

New Life for the New Year: How Scripture and Prayer Empower Fruitful Endurance

January 8, 2019

by Rod Fillinger

The most authoritative source to shape our prayers is the Bible itself. The more we learn about God and his ways and perspective, the more we improve our understanding of prayer. In this week's [Sunday's sermon](#) we considered Paul's continual prayer that we would be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual (or Spiritual) wisdom and understanding. The purpose of this prayer is that we would walk in a manner worthy of the Lord fully pleasing to him. Our lives will produce fruit. We will give evidence to the fact that he has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son. We considered how the disciplines of Scripture intake and prayer equip us to walk in steadfast endurance.

Post-sermon inventory (on your own or with your Community Group):

1. How would you rate your Scripture intake? Your prayer life?

1 – non-existent to 10 – consistent, substantial intake/prayer

2. What are your strengths and weaknesses in prayer and Scripture intake?
3. How much time do you spend daily in – serious study, devotional reading, concentrated prayer, attitude of prayer (periodic prayers)?
4. What is your biggest obstacle to Scripture reading and prayer?
5. How would you characterize your prayer for others? Does it look like an ER chart or Christmas wish list more than Paul's request for the Colossians in Col 1:9–14?
6. In Scripture intake, what is your goal? [check the box, obligation, get knowledge, know God, all 3 persons, better, know your Savior more intimately]
7. Do you meditate, study, reflect on a passage until it bothers you? God is perfect, his Word is true, and we are being conformed to the image of Christ, so it will irritate as it is used by the Holy Spirit to refine us if we really understand what the Word says.

Scripture provides many powerful prayers as examples.

- The Lord's Prayer – Matt 6:5–15
- Eph 3:14–19
- Psalms 19, 22–24, 31, 35, 38, 42, 57, 69, 70, 90, 92, 102, 131, or 139 (to list just a few)
- 2 Thess 1:3–12
- Phil 1:1–11
- Rom 5:14–33

Select one of the prayers listed, read it, and discuss how the pattern of prayer demonstrated would affect your prayers.

When are times that you least feel like praying? What can you do to hold yourself accountable in prayer when you don't feel like praying, and pray until you do?

Prayer is an active exercise of a personal relationship with the living God and his Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. How does Paul's reminder of Christ's pre-eminence in creation and re-creation as the Reconciler provide encouragement to us in praying?

Books for further encouragement in prayer:

- D.A. Carson – *A Call to Spiritual Reformation* – Now called *Praying with Paul*
- Tim Keller – *Prayer*
- Al Mohler – *The Prayer that Turns the World Upside Down*
- Scotty Smith – *Every Season Prayers*
- John Onwuchekwa -- *Prayer: How Praying Together Shapes the Church*
- Arthur Bennett – *The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers & Devotions*