, op. cit., p. 482.

³¹Thayer, op. cit., p. 157.

³²Ibid.

in the New Testament. The Apostle uses it in Gal. 1:24 thus: "and they glorified God because of me." Paul also uses this verb in 2 Thess. 1:12; 2 Cor. 9:13; and Rom. 15:6,9. The verb may also be used in the sense of honor, "to honor, do honor to, and hold in honor"³³ (Rom. 1:21; 1 Cor. 6:20).

The Apostle Paul uses a number of Greek terms to describe his communion, his prayer with God. This word study has attempted to point up the different distinctions and colorings given to the individual words. However, in the final analysis the distinctions are slight, and meanings quite similar. In speaking of the etymology of the different words McEwen remarks:

Owing to lack of fixity in their usage, there is comparatively little to be gained from a study of the etymology of the dozen Heb. and Gk. words used to denote aspects of prayer.³⁴

This seems to be an oversimplification of the matter. There are different shades of meaning, the etymology does add understanding to the type, nature, and attitude of the prayer spoken of. Trench summarizes the study adequately thus:

³³Ibid.

³⁴J. S. McEwen, "Prayer," A Theological Wordbook of the Bible, edited by Alan Richardson (New York: Macmillan, 1951), p. 169.

Thus much on the distinction between these words; although when all has been said, it will still to a great extent remain true that they will often set forth, not different kinds of prayer, but prayer contemplated from different sides and under different aspects.³⁵

³⁵Trench, op. cit., p. 192.

It is no easy task to do, especially one might say that the content of the Apostle's prayers could be described as petitions and thanksgiving. In the final analysis all communion with God can be described as thanksgiving and petition.¹ Dr. Arnold² goes further to substantiate this idea: "There are only two ways of dealing with God, namely, by thanksgiving and petition."³ However, this writer has chosen to classify Paul's prayers into the following categories: salutations and closings, greetings, intercessions, thanksgiving, and doxologies. The classification is an arbitrary one and many of the passages may fit under one or several headings, many could serve interchangeably. This classification is merely an attempt to make Paul's prayer life more meaningful and understandable. The classification also serves to point up certain characteristics of Pauline prayer, and gives us an insight into Paul as an exemplar in Christian prayer.

¹William Arnold, Christian Prayer (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1937), p. 19.

²Ibid., p. 20.

CHAPTER IV

TYPES OF PRAYER

It is difficult to itemize or classify Paul's praying. It is so comprehensive, so discursive, and concerns itself with so many minute details that it is no easy task to do. Basically one might say that the content of the Apostle's prayers could be described as petitions and thanksgiving. In the final analysis all communion with God can be described as thanksgiving and petitions.¹ Dr. Arndt² quotes Luther to substantiate this idea: "There are only two ways of dealing with God, namely, by thanksgiving and petitions." However, this writer has chosen to classify Paul's prayers into the following categories: salutations and closing greetings, intercessions, thanksgivings, and doxologies. The classification is an arbitrary one and many of the passages may fit under one or several headings, many could serve interchangeably. This classification is merely an attempt to make Paul's prayer life more meaningful and understandable. The classification also serves to point up certain characteristics of Pauline prayer, and gives us an insight into Paul as an exemplar in Christian prayer.

¹William Arndt, Christian Prayer (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1937), p. 19.

²Ibid., p. 20.

Salutations and Closing Greetings

The salutations and closing greetings in each Epistle of Paul show us that the Apostle prayed for believers. The beginnings and endings of Paul's Epistles are more than mere concessions to polite procedure in letter writing. The first and last words contain Christian sentiments, prayers. The following is a listing of salutations and closing greetings as found in the Epistles. The listing is taken from *Das Gebet in der aeltesten Christenheit*, by Edward Freiherrn von der Goltz.

Salutations in the epistles: Rom. 1,7; 1 Cor. 1,3; 2 Cor. 1,2; Gal. 1,3; Eph. 1,2; Phil. 1,2; Col. 1,2; 1 Thess. 1,1; 2 Thess. 1,2; Philem. 3.

The closing greetings: Col. 4,18; Rom. 16,20; 1 Cor. 16,23; Gal. 6,18; Phil. 4,23; 1 Thess. 5,28; 2 Thess. 3,18; Philem. 25; 2 Cor. 13,13; Eph. 6,24.

Andere Segenswuensche, diesen Schluszengegen unmittelbar vorhergehend oder anderwaerts eine Gedankenreihe abschliessend, finden sich an folgenden Stellen: Rom. 15,5.6.13.33; 16,20; 1 Cor. 1,8; 2 Cor. 13,11; Gal. 6, 16; Eph. 6,23; Phil. 4,3.9.19; 1 Thess. 3,12; 5,23; 2 Thess. 2,16.17; 3,3.5.16.³

The content and meaning of the above salutations and closing greetings have been discussed in chapter two. Suffice it is to say here that every Pauline Epistle contains a pronouncement of grace and peace from the Father and

³Edward Freiherrn von der Goltz, Das Gebet in der Aeltesten Christenheit, eine geschichtliche Untersuchung (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrickssche Buchhandlung, 1901), p. 115.

the Son, which occurs at or near the beginning of the Epistle. The terminology is similar with slight variations in the words themselves or in word order. The usual ending is "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," however, there are deviations. It is noteworthy that the "grace of Jesus Christ" is emphasized in the salutations and closings of Paul's Epistles. "The grace of Jesus Christ is of decisive importance in the matter of salvation," and therefore is continually stressed by the Apostle, even in the salutations and closing greetings.⁴

Edward Freiherrn von der Goltz summarizes Pauline salutations and closing greetings thus:

Als indirekte Zeugnisse fuer den Inhalt der Fuerbitten des Apostles fuer seine Gemeinden sind endlich auch die Segenwuensche zu betrachten, die der Apostle am Anfang oder Schluss seiner Briefe, zuweilen auch am Schluss eines einzelnen Abschnitts, ausspricht. Sind dies auch nicht im eigentlichen Sinn des Worts an Gott gerichtete Gebete, so sind es doch sicherlich im Herzen des Apostels seinem Gott vorgetragene Wuensche fuer das Heil seiner Leser. Ihr Inhalt ist ueberall ziemlich der gleiche. Sowohl in den ganz regelmæssig wiederkehrenden Anfangs - und Schluss - gruessen, wie auch in den Segenwuenschen, in welche die Ermahnung des Apostels zuweilen ausklingen, wuenscht Paulus seinen Lessern: Gnade, Friede, Liebe, Eintracht und Bewahrung bis auf den Tag Jesu Christi, also wesentlich dasselbe, was er selbst in den angefuehrten Stellen als Inhalt seiner Fuerbitten nennt.⁵

⁴Oalf Moe, The Apostle Paul, His Message and Doctrine, translated by L. A. Vigness (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1954), p. 47.

⁵Goltz, op. cit., p. 115.

Intercessions

St. Paul placed intercession at the center of his prayer life. In writing to the Ephesians he says, "Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication," (Eph. 6:18) and again when he addressed Timothy he said: "I urge that supplication, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men" (1 Tim. 2:1). The Apostle continually, "night and day," made intercessions for his readers. Paul was a strong believer in the value of intercession, whether of others for him or of himself for others. In speaking of Pauline intercession McEwen remarks:

In the Pauline epistles the duty of intercession for the Christian brotherhood is stressed. Not only does Paul constantly pray for his converts, but he begs them to intercede for him (Rom. 15,30, II Thess. 3.1, etc.). He does not stress intercession for the heathen (cf. John 17.9), but this is implicit in his prayers for the success of the Gospel.⁶

Paul was a master in the art of intercessory prayer.

Vorwerk says: "ein meister is Paulus in der Kunst der Fuerbitte."⁷

⁶J. S. McEwen, "Prayer," A Theological Wordbook of the Bible, edited by Alan Richardson (New York: Macmillan, 1951), p. 171.

⁷Dietrich Vorwerk, Gebet und Gebetserziehung (Schwerin i. Mecklb.: Verlag von Friedrich Bahn Hofbuchhaendler, 1913) p. 580.

The Pauline corpus gives us a number of instances in which intercession is solicited by Paul. Paul asks people to pray for him in the following passages: Rom. 15:30-32; 2 Cor. 1:11; Eph. 6:19,20; 1 Thess. 5:25; 2 Thess. 3:1; Phil. 1:19; and Phlm. 22.

There are many examples of intercessions by Paul, the following are instances of Pauline intercession: Rom. 1:9; Rom. 10:1; 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 9:14, 2 Cor. 13:7, Gal. 6:16; Eph. 1:16-19; Eph. 3:14; Phil. 1:4,9,10; Col. 1:3; 1 Thess. 1:2; 1 Thess. 3:10; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Thess. 1:11; 2 Thess. 2:16; 2 Thess. 3:5, 2 Tim. 1:13; 2 Tim. 1:18; 2 Tim. 2:7, 2 Tim. 4:16; Phlm. 4.

The above passages illustrate the importance of intercession in the prayer life of the Apostle. A remark by Heiler summarizes Pauline intercession.

Paul has put intercessory prayer at the very center of the devotional life of the Christian. He himself, the great missionary and pastor, was a master of the art of intercessory prayer. He prays unceasingly for the salvation and spiritual growth of his churches, and exhorts them unceasingly to pray for themselves and for their brethren.⁸

⁸ Frederick Heiler, Prayer: A Study in the History and Psychology of Religion, translated from the German Das Gebet by Samuel McComb (New York: The Oxford University Press, 1932), p. 124.

Thanksgivings

In the Pauline Epistles there are frequent references to thanksgiving by the Apostle. The importance Paul attached to thanksgiving can be illustrated by his words to the Ephesians, "always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father" (Eph. 5:20). Also in 1 Tim. 2:1 the Apostle designates "thanksgiving" as one of the two types of prayer.

In Acts 28:15; Rom. 14:6; Col. 1:3; and 1 Tim. 1:12 we have examples of Paul giving thanks. The Epistles give us instances of Paul giving thanks before taking food (Acts 27:35; Rom. 14:6; 1 Cor. 10:30; 1 Tim. 4:3). And Paul also enjoins others to thankfulness, even as he has done (Eph. 5:20; Phil. 4:6; Col. 1:12; Col. 2:7; Col. 3:17; Col. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:18; 1 Tim. 4:3).

Thanksgiving was a very real thing to Paul and is connected with his whole life as a Christian. His thanksgivings were often spontaneous, arising out of a particular situation or incident. Vorwerk remarks:

Wie bei Luther tritt bei Paulus sehr stark Dank - und Lobgebet hervor. Ausser fuer die gemeinsamen Heilsguetter aller Christen and fuer persoendlich Gnade, die ihm, dem Paulus, zuteil geworden ist, dankt er besonders fuer geistlichen Segen, Glauben, Gehorsam, Liebe, Gedult, Erkenntness, welche Gott den Gemeinden geschenkt hat.⁹

⁹Vorwerk, op. cit., p. 581.

To illustrate further the scope of Pauline thanksgiving the following summary is presented of Pauline thanksgiving. St. Paul says that thanksgiving, thankfulness should be offered to Christ (1 Tim. 1:12); through Christ (Rom. 1:8; Col. 3:17); in the name of Christ (Eph. 5:20); in behalf of ministers (2 Cor. 1:11); in everything (1 Thess. 5:18); before taking food (Acts 27:35); always (Eph. 1:16; 5:20; 1 Thess. 1:2); for the gift of Christ (2 Cor. 9:15); for the reception and effectual working of the word of God in others (1 Thess. 2:13); for the deliverance through Christ from indwelling sin (Rom. 7:23-25); for victory over death and the grave (1 Cor. 15:57); for the triumph of the gospel (2 Cor. 2:14); for faith exhibited by others (Rom. 1:8, 2 Thess. 1:3); for love exhibited by others (2 Thess. 1:3); for the grace bestowed on others (1 Cor. 1:4; Phil. 1:3-5; Col. 1:3-6); for zeal exhibited by others (2 Cor. 8:16); for appointment to the ministry (1 Tim. 1:12); for the supply of our bodily wants (Rom. 14:6,7; 1 Tim. 4:3,4); for all men (1 Tim. 2:1); and for all things (2 Cor. 9:11; Eph. 5:20).

It is interesting to note that Paul commands thanksgiving to be accompanied with intercession (1 Tim. 2:1; 2 Tim. 1:3; Phlm. 4). Furthermore, he writes that thanksgiving should always accompany prayer (Phil. 4:6; Col. 4:2). Paul seems to connect intercession and thanksgiving, and often puts them in an intimate relation. Heiler, in

speaking of giving thanks, its significance and relationship to petition, remarks:

The giving of thanks is the joyful acknowledgement that God has granted His grace or benefit. The worshipper confesses that his outer or inner happiness is God's free gift, his gratitude is thus a sign of his entire dependence upon God. As at the primitive level, the prayer of thanksgiving frequently stands in intimate relation with the prayer of petition; that is when a request has already been heard. The objects of thanksgiving are likewise preeminently religious and ethical blessings.¹⁰

"The hidden source of strength for St. Paul in the edification of the Church is to continue in thanksgiving and intercession 'without ceasing'."¹¹ The Apostle continually exhorted the church to continue in prayer, to pray with intercessions and thanksgivings, "that they might grow strong in the Lord and that His Word might not be hindered"¹² (Acts 9:11; 14:23; Col. 1:3-10; 1 Thess. 1:2; 2:13; 2 Thess. 1:11; Eph. 1:15-17; Phil. 1:3-6; 1:19; 4:6; Rom. 1:8-10; 12:12; 15:30).

For an interesting, exhaustive study of Pauline thanksgivings at the beginning of each Epistle see: The Form

¹⁰ Heiler, op. cit., p. 271.

¹¹ Adolf Koeberle, The Quest for Holiness, translated from the third German edition by John C. Mattes (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1936), p. 173.

¹² Ibid.

and Function of the Pauline Thanksgivings by Paul Schubert
(note especially pages 183 and 184).¹³

Doxologies

No study of Pauline prayer would be complete without some consideration of his doxologies. They may be considered thanksgiving, yet they seem to form a type of praise which is higher, more complete. The doxologies are characterized by a fullness of expression which is lacking in Paul's usual address to God. Heiler discusses the doxology thus:

The primitive Christian Church adopted the doxology, (a solemn acknowledgment of the sovereign majesty and boundless might of God) as a conclusion to prayer: but it simplified an expanded form of homage into a plain, powerful, and pithily brief expression of praise. St. Paul, in the commencement and close of his letters, regularly falls into solemn liturgical language.¹⁴

Paul ascribes praise and honor to God, or the Father, or Christ or both in the following doxologies: Gal. 1:5; 2 Cor. 1:3; Rom. 16:27; Phil. 1:11; Phil. 4:20; Eph. 1:3; Eph. 3:14; Eph. 3:21; 1 Tim. 1:17; 1 Tim. 6:15-16. Other doxologies are found in Rom. 9:5; Rom. 11:36; and 2 Tim. 4:18. In Acts 16:25 Paul and Silas sang praises to God, undoubtedly they sang some doxology.

Paul also speaks of "glorifying" God in 2 Thess. 1:12;

¹³Paul Schubert, Form and Function of the Pauline Thanksgivings (Berlin: Verlag von Alfred Topelmann, 1939).

¹⁴Heiler, op. cit., p. 333.

Gal. 1:24; 1 Cor. 6:20; 2 Cor. 9:13; Rom. 1:21; Rom. 15:6,9.

Perhaps the most fitting way to end this discussion of Pauline doxologies, as well as the other main types of prayer, petitions and thanksgivings, is to quote one of the most beautiful doxologies found in the Pauline corpus (1 Tim. 6:15-16). "Jesus Christ . . . the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen."

Prayers for Himself

The apostle seldom prayed for himself. In only a few instances do the Pauline Epistles mention or record a prayer of Paul for himself. Twice he prays that he might see a group of Christians: in 1 Thess. 3:11 he prays that God would direct his way to the Thessalonians, and in Rom. 1:10 he requests safe conduct to Rome that he may impart some spiritual gift to the Roman Christians. It is noteworthy that in these personal requests his purpose is to bless or impart some spiritual gift to the readers. He cannot, therefore, classify these so strictly personal prayers, for personal blessings. The Apostle also prays for deliverance from wicked and evil men (2 Thess. 3:1-2), but here also the purpose is the preaching of Gospel. Perhaps the

CHAPTER V

A FURTHER ANALYSIS OF PAULINE PRAYERS

The prayers of the Apostle Paul are unique for they are the prayers of a man in Christ. The constituent factors of Pauline prayer are a witness to the power of the Gospel at work in the heart and life of a man. The analysis in this chapter is designed to give a deeper insight into Pauline prayer and to emphasize certain pertinent truths. The divisions are arbitrary and serve only to call attention to some basic factors in Pauline prayer.

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most personal reference to prayer in the Pauline corpus is found in 2 Cor. 12:7-9. Here we are told that Paul "besought" the Lord three times concerning his thorn in the flesh. It is noteworthy, however, that Paul does not use a normal word for prayer. Rather the Apostle uses the verb *ἑκείνην κηδεύω* meaning to "beseech." The use of this word would seem to indicate that Paul was rather hesitant in approaching God in the usual way, for this is usually the word used of exhorting, beseeching men rather than God.

The Apostle asked his readers to pray for him in seven other instances, they are: Rom. 15:30-32; Col. 4:3-4; Eph. 6:19; 1 Thess. 5:25; 2 Cor. 1:11; Phil. 1:19; and Phlm. 22. In these instances as well as those mentioned above the Apostle is concerned with the furtherance of God's Kingdom. His prayers for himself have a marked extra-personal character. Paul is concerned for his readers and their relationship to God; his own personal welfare is of little concern compared to the spiritual conditions and state of his readers.

Prayers for His Readers

Paul not only prayed for himself but he made a practice of praying for others. Paul prayed much for his readers.¹

¹Andrew Murray, The Prayer Life (Chicago: Moody Press, n. d.), p. 82.

Whyte remarks, "we have little else indeed of the prayer-kind drawn out in any length from Paul's pen but prayer for other people."² Paul was preeminently an intercessor, and he urged intercessory prayer on others. Paul's concern for his readers is evident from the frequency with which he prayed for them.

The things for which Paul prays gives us insight into Paul as a man of God. Paul offered prayer for all things, for all temporal good, and for all spiritual good and grace. In the majority of his recorded prayers he asked the Lord to grant spiritual blessings unto his readers. Thus Heiler remarks:

Paul intercedes for the spiritual health of the Churches; he beseeches God to give them "a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him"; that their "love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment."³

Paul's main concern in his prayers was centered on the growth in faith, love, and knowledge. He believed that his prayers were a real factor in their spiritual life and development. Whyte stresses Paul's praying for spiritual growth by saying that Paul prayed always, without ceasing:

²Alexander Whyte, Bible Characters (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1952), II, 240.

³Frederich Heiler, Prayer: A Study in the History and Psychology of Religion, translated from the German Das Gebet by Samuel McComb (New York: The Oxford University Press, 1932), p. 247.

to make Jesus Christ our continual atonement for our sins, and our continual sanctification from our sinfulness. If we know sin at all aright, and Christ at all aright, then this will be the proof that we do so-- we will pray for pardon and for a holy heart, literally, without ceasing.⁴

The earlier chapters have discussed the content of Paul's prayers, however, the following passages are given to illustrate that when the Apostle prayed for his readers he thought almost entirely of their spiritual state and growth.

1 Thessalonians 3:10-13. "Praying earnestly night and day that we may . . . supply what is lacking in your faith . . . the Lord make you increase . . . so that he may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness . . .".

1 Thessalonians 5:23. "May the God of peace sanctify you wholly . . .".

2 Thessalonians 2:16,17. "Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, . . . comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word."

Rom. 10:1. "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved."

Ephesians 1:16-19. "I do not cease to give thanks for you remembering you in my prayers, that God . . . may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him . . . that you may know . . . what is the immeasurable greatness of his power in us who believe."

⁴Whyte, op. cit., p. 238.

Ephesians 3:14-19. "For this reason I bow my knees before the Father . . . that he may grant you to be strengthened with might through his Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love . . . might be filled with all the fullness of God."

Philippians 1:4-11. "Always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, . . . And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruits of righteousness which come through Jesus Christ, . . .".

Colossians 1:9-11. "We have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will . . . to lead a life worthy of the Lord, . . . strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might."

From the above passages and the other prayers of Paul it is evident that there are few petitions concerning the bodily welfare of readers. In 1 Thess. 5:23 the Apostle prays that their "spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." In 1 Tim. 2:2 he urges that "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, . . . that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and

respectful in every way." When Paul prayed for his readers he thought almost entirely of their spiritual state and growth. The content of his recorded prayers bear this fact out. Dr. Arndt, in speaking of Pauline prayer, quotes an English scholar who divides the content of Paul's prayer into thirteen special kinds:

prayers for the abounding charity; for entire sanctification; for the good pleasure of God; for everlasting consolation; for love and patience; for corporate perfection; for unity of believers; for hope; for knowledge of God's will; for full assurance of knowledge; for the glory of the inheritance; for the indwelling of the Trinity; for perseverance to the day of Christ.⁵

Paul's prayers for his readers shows us that uncessing prayer formed a large part of Paul's service in the gospel. We see the high spiritual aim which he set before himself, in his work on behalf of believers; and the tender and self-sacrificing love with which he ever continued to think of the Church and its needs. Paul's Epistles are filled with tender passages in which he reveals the way he bore the burden of the care of the churches in prayer to God. He prayed for the churches. He prayed constantly for his friends and Paul's converts prayed with and for him. "Through prayer the struggling churches scattered over the Roman Empire were

⁵William Arndt, Christian Prayer (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1937), p. 21.

bound together into a great fellowship in Christ."⁶

Frequency of Prayer

The absolute unceasingness of Paul's prayers impresses one as one analyzes Pauline prayer. The Apostle was instant in prayer; he fell asleep praying, awoke, and continued where he left off. Like his divine Master, everything was to Paul another speaking Parable of the Kingdom of Heaven. Everything to Paul was another call to prayer and praise.⁷ The Epistles bear this out especially in eight passages.

Romans 1:9. "without ceasing I mention you always in my prayers."

Romans 12:12. "be constant in prayer."

Ephesians 1:16. "I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers."

Colossians 1:9. "we do not cease to pray for you."

1 Thessalonians 3:10. "Praying earnestly night and day. . . ."

1 Thessalonians 5:17. "Pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances."

1 Timothy 5:5. "continues in supplications and prayers night and day."

⁶Holmes Rolston, Stewardship in the New Testament Church (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1946), p. 84.

⁷Whyte, op. cit., p. 237.

2 Timothy 1:3. "I remember you constantly in my prayers."

Whyte summarizes the frequency with which Paul prayed thus:

Paul prayed night and day, and all the hours of every night and of every day, without ceasing. Like the genuine Horologist he was Paul introduced every day of his life with praise and prayer.⁶

Paul prayed continually, at all times, in many and varied circumstances. The Apostle offered prayers on many occasions and showed that prayer has a place at all times in the Christian life. The Book of Acts is especially rich in data concerning the circumstances and time of Paul's praying. We're told in Acts that Paul prayed in prison, at Philippi Paul prayed at the riverside on the Sabbath day, at Tyre Paul knelt with families on the beach and addressed God in prayer, Paul mentions prayer in the Temple at Jerusalem, and he is not found wanting in prayer during his trip to Rome. The Book of Acts relates to us that prophets and teachers prayed before the first missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas prayed as they appointed elders, the Apostle prayed before he ate aboard ship on the trip to Rome, and upon his arrival at Rome Paul thanked God. These instances, coupled with the frequent mention of prayer in the Epistles, show that Paul was instant in prayer. It is not surprising that Paul mentions prayer so frequently in his writings, it

⁶ Ibid.

was so much a part of his life he could not do otherwise. As Prayer was of highest exercise in his personal life so it assumed a high and frequent place in his preaching and teaching.

The Importance of the Holy Spirit in Prayer

An examination of the Pauline corpus reveals that true Christian prayer is motivated, activated, controlled by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is an essential factor in Christian prayer. The presence of the Spirit was a very real thing for Paul and his teaching is to the effect that prayer is essentially a thing of the inner nature. The Spirit prays within us.⁹ The passages which speak particularly to this truth are: Gal. 4:6; Rom. 8:15-16; 8:26-27; 8:34; Eph. 3:16; 6:18. These passages have been discussed in chapter two; however, it is necessary to remember that these passages indicate that Christian prayer is wrought by the Holy Spirit. Dr. Arndt in discussing the activity of the Holy Spirit in Christian prayer remarks:

Think of the great chapter in the middle of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, chap. 8. One truth which the apostle there triumphantly asserts is that the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian and makes him cry, "Abba, Father." And in that connection you have the comforting declaration: "Likewise the Spirit also helps our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray

⁹Edward M. Bounds, Prayer and Praying Men (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1921), p. 115.

for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Hence, as certain as it is that the Holy Spirit dwells in Christians, so certain it is that they pray. This is confirmed in Gal. 4:5: "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts crying, Abba, Father."¹⁰

The Pauline corpus substantiates Koeberle's remark: "All those who have been mighty in prayer have realized that a true conversation with God can take place only when His Spirit has first touched the heart."¹¹

The Christ-Centeredness of Pauline Prayer

Paul was a man in Christ. As such his leading themes were: "the righteousness of God, the death of Jesus on Calvary, the reconciliation of the world, the eternally living and present Christ."¹² These basic themes are found in the prayers of the Apostle. The only correct way to see the cross of Jesus is on your knees, in prayer.¹³ Paul reminds us of this truth immediately after one of his great accounts of the Lord's atoning death, "that at the name of

¹⁰Arndt, op. cit., p. 20.

¹¹Adolf Koeberle, The Quest for Holiness, translated from the third German edition by John C. Mattes (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1936), p. 174.

¹²James S. Stewart, A Man in Christ: The Vital Elements of St. Paul's Religion (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, n. d.), p. 3.

¹³Ibid.

Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." An examination of Pauline prayer reveals that Paul's prayers were truly Christ-centered. This is especially evident from the manner in which Paul addressed God. The God to which Paul addresses his prayers is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God revealed in the Gospel. Paul's thoughts of God in prayer are bound to His revelation of Himself in Jesus Christ. Vorwerk remarks: "Die Offenbarung Gottes in Jesus ist die Gebetsgrundlage fuer Paulus."¹⁴ Heiler stresses this idea also in these words:

The most significant influence of the Apostle upon Christian prayer, however, lies in the fact that through him it comes about that all communion with God has an immediate relation to Jesus Christ. As Paul knows no other prayer than prayer to the "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," prayer in and through Christ. . . . His entire thought, will, feeling were so possessed by love to his heavenly Lord and Saviour that he could say: "It is no longer I that live but Christ liveth in me"; he had but one longing - to depart and be with Christ. This enthusiastic love of Christ must necessarily issue in personal communion with Him, in an abiding fellowship in prayer.¹⁵

Paul's prayers were necessarily related to Christ. They were directed to God and were Christ-centered. The risen Savior was a living reality to the Apostle, Christ

¹⁴Dietrich Vorwerk, Gebet und Gebetserziehung (Schwerin i. Mecklb.: Verlag von Friederich Bahn Hofbuchhaendler, 1913) p. 575.

¹⁵Heiler, op. cit., p. 124.

was the very center and life blood of Paul (Gal. 2:20). All that Paul did he did in His name, for His glory (Col. 3:17). Again, the prayers and thanksgiving are a vivid testimony to the Apostle's relationship to God through Christ Jesus.

Stewart expresses Paul's relationship to Christ as follows:

The man [Paul] knew himself charged to bear Christ, to herald Christ, not to rationalize Christ. Indeed nothing else was possible, for the fundamental fact about the Christ of Paul's experience was that He was alive. Historical data and reminiscences you can rationalize: a living Lord you can only proclaim.¹⁶

The living communion of Paul is evidenced in his prayers, they are Christ-centered to the core. In Ephesians and Colossians especially the Christ-centeredness is brought out. To illustrate this basic characteristic of Pauline prayer the following prayer is given. (Ephesians 3:14-21). "For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with might through his Spirit in the inner man, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who by the power at work within

¹⁶ Stewart, op. cit., p. 8.

us is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen." Prayers such as this can spring only from a heart filled with the ever living, present Christ. The key to Pauline prayer is found in the Apostle's relationship to Christ. The person of Jesus Christ stands at the center of all Paul's religious thinking, dominating his whole Christian consciousness, manifesting itself in his prayer life. Paul's prayers reveal him as a man whose trust was wholly centered in the father of our Lord Jesus Christ and whose chief concern lay in the advancement of His Kingdom.

and he never ceased to intercede for others. His prime concern in all his prayers is the advancement of God's Kingdom. To this end Paul prays that faith, love, and knowledge may abound more and more, that all may grow up into the Body of Christ.

The prayers of Paul are singularly spontaneous and free of any artificiality or meaningless ritual. They are offered thoughtfully, frequently, hopefully, joyfully, and the Apostle is fully aware that in the final analysis it is not he that prays but the Holy Spirit within him.

He who studies Paul's praying, both his prayers and his words concerning prayer, will find what a wide, general insight, diversified even as it covers. The prayers of Paul offer fruitful ground for study, for in the prayers of Paul we gain insight into the Apostle's very heart. An

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In this thesis the writer has listed and analyzed the passages in which Paul prays or speaks of prayer. The study has shown that Paul was preeminently a man of prayer. The Apostle literally gave himself to prayer. The importance that Paul attached to prayer is indicated by the frequent prayers and mention of prayers in the Pauline corpus. This study has shown that unceasing prayer formed a large part of Paul's service in the gospel. The Apostle was given to constant thanksgiving and he never ceased to intercede for others. His prime concern in all his prayers is the advancement of God's Kingdom. To this end Paul prays; that faith, love, and knowledge may abound more and more, that all may grow up into the Body of Christ.

The prayers of Paul are singularly spontaneous and free of any artificiality or meaningless ritual. They are offered thoughtfully, frequently, hopefully, joyfully. And the Apostle is fully aware that in the final analysis it is not he that prays but the Holy Spirit within him.

He who studies Paul's praying, both his prayers and his words concerning prayer, will find what a wide, general minute, diversified area it covers. The prayers of Paul offer fruitful ground for study, for in the prayers of Paul one gains insight into the Apostle's very heart. An

examination of Pauline prayer reveals that the key to Pauline prayer is found in the Apostle's relationship to Christ. Paul was above all a man "in Christ" and one can only penetrate into the prayer life of Paul as one is willing to give himself to the same ever living Christ. Only as one can say with Paul, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me," can one begin to fathom the heights and depths of Pauline prayer.

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