

The Power of Love

When difficult things happen to those we love, our concern and empathy for the pain they are going through often causes us to lose perspective on how we should pray. Because of our love for them, we immediately want to pray them out of the situation. Yet God might be using the situation for a good purpose to be fulfilled in their lives.

That was the situation with Paul. He was imprisoned in Rome. Apparently many were praying for his release. I certainly would have. But Paul told the believers that his being in chains was God's will. It was having a greater impact for the kingdom than if he weren't in chains. He asked the Philippian believers not to worry about his condition. He even told them not to worry about those who were stirring up trouble for him while he could not defend himself.

In the midst of his comments, he told them what he was praying for them—love.

“And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.” (Philippians 1:9-11)

Love is an amazing force! God is love! Paul was praying for love so that they would grow in their discernment of what was best (God's will and purposes) and that they would live pure and blameless lives. How can an increase of love bring about all that—a deeper recognition of God's purposes and a great desire and ability to live a life pleasing to Him? What would an increase of love in everyone do in your church? What would a deeper level of love do in your marriage and family?

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not

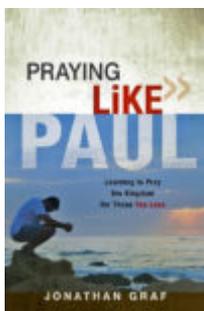
boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.” (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

Peter wrote, “Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins” (1 Peter 4:8).

Praying for love for yourself and others will have a profound effect on you or those you pray for—on how you view life, on how you handle circumstances, on how you pray for others.

Prayer

Father God, I thank You for Your great love for us. Thank You for the love that sent You to this earth to suffer and die to pay the penalty for our sins. Lord, I want to experience a deeper level of love in my own life—that sacrificial love. Would You give me a deeper understanding of what love is? Help me to pray with love when I pray for others. Give me a greater love for You, so my life would reflect the fruits of righteousness and bring glory to You. Amen.



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