

# 9-7-25 Message- Prayer

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Prayer, thankfulness, spiritual growth, Ephesians 3, Paul's epistles, Lord's Prayer, Revelation, 24-hour prayer room, University Heights, spiritual blessings, inner man, Holy Spirit, gospel, faith, love of Christ.

## SPEAKERS

Pastor Dow Boyer

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Pastor Dow Boyer 00:00

Well, we I guess this week the topic, if you're going to be in small groups, is going to be prayer for the next few weeks, which is kind of why I want to spend a couple of weeks priming you for that. And last week we talked about the the Lord's Prayer specifically spent time in the gospels as well as Revelation. So today we're going to spend a little bit more time in some of Paul's epistles talking about prayer, but I really want to kind of give you guys a little story of my prayer journey, if a prayer journey, if you will. But in one of my lowest points of my life, I had a mentor who really challenged me on this idea of prayer, and he we didn't believe everything the same, theologically, but he really challenged me, and as I was trying to get back up off the ground, he said, alright, well, we'll talk next week, and I'm going to ask you how much time you spent praying this week. And so, you know, I got up every morning and was hit, hit, hit my knees and and prayed. And then when I talked to him next week, I was excited to tell him, you know that, hey, I spent a good 15 minutes of prayer every morning, and he's like every morning. And I said, well, not Saturday and Sunday. He goes, Why not Saturday and Sunday? I think, well, Sunday is church day and Saturday, I guess. Well, it wasn't a work day, so I guess I didn't pray that day. I was kind of out of the routine. And he said, next week, I want you to pray for 30 minutes, and I don't want you to skip Saturday and Sunday. And this, this relationship kind of grew a lot, because I don't know about you all, but 15 minutes is a long time now, not when you're watching not when you're binge watching something, but not when you're scrolling, but when you're praying. Set a timer, 15 minutes. That's a pretty long time to pray. At least it was for me. I'm like, Yeah, I felt like I was laboring everything. And I looked and I was like, five minutes. It feels like I've been going for a while here. And he told me 15 and then 30. But you know, what's interesting is I got into this habit of praying, and I remember one day, I mean, it got up to a point where it was considerably longer than that, and it was just everybody that God would put on my heart, I would just pray for. And I feel like, if I didn't, the very next day, that maybe God wasn't going to do anything in their lives. And so I felt then kind of responsible. I carried a lot of these, these burdens. There was one day I was running late from work, and I felt bad all day. And at lunch time, I found this little church, I think was out in Linton that actually had a prayer chapel. And so for lunch I went, and I was in this prayer chapel for the entire lunch period because I felt like, Man, I didn't get to pray during that day. And so for me, it was, it was a life boat, for me, so to speak, a life preserver. When I was at a low point in

my life, it was, I needed to get a hold of God. I need to talk to God. I was in the word, I was studying the Word. I needed to communicate with God as well, and a lot of that time was spent praying for other people. But we're gonna talk a little bit about how I've grown even in that area as we move on. And then at University Heights, I don't know how many of you all were present at University Heights. There's still a few of you guys out there. So one of the things when I led the single adults there, I had this idea that I wasn't original to me, but we wanted to do a 24 hour prayer room. And we did this a couple of times at University Heights. And so how this would work is we would have people sign up for these 15 minute increments and 24 hours around the clock we prayed. And it was really cool. We did this a couple different times. I was reminded of a message of this here recently, one of the kids who was a part of that sent this message, and I thought was, I guess there was some good that came from that. And then there were some other churches that actually wanted to find out what we were doing, and they set one of these up in their church as well. But it was interesting, especially that that one to five in the morning time slot, it was really easy to fill all the other time slots, but it was like that those midnight and I was like, I feel like I almost have to be there to make sure people aren't lying to me, to make sure that we really are doing kind of the prayer but, but I remember those moments there. And so there was certainly at a time where I was still kind of growing. I don't even know really what those prayers look like, but there was this dependency and this need to get a hold of God, and a desperation. And I remember when we started this church in 2008 and some of you probably were a part of this group, but right over here, when there was no chairs, there was a group of us that sat together that first night, Kenny, you were probably here for that, and we prayed very first night that we got in the building. And I'll never forget that that has stuck with me all these years later, about what that meant and praying to God and the opportunities that were before us. And then April 12. After the vote here that night, I brought my family. We came down right here in this area, primarily, and we prayed. And I didn't really want to open it up to the church. I was very overwhelming and emotional time, but I thought the right thing to do would be to pray and thank God for all that he had done and for the opportunity to move forward. So prayer has been a part of my journey, but it has changed over time. You know, as I've grown, as I've been in the Word of God, I've started looking at prayer differently, and I wanted to share a little bit of that with you. And so what we're going to do today, just so you guys can keep track of where we're going, I want to share a link between thankfulness and prayer, and then I want to focus on in the same way that we focused on a prayer last week, I want to focus on a prayer that Paul wrote in Ephesians, chapter three, that I believe is the spiritual growth prayer for today, but it's one we don't pray. I bet if there was a survey myself included, we're like, I have never prayed that in my life. I'm going to kind of stress today that I think it should be integrated into your prayer life. And this is this prayer in Ephesians, chapter three, the ideas of this prayer. But to get there, let's start out by looking at some of these connections between thankfulness and prayer. You can spend a lot of time talking to God just thanking him, and you know what you'd be doing praying. More often than not, we're dialing a friend. We need a favor, and that primarily is our prayer life, and the God and definitely the Bible, from cover to cover, certainly wants us to make our requests made known unto God. Even Paul says this in Philippians, 4:6 he says, Be careful for nothing. He talks about them, not worrying, right? But he says, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made known unto God. So we're certainly told to pray and make requests to God. But the interesting thing is, the very next verse says, The peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ, Jesus, you know, you may not be getting the response that you want, but the peace of God that pass all understanding, what valuable answer to prayer that is for us today. Colossians, one three, says this. We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ, praying always for you. Colossians 4:2 which is going to lead into a great prayer of furtherance of the gospel. But preceding that verse in 4:1 it says, continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanks giving

First Thessalonians, 5:16, and 17. We know 17. But 16 starts out saying, pray without ceasing. Be constant, continual in prayer, in everything, give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ. Jesus, concerning you, and I would challenge you that if you're finding that you don't have enough things to talk to God about, and not enough things to be thankful about, then you're not in his word. That's probably your biggest disconnect, because when you're in the Word, and you understand who we are in Christ, the spiritual blessings that we have in heavenly places, when you understand all those things, we could spend a lifetime thanking God, as well as thanking God for your church, for your spouse, believe it or not, right for your kids, even when they're not behaving well. But you could spend a lot of time thanking God. You could be filling up that time spot just saying, God, I thank you. And here's the big difference between thanking God for something he's done and hoping he's going to do something in the future with your request. That's what thankfulness does. Thankfulness says, God you've already done something. So the very God I'm talking to is capable. I'm thanking you because of what you've done. That changes your prayer life, right there. Changes your posture when you're already acknowledging God has done things. Because the whole thing about the rubbing the genie lamp, Prayer Life of today is we hope you're there, God, we hope you're going to do something. Well, he has done something. Why don't we thank him enough for what he's done, for what he's given that starts changing our posture when it comes to prayer. So there's plenty to be thankful for. But then Paul also, I mean, he was constantly praying for others. Very little is mentioned about Paul. Praying for himself. You can pull the thorn in the flesh, but the majority of time, it was that others would be strengthened in their walk, right? That there's this furtherance of the gospel. It's interesting when you look at how Paul prayed for other people, and even the unique way, excuse me, the unique way he introduced his letters, talking about praying for people, but it really wasn't just a big prayer sheet. For example, in Ephesians, 1:16, through 18, which will eventually be our main text, is in Ephesians today, if you're turning there, it says, cease not to give thanks for you. Making mention of you in my prayers that the God of our Lord, Jesus, Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation and the knowledge of him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling and what the riches of His glory, of his inheritance in the saints. What is it? Is a crazy way to pray for somebody, right? Probably not a way we do it today, Colossians, one, nine and 10 for this cause also. We also, since the day we heard it, we do not cease to pray for you and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of his will and all wisdom and spiritual understanding that you may walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. Here's kind of a fun fact. When you look at the actual letters that Paul wrote to churches, I know we have a few individual letters, but two churches, every church, whether in the first letter or the second letter, Paul says, I am thankful for you, with the exception of one. So I've got a little clip here to show you about this one. Hey guys, we got a letter from Paul. Let's see what he said. You he actually does even is thankful for the Corinthians, but thought that was kind of funny, since we're talking about Philippians this week. So I think that maybe the second semester I should follow it up with Galatians, for that matter. But Galatians, he just gets right to the heart of the matter, so that one's a little bit different, but but for the most part, Paul is constantly saying, constantly saying, I thank God for you, and then kind of fill in the blanks. A lot of it has to do with who they are in Christ and how they are living. But he's thankful to God for them. And he's usually writing from a distance, and so he's getting feedback either from somebody that he sent or letters that he's received, but he is thankful for them. And so I was thinking about this, and I was like, man, what is this connection between thankfulness and prayer? And really, it kind of boils down to some things that I shared back on May 25 you can go back and pull that up. I spent a lesson talking about thankfulness, if you want to go in more depth in this, but I'll give you a little bit of snippet from there. But in Romans 12:1 it says because that when they knew God, they glorified Him, not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their

imaginations and their foolish heart was darkened. Steve Gallagher, who is the president of pure Life Ministries, and in his book from the altar of sexual idolatry, in the very first chapter, he starts talking about how being unthankful is the beginning of a downward spiral. And I want you to think about that just for a second, because here it says that these people that they no longer glorify God as God, and they were no longer thankful. And as a result, we see three times they change something about God, and then God gives them up, gives them up, and then gives them over. But the beginning of the spiral was no longer recognizing God as God and no longer being thankful. See, we have this great section, little teaser coming forward, probably closer to December, where Paul's going to talk about contentment in Philippians chapter four, you cannot be content if you are not thankful, because the whole idea of contentment means you are satisfied, satisfied in the Lord, not in your circumstances. See, a lot of our unthankfulness comes from the fact that our eyes are on ourselves, our eyes are on our circumstances, and we don't have the favorable circumstances that we want. So we begin to complain. And the more that we complain, we are speaking against God, and we have a rebellious heart, and we're getting farther away from who we are in Christ and what we are thankful for, we start becoming miserable to be around. I mean, I can't think that there's many of you in here who says, My best friends all have this quality. They complain all the time. I don't think there's many of you who would say that in here today, it's probably not the redeeming quality you were looking for in your spouse. Man. He is just so charming. He's good looking in the way he complains. I love him so much. I can't imagine that's what you look for in somebody. Usually it's a sign of this rottenness on the inside that is destroying them, right? So Paul is constantly saying, our heart and our posture needs to excuse me, always be focused on being thankful to God. It's also an indication in Second Timothy three, one and two of one of those negative attributes of things that are going to be going on in the last days. When Paul says this, he says this, know also that in the last days, perilous times shall come for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud blasphemers, disobedience to parents, unthankful, unholy It reminds me a lot of the idea in some of the older shows when I was growing up is like somebody is on some sort of technology trying to reach space, and they're asking the question, Is anybody out there, you know? And it's like, we kind of, they're going in thinking there's, there may be life out there somewhere, but most likely there's not, and I feel like more often not, that's kind of what our prayer life looks like. It's like, Is anybody out there? Because we are looking for a response, but thankfulness changes that, and it sets the right posture. So I hope you guys are pulling from that today, when we get to Ephesians chapter three, I thought this was unique, and I wanted to be able to share this with you today for a couple reasons. And the first is this, when you look at the book of Ephesians, it is broke up into three chapters of doctrine. There's a transitional verse in chapter four, verse one and the last three verse or the last three chapters of Ephesians is practical in a world where we're like, I just want to start doing the right thing and I need to put on the right behavior. We realize that the right process is renewing your mind with the right doctrine and then working out your salvation from that right doctrine. And Ephesians has that blueprint, right? It starts out in chapter one, where there's a there's a great prayer there that he has and in the early part of Ephesians. But then it's really about our spiritual blessings and our identity in Christ. And then we get to chapter two, and there's this subtle reminder of how far we were from God, right, and how we needed God to draw nigh to us by the cross. And we got those great verses in verses eight, nine and 10 of chapter two, which says, For by grace, are we saved through faith, and that not of ourselves is the gift of God, not of works. Lest any man should boast, we're given this reminder that each and every person in this room, as well as in that original audience, can only be right with God by placing their faith alone, and that shed blood on the cross and the burial and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, that alone, nothing of yourself, will put you in a right position with God, and that is who he's writing to people who have done this, which I think the majority of us in here can relate to that, and if not today, write in your seat right now while I'm

talking, if you believe in the death, burial and resurrection alone to wash away your sins, you will have eternal life. No coming forward, no no manipulation, no. I'm going to scare you to death with a bunch of scary hell verses, even though Hell's real, but it is about your sin, separating you from God, and the only solution was God coming down himself and fixing the sin problem. And he's talking to people that have done that. And so I'm like, this is kind of our letter, right? He's talking to Gentiles who were so far from God, as was talked about in like verse 11, right? That they were so far from God, they were strangers from the promise, right? They had no hope in this world, but God, he talked about being dead, but now we've been quickened and made alive chapter two, then rolls into chapter three, which gives us unbelievable doctrine, like we know all these benefits from Christ in chapter one, we know how it happens in chapter two, but now we've got really the doctrine of why it happened. In chapter three, we come right out the gate, starting talking about this mystery. These first six verses of Ephesians are so great. And then they lead into verses eight and nine, which are phenomenal, where Paul's saying he wants all men to see the mystery. After he said all this, he begins this prayer. Prayer that's going to take you to the end of chapter three and then move you into Chapter Four to tell you how to start living. And I'm like, shouldn't the body of Christ do that? I don't. I mean, I don't know. We're so focused about, how do I live this life, right? And I'm like, shouldn't we then talk about this prayer a little bit. We know we need to pray. We need to be in the Word of God, but here's a prayer directly where we're at today, preceding the way we are to live. Shouldn't we look at that? And I was challenged this week. It's like, shouldn't this be the way I'm praying for you all? Because I haven't been it was really challenging for me. I told Rachel, I was like, I have to memorize this. Now. I have to commit to memorizing this. I need to pray this for the people at Grace point as well as myself. So that was my build up. Give you some context and not just leave you hanging wondering what was Paul talking about. That's how we get to verse 14 of chapter three, where Paul says, For this cause, I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now is Paul advocating every time that you pray, you have to hit your knees. No, I mean, you see like three references, and only one of them is in direct reference to prayer. The other two are like to authority. Now, is there anything wrong with bowing your knees when you pray? Absolutely not. But I'm saying that Paul, that's not what Paul's commanding here. Okay, it's important that we make that distinction. He says, I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. What you're going to see in this prayer is the Trinity, but starts with the Father, says, The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he said, For this cause. So let's bounce back a little bit in verse 12, leading up into him saying, For this cause. He says, In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him, we're gonna we're gonna hang out there in just a moment. Wherefore, I desire that you faint, not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory? So there's a couple things there. The first one is, and I think this is a great thing for us today, is that we have access to God. You're not going through anybody to get to God. You have direct access to God. First, Timothy two, five says, there is one God, one mediator between God and men, the man Christ, Jesus, not the white cloth with a cross. We have direct access to God today, amen, as he's as he's leading into this prayer, he says, We have access. I love this in Ephesians, 2:18, for through him, we have both access by one Spirit unto the Father. We're reminded in Hebrews, 4:16, even in that epistle, it's like we come boldly to the throne of grace. We have access to God, today, and that was definitely not always so for a Gentile, but he talks about these tribulations. It's interesting, because I think the end of Ephesians gives us a little insight here, when he says in verse 19 of chapter six, for me, that utterance may be given unto me that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel for which I am an ambassador in bonds, for therein I may speak boldly as I ought to speak so. Essentially, you're reading that, and it's like he is literally in prison because of preaching this mystery gospel program. And he's like, Hey, pray for me that I continue to utter this message that has put me here and his he talks similarly in Colossians, chapter four, verse three, which says, With all praying also for us, that God would

open up us as a door of utterance to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I also am in bonds. This message, he says, Put him in bondage. Put him in prison. I love when you look at both of these because especially Colossians. Chapter Four, you would have thought that Paul's prayer request to the Colossians would be that I may be released from prison. But he says, Pray that I continue to do the very thing that put me in prison. He wasn't looking for relief. He was looking for an opportunity to utter the gospel, which should be a real focus of our prayer life today, the opportunities that we should be able to further the gospel and utter the very words of truth, the gospel, which is able to save souls, so popping them back into the prayer after he says, I bow my knees to the Father. In verse 15, he says, of whom the last part of that verse, The of whom that prepositional phrase is pointing to Jesus. Christ, because that was the end of the previous verse, he says, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, there's a lot of prepositional phrases there, but listen what he's saying here. First of all, it starts out with the riches of his glory, talking about Jesus Christ, that's an unlimited supply. It's like the thing you're going to pray for. He's going to start out by saying, it's limitless the riches of his glory. All right, that is going to be how we're going to start this prayer, when we're starting to start, start talking about power and might it's going to start with one who is able, right? And we're not going to start leaning into the charismatic movement. That's not where we're going with this passage here at all. But he is saying this. He is saying that inside of us in the inner man, praying for it to be strengthened with might. So much of the charismatic movement is focused on the outside, not the inner man. What he's talking about here is praying that this very power from this unlimited power source, that that this would strengthen with might the Spirit in the inner man. We want so bad to change the outside, but real change only happens from the inside out. And this prayer starts with saying that not only changing from the inside out, but you need something outside of yourself to do it. You need the very spirit of God and the might going on in your inner man, coming from something much bigger than yourself. In a world where we want to just be better, or we just want to power through, where we want it to be all about what we can get through in this life. He is saying, the power source, ain't you. It is not about you. This prayer starts with God, and it puts the focus on the power source of our life, which is not you. For us to walk in this life, is not about our strength. It is about his and he moves on in other places to kind of talk about this idea of the inner man. Second, Corinthians, 4:16, For which cause we faint not, though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. Shouldn't we be investing in the thing that does not decay? First, Corinthians, 2:10 God hath revealed them from us by His Spirit. For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man, which is in him, even so as he continues on in here, the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of this world, but the spirit which is of God that we might know the things which are freely given to us by God, Which things also we speak not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth. Comparing spiritual things with spiritual the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. This is why the inner man is so important. It's the part of us. It's not the natural man, it's the spiritual side of us that can only understand the spiritual things we are trying so hard to understand the things of God with just our natural self. When this is a spiritual book, and it takes a spiritual connection inside of us in order to understand it, he also talks about these riches, and this isn't the only place that he mentions this, but Ephesians 2:7 That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace and His kindness towards us through Christ, Jesus, verse eight, unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, these riches of his glory, the riches of Christ, this unlimited source. Here is how this prayer begins, but he says is going back to the prayer in verse 17, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by

faith. You're like, wait a second thought, right? When we get saved, he's there, and that's not what Paul's saying here, but there's a difference between us just having something and us tapping into it. When he's talking about dwelling in your hearts by faith that you be rooted and grounded in love, and of course, faith, that's how this. Whole thing started Colossians, two, six and seven, as you have therefore received Christ, Jesus, the Lord, so walk ye in him. Well, how did we receive him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith as we have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving, taught hearing Faith cometh by hearing right we have the standing that we have by faith. But then he goes into this idea of love, being rooted and grounded in love. He just talked about being rooted and built up in him, in Colossians chapter two. But in this prayer, he says, You, My prayer is that you're being rooted and grounded in love. And so the next part of the prayer, we'll talk a little bit more about that, but let's talk about the dwell part. This is good for us to know that in Romans eight, nine and 10, you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit. If so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you, it's an indicator that you are a child of God, because he's dwelling inside of you. He says, Now, If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. First, Corinthians, 316, Know ye not the year of the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. His indication, as he's praying here, is that you are a child of God, and that already Christ dwells in you. That's an important thing here. This is a prayer to a believer, Ephesians, 318, the next part of the prayer says, may be able. This means it's not automatic, right? When you get saved. I think this is interesting to pray about. This pieces may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, the length and depth and height? It talks about a semicolon there, and to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge that you might be filled with all the fullness of God. So we talked about these dimensions, you know, probably looked at that in our lives before, when we think about things that we can measure height, depth, width, but this is the breadth. That's the part we really that's different than our normal dimensions, right? But he's talking about this love that that we may know this so experientially, even in the ways that we can see and in our normal dimensions, but in the spiritual sense that we can't see, that we would know that this love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, and he says, that you might be filled with all fullness of God. Now we know the moment that we're saved, we get the Holy Spirit, and we are sealed. We have all the Holy Spirit we're ever going to have at that moment. But Paul does say in Ephesians chapter five, be filled with the Spirit, and not drunken with wine wherein is excess. There's a difference between being sealed and then being filled, and that is why we want to walk in the Spirit, so we don't fulfill the lust of the flesh. But in Romans five eight, we know that God committeth His love toward us, and that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. We also know, in Second Corinthians, 514 that the love of Christ constraineth us. So you can understand why the love of Christ is so important in this prayer and understanding that the whole reason you and I have a relationship with God is because of love. It's Romans five, eight. God commendeth. He demonstrated his love. He made an open display of His love toward us, and that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. And then we want to portray that message to other people in a world where everybody says, I want to be loved. Let me tell you. Let me tell you friend about the love of God for you through Jesus Christ on the cross. But he says this to finish the prayer, he says Ephesians 320 and 21 says Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us. Unto Him, be glory in the church by Jesus Christ throughout all the ages, world without end. This prayer starts about might and strength and ends with power, but the power source is the exact same at the beginning and the end. And when I'm looking at this, the very next verse in the Bible is going to say, I Paul, a prisoner of the Lord. Beseech you, brethren, to walk worthy of the vocation where with you are called. Right after this prayer, he says, walk worthy. You cannot walk worthy in your own strength. And that was the message, the message of this power, the message of this prayer, is that we need power from on high. I working in our inner

man so that we can understand this fullness of God and understand this love of Christ, and that we can then go live the life that we were meant to live in this dispensation of grace, but you cannot do it in your own strength. You see that over and over again, but there is one who is limitless who wants to power you for this walk? To me, that's a really great prayer for somebody, is that it not be your power. It's the power of Christ moving you through as you're reading the Word of God and as you're implementing the things of God, and as you're being an ambassador and doing the things of God, right when you do this on your own strength, you will surely wear away. And some of you have been there, maybe you're in a dry spot right now. In your faith, you have will powered yourself to read the Bible every day, or to go to church all the time. And it is dry, the dry and thirsty land, you have exhausted your own power sources. You are a cell phone that is getting ready to shut off and has a little plug in icon and God's saying, plug into me. Let me power you remember the prayer. Remember the prayer with the thorn in the flesh. He says, My strength is made perfect in your weakness, My grace is sufficient for thee. This is a prayer about spiritual growth, and it involves a spiritual nature of God working in and through you by His power and His might to produce this in you. And so I want to commit to adding this to my prayer life for the people in my life that I know are children of God and who need to walk worthy. I think this is a good place to start a good prayer and a good additional prayer for you to add. I want to close this out by Colossians, one nine through 11. It says, For this cause, we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of his will and all wisdom and spiritual understanding growth, that you might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful into every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God, strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness. You see us both in Ephesians and Colossians. You see things like being filled with the knowledge of his will, growing in understanding, filled with his power. I just don't know that that is really things at the forefront of our prayer life for other people. But it should be. It absolutely should be. And my encouragement today, this was going to be a little bit differently, but I want to spice up your prayer life in the same way that Paul was praying for the Ephesians. I'm not telling you to bypass all of the prayer requests or bypass what else you're going to pray for, but I would challenge you for the leadership of this church and for the for the body of Christ that that you should engage in this kind of prayer as well. You should want people to grow in their knowledge and understanding of the Lord. You should want people to understand the will of God. You should be praying for that they be filled with all the power of his might. Those are important prayers as well. And I'm glad that Paul added it into the Word of God. This is a prayer of spiritual growth for the believer. In a time where people say, I just want to grow, then maybe we tap into a power source that's bigger than just us, that's already present inside of us, it just needs to be activated. I'm going to have everybody pray, or I'm sorry, we will have you pray in a second. Everybody? Stan, wow, can't get off my mind today. Prayer warrior, overnight, it's great today. If maybe was the day that you heard the gospel for the first time and you said, this is the day that I have placed my faith in the death, burial and resurrection. I now know I'm a child of God. I would love to talk to you. I'd love to encourage you, not that you have to talk to me. It didn't have anything to do with your decision, but I want to help you grow. I want to help give you some tools of what is next, or if maybe you've been praying about and want to join our church. We're still, I know, trying to define what that looks like, but we'd love to have you be a part of us and moving forward. We have people up front that are willing to meet with you, but we certainly are so glad to have you here today. If you're a visitor, please let us know there's your first time attending. We have visitor cards and the pews in front of you or in the chairs in front of you, and we'd love to collect that information, but right now, we're gonna pray and we're gonna sing a song, and then we'll dismiss Dear heavenly Father. Thank you so much for your grace and Your mercy, Lord. I was. Encouraged in studying this week. I don't know if the people were as encouraged as I was, but Lord, I needed this reminder. Lord, that it is about

your power, your strength in me, in my inner man. Lord, there are times I know in this life it is easy to go through the motions, it is easy to get in a rut, and it is easy to stunt our growth and to start focusing on the wrong things. I love how there's so many prayers in the Bible that are focused on thankfulness, and they're focused on you and what you've done and what your unlimited power can do in our lives. It's not about all these sign gifts from the early acts period, Lord, but it is being strengthened with might in our inner man and growing in our knowledge and understanding of you, understanding your will, Lord, having the fullness of God in our lives. Lord, then going out and walking worthy, because your strength is in us. It is you that worketh in us, both to will and do of Your good pleasure. Lord, we, thank you for that today, that you didn't just leave us here trying to figure it out on our own. And Lord we, thank you for the cross. We, thank you for the shed blood of Jesus Christ to wash all of our sins away and that He was buried in three days later rose again. And Lord, we're thankful that All one has to do today is place their faith in that alone, and they will be with you in heaven for all eternity. And may that message never go silent. May we never close the service without mentioning it, Lord, and may that always be the focus of what we do here, Lord, for people to come to grace and grow in grace. Well, we love you and praise you, Lord. We just pray that people have a great week Amen.