

We Prayed for Others?

Even though Paul was far away from his friends, his heart was near to them. Though he could not be with them, he knew that God was able to watch over them and bless them. This gave Paul great joy even while he sat in prison. You can have this kind of joy too!



Day #1: Never Stuck

Trace your feet on a piece of paper. Now put it on the floor and stand on it. Without moving your feet, what can you do? Can you go swimming? Can you rake the yard? Can you even make yourself a sandwich?

No question, it can be frustrating to be stuck somewhere. Just imagine how Paul might have felt, "stuck" in prison when he had done nothing wrong. He couldn't go see his friends in Philippi, he couldn't go visit a pal who was sick, he couldn't travel to cities preaching about Jesus. If one of his friends needed something, Paul couldn't go to help him or her.

Most people in his situation would have been pacing the floor and trying pointlessly to shake the bars loose. But Paul was actually filled with joy! (Philippians 1:3) He knew the secret: When we are stuck, God is NOT! So Paul continually called upon God to do what Paul couldn't.

If you every feel "stuck" because you are not able to help a friend, remember that God is unstoppable! There's nowhere He can't go, there's nothing He can't do, and there's no one He can't help (Psalm 139:7-12).

† *Lord and King, you have reached out your great and powerful arm. You have made the heavens and the earth. Nothing is too hard for you.*
- Jeremiah 32:17

* Who do you know that needs a little help right now? Call upon God to work in the person's life. Rejoice knowing that you have been key in helping the person by calling out to God.

Day #2: Koinonia

Can you find a coin at home? Any coin will do. Now set it on your knee. Does this remind you of a certain Greek word we talked about this week?

The word is Koinonia (and it sounds like coin-o-knee-a). It means community or group of people who share common goals. It means having unity with friends. It's like your spiritual team.

Paul found a group of people like this in Philippi. Paul is not from Philippi, and Paul didn't even plan to go to there. But when God made it clear that Paul should go there, he went. And what a blessing it turned out to be. As soon as these folks heard about Jesus and believed, suddenly their hearts were in line with Paul's. They began to help him with the mission God gave him - telling everyone in Macedonia about Jesus.

Life and ministry is just better done together. There's an old saying that goes: "Friendship doubles our joy and divides our grief." When you have friends to lean on, those people can make the hard times much easier, and when times are good, you can all celebrate together.

† *So cheer each other up with the hope you have. Build each other up. In fact, that's what you are doing.* - 1 Thessalonians 5:11

* Do you have a community of friends that you depend on? Thank God for them. If you don't feel like you have that type of friendship right now, ask God to bring these kinds of relationships into your life (Matthew 7:11).

Day #3: Pass It On!

When Paul met Jesus, Paul changed from being a mean bully to a caring preacher. That's a big turn-around! God told Paul he would go and tell the whole world about Jesus. That's a pretty big task. Paul did a lot of traveling and a lot of talking! But Paul wasn't left to do this on his own. Many others joined in the work.


† *(Jesus) said to them, "Go into all the world. Preach the good news to everyone."* - Mark 16:15

Day #3 continued:

How long do you think it would take you to tell a million people about Jesus? (A really long time!) But what if you had some help?

Let's imagine that today you told one friend about Jesus. So now two of you know about Jesus. Tomorrow, you and that friend each tell another person. So then four of you know about Him. The next day, all four of you each tell four more people. How many people know now? Eight. If this pattern continued every day, how long do you think it would take for 1 million people to hear about Jesus? It would only take 21 days!

The kingdom of God grows because we tell other people about the amazing way Jesus took away our sin and brought us back to God. Think about it: Everyone was told by someone. Who was it that told you? Who still teaches you about God and His good kingdom?


 Take a minute to thank God for sending those people into your life. What a blessing they are! Now ask God who it is He would like you to tell. Let's keep the movement going!

Day #4: Grace and Peace

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ...

Nine different times, this phrase is recorded in the Bible. They were all penned by Paul. This is the way he began the letters he wrote to his friends.

Why do think grace and peace were so important to Paul? Paul gives us a clue in a letter he wrote to his young friend, Timothy:


 *Here is a saying that you can trust. It should be accepted completely. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. And I am the worst sinner of all. - 1 Timothy 1:15*

Paul readily admits that he had a terrible past. When he was a young man, he was trapped in the kingdom of darkness, separated from God. He believed lies about God, Jesus, and himself. He was so convinced that Jesus was not the Savior, that he punished anyone who chose to follow Jesus. Paul lived a life of violence and

Day #4 continued:


conflict; he caused pain and hardship. His life was the opposite of peace.

But then came Jesus. Jesus confronted Paul. At that moment, Paul was struck with fear. He knew he had been wrong. Dead wrong. Jesus was alive and is the Savior of the world. Paul deserved to be punished, but Jesus gave him grace (undeserved kindness)! All the wrong things Paul had done were washed away (1 Corinthians 6:11). And Paul finally felt peace. Grace and peace are beautiful gifts from God and Paul would never take them for granted.

 Who do you know that needs some more grace and peace? Pray right now for God to give it to them. There's no limit to God's grace or peace!

Day #5: Prayer Notebook


What's your prayer habit?

 *Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Give thanks no matter what happens. God wants you to thank Him because you believe in Christ Jesus. - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

There's definitely a link between joy and prayer. There's something wonderful about taking all of our cares to God. When we tell him what we need, or what our friends need, it lifts the weight and worry off of us. We know that God is able to do immeasurable more than we ever could!

And then there's the listening part. When we are quiet and still before God, He nudges us deep in our heart. He lets us know if there's anything we should do, or an attitude we should change. When God nudges us in any way, it will always agree with the Bible.

Our prayers please God because when we come to Him, that's proof that we have faith in Him (Hebrews 11:6). When we pray, everybody wins! It's always the right thing to do!

 It's a great idea to have a notebook to write your prayers in. This helps you remember to pray during the week and it is a wonderful place to write down when God answers! You might want to use a different color pen for the answers, or maybe highlight them with a bright color. Looking back over those prayers and answers will make your faith grow and grow!