

Hallelujah Anyway, Part 5

Pastor Steve Berger April 19, 2015

Hallelujah Anyway

...having a faith that no matter what happens in your life, you continue to trust and praise God, knowing that God, and no circumstance, has the final word over you!

This is how Paul lives, this is how he encourages us to live! He is wrongfully imprisoned for the gospel, yet rejoicing, showing us how to live our own Hallelujah Anyway life, while going through our own tough times.

The Importance of Partnering Together in Prayer

I. Paul was a committed man of prayer

- immediately after miraculous conversion, he's found in prayer by Ananias
- while he's in the Philippian prison, he's praying
- mentions prayer in all his writings, except Titus; here he starts with a prayer of blessing, "without ceasing" "always" "everywhere" — he lived that way
- he prayed for the churches
- **begged churches for prayer for himself**
 - knew he couldn't fulfill God's will apart from prayer partnership in and with the church
 - knew Heaven released Holy Spirit when God's people partner in prayer
 - invited church into partnership with his work through their prayer

**We must realize the same for our own lives,
we're no different, we must partner in prayer for one another
so God's will can happen in and through our lives!**

*What might happen... in and through us if we partnered in prayer as our **first option**, rather than our **last resort**!*

2. Philippians' prayers released the Holy Spirit's supply (contribution)

- Philippians 1:19-20
 - Paul believed he'd be delivered from several things
 - Philippians prayer is what released the Holy Spirit's supply
 - what a partnership — with God and Paul

Think about that... our prayers for one another pave the way for the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit to manifest in our lives!

- Acts 12:5
 - Peter was in prison; constant prayer offered to God for him by the church
 - Peter chained between two guards; angel delivers him because people were praying!

**You might feel chained and imprisoned, time is running out —
surround yourself with some faithful prayer partners
and watch God deliver you!**

3. What were some things Paul sought deliverance from? “turn out my deliverance”

- circumstance — prison, again — however God might do it
 - **IMPORTANT** — *Paul didn't limit God how he might do it, he solicited prayer that God would do it!*
- cowardice — Paul saw their prayer and the Holy Spirit's supply as the source of his continual boldness
 - Acts 4 — prayer / HS / boldness
- mediocrity — Christ will be magnified by life or death — Paul saw their prayer and the Holy Spirit's supply as the source for Jesus to be magnified through his life

Crucial — *with all that Paul was, he never saw himself as being beyond the need of prayer for his circumstances, or compromises that could diminish his testimony!*

How much more for us — *God deliver us from circumstances, potential compromises that could cause us to be mediocre and diminish our testimony!*

What other things did Paul ask prayer for from the churches?

Romans

- Romans 15:30-32
 - beg you/strive together with me in prayer — desperation and effort on Paul's part
 - delivered from unbelievers who have/will persecute him
 - service to be acceptable — gift and word received by them
 - reunited and refreshed together — emphasis on together

Notice — *Paul wants “big” and “small” things covered in prayer by his partners*

Corinthians

- 2 Corinthians 1:9-11
 - help together in prayer — prayer was tangible help in Paul's mind: prayer helps, prayer matters, prayer changes things, prayer is needed
 - delivered from death repeatedly — Paul saw prayer as being able to conquer the death sentence that was on his life
 - He did — He does — He will — what faith!

Thessalonians

- 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2
 - pray for us
 - that the word of the Lord run swiftly and be glorified
 - prayer propels the word into men's hearts so Jesus gets glory
 - deliver from unreasonable and wicked men — again, prayer brings deliverance

Interesting — *Paul's repeated request was deliverance — from Jews, death, unreasonable and wicked men.*

EMAIL JUST IN FROM SOUTH SUDAN THIS MORNING — *Jalle being devastated; help needed, prayer most important! Death surrounds them — let's pray for deliverance.*

Ephesians

- Ephesians 6:18-20
 - pray always, be watchful, persevere in it — of course, it's powerful!
 - speak boldly as I ought — a continual request for fresh power and boldness

Colossians

- Colossians 4:2-4
 - continue earnestly, fervently, passionately, be vigilant
 - attitude in prayer is radically important
 - “2 cent prayers don’t get million dollar answers!”
 - pray for open door for word, and that I speak as I ought
 - prayer opens doors for the word, paves the way for the Holy Spirit to work

Paul begs the church to partner with him in prayer for many reasons. He sees prayer as the difference maker in any and every situation; the very thing that facilitates God’s work in our midst.

**Partnering in Prayer
is non-negotiable for every follower of Jesus —
it produces too much for us to let it go undone**

Charles Haddon Spurgeon —Prince of Preachers

In his church there was a prayer-room where people were always on their knees interceding. Spurgeon would declare,

"Here is the powerhouse of this church."¹

"We had prayer meetings that moved our very souls, each one appeared determined to storm the Celestial City by the might of understanding."²

"Shall I give you yet another reason why you should pray? I have preached my very heart out. I could not say any more than I have said. Will not your prayers accomplish that which my preaching fails to do? Is it not likely that the Church has been putting forth its preaching hand but not its praying hand? Oh dear friends! Let us agonize in prayer"³

Partnering in Prayer, Agreeing in Prayer, Symphony of Prayer

- Matthew 18:19
 - if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask
 - it will be done for them by My Father in heaven

Pastor Steve’s Prayer

Let's increase our partnering, agreeing, Symphonies of Prayer...let's send prayers to heaven that cause the Holy Spirit to come down from heaven into every situation, for deliverance, for boldness, for Jesus' glory, for the souls of men, for fruit from our labor, for all things big and small...in Jesus Name!

Discussion Questions

1. Right now: how important is serious prayer with other believers in your life?
2. Did today’s sermon challenge your belief that this kind of praying is necessary?
Did today’s sermon fuel your desire to be a part of a prayer partnership within our church body?

¹ Dave Early, *Pastoral Leadership Is...*, (Nashville, TN:B&H Publishing Group, 2012), 124

² *ibid*, 125

³ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Sermons on the Psalms* (London:Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1963),89

3. If you really believe that your prayers for each other will release the Holy Spirit's miraculous work in your lives — how would the dynamics in our Life Group change — right now?
4. What happens to our attitude when God does not answer our prayer like we think it should be?
5. Why would Paul want to be delivered from mediocrity?
Does that apply to us today?
6. In Romans 15:30-32, Paul asks the church to *strive together* with him in prayer. What does that mean?
7. Paul's repeated request was *deliverance*. From what or whom do you (or who you are praying for) need to be delivered?
8. Do we discount prayer because we don't always see results in our time and our way?
Is this applicable to our praying for the Holy Spirit to affect the affairs of men on earth?
9. "Dead 2 cent prayers don't get million dollar answers ."
Compare this with a earnest, fervent, passionate, vigilant attitude in prayer.
Where are your prayers?
10. Charles Spurgeon said, "Will not your prayers accomplish that which my preaching fails to do?"
Is this hard for you to believe?
What is it going to take for the "power of partnering in prayer" to become real for you?
11. Are there circumstances in your life right now where you are feeling overwhelmed, chained, like time is running out? Will you share these with your prayer partners?

**Click on "House of Prayer" on www.gracechapel.net to fill out a prayer request.
We will pray for requests for one month, and at our weekly prayer meetings.
See you this Tuesday, April 21, at 6:30 p.m.!**