

3 Ways to Prevail in Prayer

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By Dave Butts

"I want you to know how much I am struggling for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally. My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments. For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your faith in Christ is" (Colossians 2:1-5).

This text discusses a step beyond where most of us have ever been in prayer. The idea of "struggling" (wrestling, travailing) in prayer is foreign to many. Yet, Paul is expressing a deep, heartfelt prayer for people whom he has never met.

The older term for struggling in prayer is "prevailing" in prayer. Wesley Duewel states that "Prevailing prayer is prayer that pushes right through all difficulties and obstacles, drives back all the opposing forces of Satan, and secures the will of God. Its purpose is to accomplish God's will on earth. Prevailing prayer is prayer that not only takes the initiative but continues on the offensive for God until spiritual victory is won."

HOW TO PREVAIL IN PRAYER

1. **You must be willing to take time.** In this busy day and age, it is difficult to find the kind of time necessary to “Pray through to victory”.
2. **You must pray in the Spirit.** Charles Spurgeon has said, “Prayer is an art which only the Holy Ghost can teach us. He is the giver of all prayer.” Therefore, our prayer must not be for selfish gain, but a channel for God’s power to be released upon this earth.
3. **You must pray with urgent persistence.** This is the kind of prayer which never gives up!

Paul’s purpose in the prayer he struggled with was in order for the Colossians to be encouraged in heart and united in love. The opposites of these things, discouragement and disunity, can easily rob Christians of joy and strength.

Discouragement comes when success is difficult to see, obstacles, large and small, get in the way, etc.

Closely allied to this is disunity. In the church, it is characterized by grumbling and complaining, with people going in different directions.

Discouragement and disunity are a distraction from what is really important—Jesus Christ. These things can keep us from fulfilling the task which Christ has placed before us by distracting us from our primary purpose—winning others to Him.

Paul was attempting to share with the Colossians that if they could experience encouragement and unity among themselves, they would be able to focus on Christ with “the full riches of complete understanding”.

A church that is focused on anything or anyone else other than Jesus Christ and Him glorified, is going to get into trouble—both doctrinally and in practical ways.

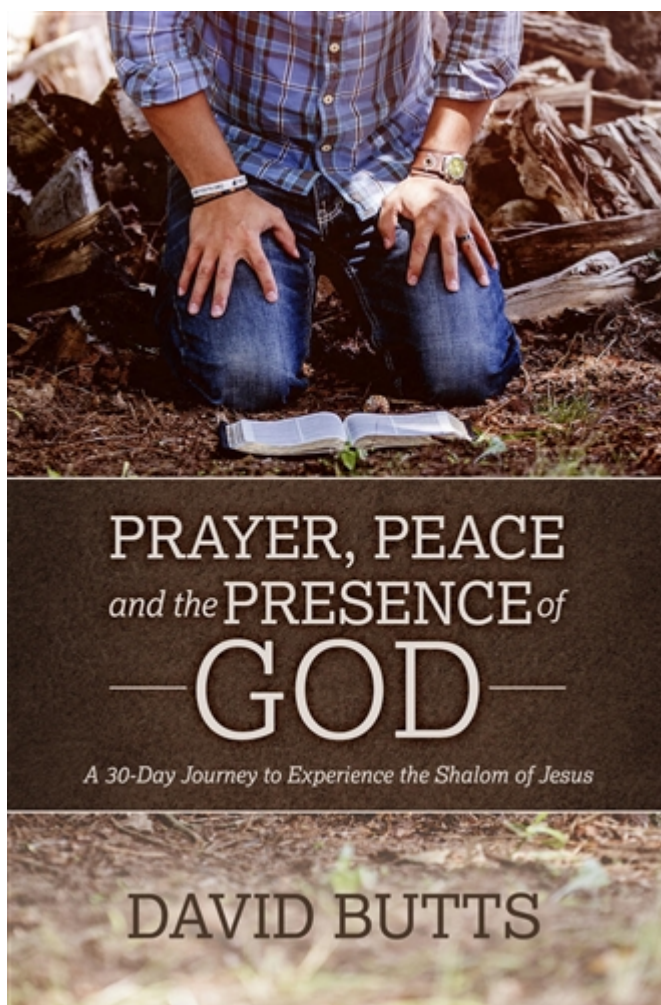
Paul commended the Colossians for their ordered and firm faith. His prayers were working. They were, thankfully, NOT discouraged or disunited.

Would you think about how you could “struggle” in prayer for someone, or maybe for an entire people group or country, that they would come to know Christ as Savior and Lord?

Commit to “praying for one another” utilizing the following two prayer requests:

1. For encouragement of the heart.
2. For unity in love.

When enough Christians take the time to “struggle” in prayer, then Christ will be known in our midst and glorified by our lives.



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The author, David Butts (1953-2022), started writing this book and 10 days into it he got word that he was in stage 4 with a rare form of lymphoma. God allowed him to live in a greater way for five additional years of full-strength ministry. Dave has challenged readers in *Prayer, Peace and the Presence of God* to seek after His best life, no matter what it holds.

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